

UNIVERSITY OF TAMPERE

Faculty of Management

**EXPLORING THE ROLES OF THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT AS THE MIDDLE LEVEL
MANAGER IN A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION IN THE QUALITY
ASSURANCE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING**

Master's Degree Programme in Research and Innovation in Higher Education (MARIHE)

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Abstract

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Abstract – This research is purposed at exploring the roles of the heads of departments as the middle level manager in higher education institution in the quality assurance of teaching and learning especially in the Indonesian context. This research is significant as research on the role of middle level manager in higher education are less found especially in quality assurance of teaching and learning. This research focuses on the management strand of quality assurance (c.f. Steinhart et al. 2017). The roles of the middle level managers are seen from the activities of the managers in the stages of quality assurance of teaching and learning (c.f. Elton, 1995) and the support to the presage and process dimension of quality teaching and learning (Gibbs 2010). In addition, analysis of leadership from the organisation structure perspective (tactical/middle-level management, c.f. Turbino et al., 2013). Data were collected from documents analysis and interviews to seven heads of 'A' grade departments and one head of Centre for Teaching and Learning in the university. The findings show that the role of middle level managers in quality assurance of teaching and learning fell under seven categories such as (i) translating university's vision into concrete benchmark, (ii) empowering subordinates and building partnership with other parties, (iii) monitoring and controlling quality teaching and learning, (iv) planning, managing, evaluating programs for quality assurance, (v) becoming hub between top and lower level management, (vi) leading academic convention, and (vii) fund tactician. This research, even though has described vividly the roles of the heads of departments as the middle level manager in higher education, is very context specific and other countries' higher education may possess different mechanism. However, most universities, especially in Indonesia or similar contexts, may take the practical benefits of this research, which is to raise awareness and potential contribution of the middle level managers in quality assurance of teaching and learning.

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1. Introduction

This chapter consists of research background, research question, key concepts, and thesis organisation. First, this chapter begins with the presentation of the current trend in quality assurance of teaching and learning research. Seeing the research trend and that the role of middle level managers in quality assurance of teaching and learning is less specifically addressed in higher education research, the researcher found it is important to conduct this research. Second, the next section of this chapter presents the formulation of research questions and research purposes. Furthermore, key concepts and the thesis organisation are presented.

1.1. Background

Even though quality assurance in a higher education institution is a systemic process which involves and evaluates the entire activities of higher education, the focus of quality assurance in many universities leads to the aspect of teaching and learning (Biggs, 2001; Netshifhefhe, Nobongoza, & Maphosa, 2016; Pavlenko, Bojan, & Trif, 2008; Szymenderski, Yagudina, & Burenkova, 2015). Hénard (2010) finds that despite the diverse approach to defining quality assurance, “there is a growing number of initiatives (actions, strategies, and policies) aimed at improving the quality of teaching” (p.10). These initiatives and other activities of quality assurance of education are indeed critically needed to continuously improve the learning content, delivery, and academic preparation (Anane & Addaney, 2016; Chong & Ho, 2009). Indeed, demand exists for quality teaching and learning especially from the students who expect to achieve certain competencies and learning outcomes after study (Roseveare & Hénard, 2012).

Actually, there are a lot of players of and contributors to the quality of higher education for instance the government (c.f. Chalmers, 2008; Tremblay, Lalancette, & Roseveare, 2012), private sectors (c.f. Tremblay, Lalancette, & Roseveare, 2012), students and families, etc. Unlike corporation or company of which quality relies on the hands of the producer or service provider, higher education quality is determined by all level of stakeholders including the state government, institutional faculties, students, and parents. Many research have been done in almost all of the layers, for instance, Chalmers (2008) found that government will to elevate the quality of higher education of a country can be assessed from its provision for resource, infrastructure support, consulting and community activities, evaluation for teaching practices, faculty policy, and relevant higher education policies. At the institutional level, moreover, the extent to which HEI managers are serious in quality improvement could be seen from its mission statement (c.f. Meacham & Gaff, 2006), academic innovation and creativity, research-teaching link policy (c.f. Chalmers, 2008), and

accommodation for the students/staffs (Gibbs, 2010). Nevertheless, this research focuses only at institutional managers as the subject to quality higher education, specifically, the quality of teaching and learning.

In the studies of quality assurance of teaching and learning, there are two major strands namely the management strand and the education strand (Steinhardt, Schneijderberg, Götze, Baumann, & Krücken, 2017). The management strand views that quality assurance of teaching and learning is a top-down approach that is managed and regulated by the university top management through certain policies and mechanism (Hénard, 2010; Roseveare & Hénard, 2012; Steinhardt et al., 2017). On the other hand, the education strand views that the teaching and learning quality is assured by the teacher's efficacy and teaching effort as the quality assurance system from management strand does not "recognize educational and cultural issues" (Steinhardt et al., 2017, p. 230). In education strands, teachers believe that they are the subject to reward for quality education and student achievement and satisfaction since professional and quality teaching is the key point of university operation (Scott & Scott, 2014).

However, Scott and Scott's (2014) finding and Steinhardt et al.'s (2017) meta-analysis show that there is a stronger tendency of management strand in the quality of teaching and learning in most higher education institutions. This means, top-down and structured management is more influential as they give more initiative to the quality of teaching and learning, yet not taking aside the "infrequent" bottom-up initiatives.

Structurally there are three groups of management in an organisation: top-level, middle-level, and low-level management (Jago & Vroom, 1977; Sinha & Subramanian, 2012). Other scholars such as Turban, Volonino, Wood, and Sipior (2013) classified organisation management into three levels namely strategic, tactical, and operational. In a higher education institution, the top-level managers are the rectors, vice rectors, provosts whose role is the strategic policy decision makers. Meanwhile, the middle level managers of a higher education institution are the deans and heads of department, heads of unit/bureau whose role is tactical and connecting the policy from the upper leaders to the operational leaders. Then, the low level management are the teachers, supervisors, researchers who are dealing with the operational tasks of teaching and research with students or colleagues.

This research explores, from the management strand, the roles of the heads of departments as the middle level managers in a higher education institution in the quality assurance of teaching and learning. So far, research that have been conducted on management in quality assurance are referring to top management leaders such as those by Owino et al. (2011), Psomas and Antony

(2017) and Papanthymou and Darra (2017). Kinyanjui (2007) also found that the transformation and improvement of an institution require visionary and creative leadership, specifically in top level management. He further gives recommendations to empower and to give higher decision-making power to the leaders in the operational units –i.e. teachers in the class- and in middle level management. Research in similar tone are many and most imply that top leaders are more responsible for the achievement of the quality objective through systemic quality assurance such as ones conducted by (Carlsson, Kettis, & Söderholm, 2014; Garwe, 2012; Mishra & Pandey, 2013).

Interestingly, Meek, Goedegebuure, Santiago, and Carvalho, (2010) believed that the leaders in the middle management are very important because they are the hub between abstract vision and policies from the top leader in the institution and concrete and more practical activities of higher education e.g. teaching and research. Yet, Nguyen (2013) found that the role of the middle level managers, especially the heads of departments, are ambiguous, especially in developing nations where most middle level managers tend to focus on their field of expertise (Nguyen, 2013). This ambiguity may be due to the transition from the managerialism to the new public management as these managers are mainly full time academicians with the main duty to conduct teaching and research; while the new status forces these academicians to the new managerial role (Meek, Goedegebuure, Santiago, et al., 2010).

O'Mahoney and Garvan (2012) argue that middle managers have a crucial role to play in implementing a quality management framework since they are well placed to understand the changes implemented and then explain changes to employees. Rezvani (2017) assert that middle level managers are people who “integrate the intentions of top-level managers with lower level managers” (p.3). Therefore, they are the “mediators” in case some misunderstanding of both managers' expectation occurs (Rezvani, 2017, p. 4). This is similar to the view expressed by Meek et al. (2010), that middle level managers form the hub of the policies from the top leader in the institution and to the practical activities of higher education: teaching and research.

The support of middle management is essential during change implementation because previous research (e.g. Lawrence & McCollough, 2001; Roffe, 1998) has demonstrated that there can be a lack of acceptance and implementation of a new quality management framework. Roffe (1998) outlines a number of issues that are inherent in implementing a quality management framework such as: internal versus external; bespoke versus off-the-shelf; people-oriented versus process-oriented; the role of the team and of the individual and; encouraging acceptance and application of the framework. Although the importance of the middle manager is addressed by O'Mahoney and Garavan (2012), the issue is not given in-depth consideration and is not mentioned at all by either

Roffe (1998) or Lawrence and McCollough (2001). However, it can be considered that since middle managers are in the position they hold, they are ideally placed to deal with the issues regarding quality management implementation outlined by Roffe (1998).

Shortly, the role of the middle level managers are believed to be more complex to be discussed (c.f. Boyko & Jones, 2010; Clegg & McAuley, 2005; Nguyen, 2013; Pepper & Giles, 2015; Rudhumbu & Maphosa, 2015). Their roles are actually clear on papers, but what they are working is more or sometimes less from what is appointed (Nguyen, 2013). Traditionally, the roles of the middle level managers are of academics which maintain the quality of teaching/teachers and research/researchers (Meek, Goedegebuure, & De Boer, 2010). However, the role is shifting beyond these two and the middle level managers are now also responsible for the management of the faculty/department including quality assurance (Scott, Coates, & Anderson, 2008).

In fact, middle level managers in higher education have a significant position in quality assurance of teaching and learning yet their roles and contribution are less researched. In the Indonesian context, moreover, research from the management strand is also scarce (detailed further in chapter two, [section 2.1.3](#)). Therefore, this research is trying to fill the gap and contribute to higher education studies specifically on quality assurance of teaching and learning in higher education.

1.2. Research question and purpose

As research on the roles of heads of departments as the middle level managers in the quality assurance of teaching and learning specifically is scarce, this research aims at contributing to study of quality assurance of teaching and learning from the management strand. This research purposes to explore the roles of the heads of departments in the quality assurance of teaching and learning. Moreover, this research reveals the contributions of the heads of departments in the form of the support they are giving to the aspects of quality teaching and learning. Therefore, the researcher formulates one research question as follow:

- (1) What are the roles of the heads of departments as the middle level manager in a higher education institution in the quality assurance of teaching and learning?

This research is designed as a case study, which focuses on exposing the success of quality assurance in the departments within an excellent grade quality university in Indonesia. The case study, however, is more specifically to explore the role of the heads of departments in the quality assurance of teaching and learning. The role in this context is defined as the activities of the middle level managers in the quality assurance process and the support given to the dimensions of quality

teaching and learning (see [Table 2.2](#)). Moreover, this case study explores further the challenges faced by the heads of departments in the quality assurance of teaching and learning.

1.3. Key concepts

This research aims at exploring the role of heads of departments as the middle level manager in a higher education institution in the quality assurance of teaching and learning. The statement possesses three main keys: middle level managers, quality assurance, and quality teaching and learning. In this section, the concepts presented are the three main keys and the Indonesian context of higher education quality assurance. Nevertheless, the more detailed theoretical/analytical framework would be presented in the next chapter.

1.3.1. Quality and higher education quality

The definition of quality higher education and quality teaching and learning is based on how the context university perceives it, which would be identified in the Findings chapter. However, this research refers to Harvey and Green's (1993) five definitions of quality higher education. First, quality is exception; it determines that quality higher education institution is distinguished from other institutions. In this sense, quality is achieved when standards are surpassed. Second, quality is perfection or consistency; it defines quality higher education as flawless, with 'zero defect', institution. In this approach of quality definition, a higher education institution must meet certain standards or criteria to be categorised quality. Third, quality is fitness for purpose; it suggests that quality higher education is that which fulfils the self-set sets of goals, standards, and needs of the stakeholders. Fourth, quality is value for money; it perceives a higher education institution is of quality if it has a high ability to 'return' the investment. Fifth, quality is transformative; it sees quality higher education institution as transformative agency for it provides enhancement and empowerment of the students.

1.3.2. Quality teaching and learning

Correspondingly, the definition of quality teaching and learning is up to the university in this research context. Nonetheless, there are two approaches to define the quality of teaching and learning in this context. First, we could define the quality of teaching and learning by integrating the approach to defining quality in general into the teaching and learning process. So, if quality is product (c.f. Harvey, 2006), then the learning outcome is the indicator of quality teaching and learning (Rifandi, 2013). However, the quality of learning outcome is strongly determined in the learning process (Gibbs, 2010; Muljono, 2006). Therefore, the second approach to define quality teaching and learning in higher education is viewing the quality of the process. Muljono (2006)

explains that teaching and learning as a system comprise of several components such as the content of learning, teaching faculties, infrastructure, funding, control, and evaluation of teaching and learning. So, quality teaching and learning is interpreted as the quality of the components of the teaching and learning process.

These components are condensed in Gibbs's (2010) dimensions of quality namely presage, process, and product. This research, however, only analyses the presage and process dimensions of quality in which heads of departments are able to control and give support to. The term support in this research is defined as kinds of initiatives provided and the extent to which heads of departments control these dimensions –this research found that heads of departments do not have full authority in some dimensions. Presage dimension is the aspects which exist before the teaching and learning occur while the process dimension is the aspects which occur in the process of teaching and learning.

1.3.3. Quality assurance

Harvey (2006) states that quality assurance is a process of assessing compliance and accountability while at the same time improving quality standards. Elassy (2015) asserts that quality assurance is a process of establishing stakeholder confidence that the provision of higher education “fulfils expectations or measures up to threshold minimum requirements” (p.14). Based on those definitions, quality assurance of teaching and learning in this research is interpreted as the entire system, mechanism, procedures, and activities purposed to ensure that provision of higher education can meet the expected quality benchmark.

1.3.4. Quality to Indonesian higher education authorities

For the Indonesian government, quality higher education is perceived as standard accomplishment. This interpretation is generated after examining the definition of quality higher education in the Regulation of the Ministry of Technology Research and Higher Education (MoRTHE) No 62 Year 2016 on Quality Assurance System in Indonesian Higher Education and the Principles of National Accreditation Agency as the country's sole quality assurance agency for higher education institutions. Accordingly, Indonesian HEIs must meet certain standards in order to be qualified and legally operate as a higher education provider. Therefore, referring to Elassy's (2015) or Harvey and Green's (1993) approach, the quality of higher education in Indonesia can be defined as perfection/standard conformity. Therefore, quality Indonesian universities are those who fulfil the standards.

In order to achieve the institutional objectives, quality and quality assurance must be included in the institutional mission, vision, and strategy (Hou et al., 2015). The policies, guidelines, and indicators of quality must be set in a clear mechanism at every activity in an institution. To the institution level, the government of Indonesia has developed the standards/criteria of the educational mission of higher education that is enacted in the Minister Regulation No 44/2015. The Act suggests a set of National Education Standards that consist of learning outcome, content, process, evaluation, human resource (faculties), infrastructure, management, and financial. These National Education Standards, compiled with National Research Standards and National Social Service Standards, are developed to assure the accomplishment of the higher education missions of the HEIs (MoRTHE, 2015).

1.3.5. Indonesia's internal and external quality assurance and the accreditation system of higher education

According to the Regulation of the Minister of Research Technology and Higher Education No 62 Year 2016, quality assurance is a systemic assessment to enhance the quality of higher education institution in a planned and continuous manner. Internal quality assurance is defined as systemic quality assurance process that is conducted autonomously by the higher education institution to control and enhance the provision of higher education (MoRTHE, 2016). On the other hand, external quality assurance is an assessment of quality through accreditation to determine the feasibility and level of quality achievement of a higher education institution. Usually, the external quality assurance is run by the external parties such as the government and/or international quality assurance agencies whereas the institution is the reviewee.

The external quality assurance of Indonesian higher education institutions is conducted by the sole body of higher education accreditation, which is the National Accreditation Agency for Higher Education (NAAHE). It is important to highlight that in the Indonesian context, accreditation is not limited to accredit a higher education institution but rather to evaluate, assess, and provide feedback and supervision to the institutions. The primary domains of the accreditation are at the institution and study programme level. This means, not only is the university but all the study programmes of the university are the subject to accreditation. Moreover, a university is unable to request an institution-level accreditation if not all of its study programme has been accredited (NAAHE, 2017).

The process of accreditation assesses every aspect of the institution which is condensed into seven dimensions including (i) vision, mission, goals and objectives, and strategy achievement (ii) governance, leadership, system management and quality assurance (iii) students and graduates, (iv)

human resources, (v) curriculum, learning and academic atmosphere, (vi) finance, facilities and infrastructure, and information systems education, (vii) research, social service, and cooperation. The accreditation process will result to accreditation score and grade namely 'A' (excellent), 'B' (good), 'C' (fair), and Not Accredited. This result is critical for HEI or study programme to attract students or faculties and to establish partnerships with other institutions including universities and industries. In addition, renowned industries and government bodies –ministries, councils, and bureaus– only hire graduates from at least B –preferably higher- grade accredited institution and study program.

In addition to the practical significances of quality assurance or accreditation of higher education in Indonesia–employability and partnership opportunity, the existence of quality assurance in higher education is a must for challenges in higher education are growing. According to Olssen (2004), the challenges of quality assurance are at least identified by three factors: (a) changing demands on higher education by the increasing scarcity of public funding sources, (b) the necessity of public accountability, and (c) the emergence of qualification requirements for graduates by the labour market.

In the Indonesian context, furthermore, quality assurance is not limited to maintaining the academic quality but also the quality of the foundation's ideology, especially in the Indonesian private universities. In the specific type of university, the aspect of ideological quality must be maintained and implemented because the mission of the foundation is to reach not only the academic quality but must produce idealistic graduates for the sustainability of the foundation as an organization. This is important as (Supriyanto, 2008) assert, "abandoning the quality of ideology can result in the foundation losing its successor/cadres and eventually collapsing" (p. 2).

1.3.6. Middle level managers

Referring to Turban's et al. (2013) hierarchy of organisation structure, middle level managers in a higher education institution are defined as tactical personnel who function to transmit strategies, visions, and objectives of top level management to lower level management in the form of short-term activities. In this research, the middle level managers in higher education institution are the heads of departments, units, and bureaus in a higher education institution. Traditionally, heads of departments act as academic leaders (Meek, Goedegebuure, & De Boer, 2010; Verhoeven, 2010) with the main function of supervision of the work concerning students and interaction with other academics (Boyko & Jones, 2010). However, their works are now including programme management and quality assurance (Nguyen, 2013).

1.4. Thesis organisation

This thesis is organised as follow. Chapter one presents the introduction to the research. The research background, purposes, and key concepts are described in this chapter. Chapter two lays out the literature review and the theoretical framework of this research. This chapter highlights former discussions on the topic of middle level managers in quality assurance. Then, all concepts which frame the research is also presented in this chapter. Chapter three presents the research methodology. This consists of the research design, case context description, research data, and analysis. Chapter four presents the findings of this research as well as the discussion. Lastly, chapter five provides the conclusion of this research. This includes the summary of the finding, research significances, implications, limitations, and recommendations.

2. Literature Review and Analytical Framework

This chapter consists of the review of related studies and analytical framework. The review of related studies presents the previous research in quality assurance of teaching and learning and the identification of the research gap. The analytical framework presents all points on how this research is built including scholars' approaches to frame a quality assurance system, the dimensions of quality teaching and learning, the role of middle level managers, and the relationship between management and quality assurance. Last but not least, the summary of the analytical framework is presented, that is how the presented concepts link to each other and especially to the research questions.

2.1. Previous research and research gap

This research goes from the management strand in quality assurance of teaching and learning as presented in chapter one. Research on this field has been very well conducted in different countries at the institutional level, such as in Indonesia (e.g. Bernik, Sondari, & Indika, 2017), the Netherland (e.g. Kleijnen, Dolmans, Willems, & Hout, 2013), Greece (e.g. Psomas & Antony, 2017), Croatia (e.g. Sutić & Jurčević, 2012), and Spain (e.g. Calvo-Porrall, Lévy-Mangin, & Novo-Corti, 2013). However, most of the research that has been carried out has either focused only on the perception of quality (e.g. Calvo-Porrall et al., 2013; Kleijnen et al., 2013) or the mechanism of quality assurance (e.g. Bernik et al., 2017).

There are also research focusing on the significance of the university management in higher education quality assurance. However, most research addressed the top / strategic management. For instance, Psomas and Antony (2017) investigated the total quality management in some Greek universities. The research revealed that the focus of quality management in Greek higher education institutions includes leadership and top management commitment and strategic quality planning. Sutić & Jurčević (2012) addressed the determining factors to quality improvement in a Croatian university. Both found that “strategic actions, based on well-defined and communicated strategic goals, can contribute to the enhancement of quality in higher education, but only when there is a strong organizational culture present” (p. 147).

Furthermore, the sub-sections below elaborates on the research that have been conducted on quality assurance management in the Indonesian context. The first presents the research on the Indonesian quality assurance education strand and the management strand in the second sub-section. The next

sub-section presents previous research investigating the role of managers in higher education in the quality assurance of teaching and learning.

2.1.1. Indonesian teaching and learning quality assurance in education strand

In the Indonesian context, research that had been conducted on quality assurance are abundant yet mostly concentrate on the educational strand. The education strand views academician role as the core of quality teaching and learning (Steinhardt et al., 2017). Benawa, Bali, & Lakonawa (2014) investigated the extent to which teacher capacity in content delivery and classroom management influence student retention at a university in Jakarta. The research viewed quality teaching and learning as process –the student retention in the classroom. The quantitative research which used path analysis method showed that student motivation and retention are higher when teachers enhance their capacity in content delivery and classroom management.

Eryadini (2014) also viewed quality as process on her research which is focusing on the relationship between teacher's competence and quality of learning process in a higher education institute in Lamongan. Learning process in Eryadini's (2014) research is defined as classroom environment which stimulates students to be vigorous (student retention) and promote curiosity (soft skill). The research found that the competences of the teacher especially teacher efficacy could improve student retention and promote curiosity.

On the other hand, Purwanto (2014), regarded quality as product. He investigated the relationship between teacher's teaching method and learning achievement at a university in Surakarta. The survey showed that the teaching methods which put student as the centre of learning (student-centred learning) have a positive correlation with student achievement.

Yudistira, Pasek, Sumetri, & Suryadi (2016) conducted a survey investigating the factors affecting the quality of graduates by looking at the factors affecting the quality of teaching and learning at a polytechnic in Bali. The findings showed that the teacher's professionalism and learning infrastructure are the most determinants to quality teaching and learning. Moreover, teacher's competences have positively influenced the graduate competencies, namely knowledge, application of knowledge, judgement making, communication skills, and continuous learning.

There are much empirical research from the educational strand conclude that quality education in Indonesian universities is determined by quality teachers. However, it is very important to not fall into what Dobelli (2013) called 'false causality'. The success of quality assurance when regarding quality as product –student achievement– may not always due to the sole strive of teachers. There are other factors which exist, such as learning facilities as Yudistira et al. (2016) found. Vice versa,

the success of quality assurance in an institution may not due to the strong support from management.

However, Indonesian higher education governance is still controlled by strong government regulation (Nizam & Nurdin, 2014) and that the level of institutional autonomy is low (Husen, 2016). Dinarwati (2013) criticised the too-centralized and bureaucratic governance of Indonesian higher education and found that in fact the provision of higher education is based on guidelines and regulations –low autonomy. This, nevertheless, indicates that the top-down university government is apparent in Indonesian universities. Similarly the top down approach of quality assurance –the management strand– is more sensible determinant to quality teaching and learning in the Indonesian context.

2.1.2. Indonesian teaching and learning quality assurance in management strand

In general, research in the management strand of quality assurance of teaching and learning in Indonesia, though scarce, view similar aspects to what Gibbs (2010) proposed –dimensions of quality teaching to which the support is given. Most research these dimensions to be given more attention by the university management. Asmawi (2005) for instance, derived his research from the low level of graduate competencies in a university in Tangerang. His research was entitled finding a new strategy to improve quality graduates. Asmawi (2005) identified the factors affecting the graduate competencies (product) and how the competencies can be improved (in the process). The result was actually not too surprising, there was no need of having new other strategies. Asmawi (2005) suggested, rather, to maximise the support to student input, teachers development, and learning infrastructure. He suggested the university managers attract quality students, incentivize teacher for development, and upgrade learning infrastructure.

Alba (2011), similarly, focused on how to improve Indonesian quality higher education. His literature review came to a conclusion that the quality of teaching and learning –seen from the quality or competences of the graduates– depends on the quality of teachers in encouraging the students to be more critical. He identified that quality assurance of teaching and learning depends on how well the institutional management can promote a teacher’s competence through mechanisms such as incentives and soft-skill training.

2.1.3. Research on middle level managers in a higher education institution

The research presented above –especially from the management strand– did not address the role of the middle level management on quality teaching and learning. In Indonesia research on this specific regard is scarce.

Nevertheless, in some countries such as Vietnam –the other developing ASEAN countries– research has been conducted in finding the role of middle level managers in a public university in the country. Nguyen (2013) explored the role of heads of departments as the middle level academic manager in a university in Hanoi. His research provides significant insight into this research regarding the role of middle level academic managers. The term of academic managers is used as the heads of departments in the research context are the full-time academicians who obtain new managerial status. In Indonesia, the situation is the same. The heads of departments in Indonesian universities are full time teachers who obtain managerial status for a certain period of time. Nguyen (2013), however, explored the role of the middle level managers in general, not necessarily in teaching and learning quality assurance.

Research on the relationship between leadership/management and quality assurance has been conducted but most refer to the management level (strategic leader) or the teacher (operational leader). Papanthymou and Darra (2017) reviewed the practices of quality assurance from over fifty six articles. The result was expected: the leadership being referred to in the literature review is all top management; there is no single courtesy to middle level managers. Accordingly, there are seven factors leading successful quality management in higher education namely “vision and plan statement, employee involvement, customer focus, reward and recognition, education and training, the commitment of top management, and quality management supplier” (Papanthymou & Darra, 2017, p. 134).

Odhiambo (2014) researched Kenya’s higher education institutions and suggested that in the developing countries and developing higher education institutions, transformation and improvement of the institution requires visionary and creative leadership, specifically in top level management. Odhiambo (2014) recommended the managers to strengthen the understanding of the subordinates towards the vision of the institution. He further gave a suggestion for the top leaders to empower and to give higher decision-making power to the leaders in the operational unit –i.e. teachers in the class- and in the middle level management.

Mishra and Pandey (2013) conducted a research in Indian higher education and asserted that that the success of any organisation depends on the leadership. Both suggested that “top leadership is the key to any total quality management programme, including in higher education, and the driving force behind success and failure” (p. 2162). In addition, Carlsson et al.’s (2014) report to the Swedish Association of Higher Education stated that the direction of a university depends on the activeness of the institutional leadership to promote understanding of quality education and research of the university stakeholders.

Among those research, none addressed the importance of middle level management in the quality assurance. However, one piece of study conducted by O'Mahony & Garavan (2012) addressed the importance of the middle level managers in the quality assurance of higher education institution. Both conducted a case study on the implementation of quality assurance of a department within a university. Their goal is to find out factors driving the success of quality assurance of the department. The finding revealed that "the successful implementation of quality management in a department is difficult without the involvement, commitment and sponsorship of senior higher education leaders" (O'Mahony & Garavan, 2012, p.187). O'Mahony and Garavan (2012) assert that the involvement –empowerment– of middle level managers or the stakeholders, in general, is vital, but "academics are frequently not consulted and involved in the implementation process. Similarly, in service departments, core employees may have very little involvement" (p.188).

To this point, some research gap can be identified. First, in the broader context of higher education studies, given that the subject of this research –middle level management– is less researched, this research can contribute to the management strand of quality assurance. Second, in the Indonesian context, research on the management strand of quality assurance is also scarce. Therefore, this research would benefit as the reference for future research.

2.2. Analytical framework

After identifying the research gap, that is the scarcity of research on the role of the middle level managers in quality assurance of teaching and learning, the chapter continues with the presentations of all concepts which construct this research. This subchapter begins with the concepts of quality assurance of teaching and learning. In this section, the model of quality assurance of teaching and learning is presented. The model of quality assurance is vital to this research; it consists of the stages from which the role of the heads of departments is observed. In addition, to analyse the supports given by the heads of departments in the teaching and learning process, aspects of quality teaching and learning are presented. Furthermore, the concept and the roles of the heads of departments as the middle level manager in a higher education institution are presented. Finally, this subchapter is closed with the summary of the analytical framework.

2.2.1. Quality assurance of teaching and learning

This section presents, first, a quality assurance model. The model is used as the framework for quality assurance especially teaching and learning. In the accreditation system in Indonesia, quality teaching and learning is assessed in the administrative process. The review is based on the existing document or report mainly on the existence of lesson plans, teacher qualification, student and

graduate achievement. The accreditation system, unfortunately, does not see the quality assurance of the teaching and learning in the process instead it assesses only the outcome. Therefore, to identify the process of quality assurance of teaching and learning, a model –framework– which reveals stages and the activities in each stage is needed.

Secondly, this section presents the aspects of quality teaching and learning. These aspects are, practically, all elements in teaching and learning which influence the quality of teaching and learning. They include resources and condition prior to and during the teaching and learning process.

2.2.1.1. Models of quality assurance: Elton's Professional Model of Quality Assurance

In this research, the researcher adopts Elton's Professional Model of quality assurance as the framework to analyse the roles of the heads of departments in the implementation of quality assurance. The model is selected because it is the specific model of quality assurance of teaching and learning –the focus of this research and, more importantly, it sees from the management strand of quality assurance. The quality assurance model developed by Elton strongly demands the commitment of all members of the higher education institution. The development of quality assurance requires a professional attitude that is those who want to be fully responsible for the task toward quality excellence (Elton, 1995). Second, the Elton's (1995) model is selected since it adopts TQM, which is a quality management process used in many universities worldwide until nowadays. It originated as a model in business but its success quickly led to it being adopted in HEIs (Kanji, Malek, & Tambi, 1999). Figure 2.1 below is the model of quality assurance developed by Elton (1995, p. 139).

there must be an agreement with the stakeholders because in determining their quality that gives the assessment.

2. Objective and Standard Formulation. The step of setting goals and standards is taken into account in the overall learning environment of the students. Goals and standards are developed jointly between the graduate users and the HEI so that there is a link between what is being done by the college with the external willingness as the graduate user.
3. Learning environment. In a college learning environment should be monitored and evaluated through formal procedures conducted by the concerned person either in the level of individual lecturers or at the institutional level. This formal assessment procedure is a preparation for the implementation of the same assessment procedure in an autonomous assessment step by the lecturer.
4. Self-assessment by lecturers, i.e. lecturers are asked to conduct self-assessment followed by employee appraisal. Institutional assessment is conducted on the elements of teaching materials, management and resources. These are the domains which are reviewed.
5. Adjustment, in this phase the results of the previous stages assessment of both lecturers and institutions are immediately followed by training and development, curriculum development and resource relocation to conform to standard demands. In this stage, training and development are the follow up of lecturer and institutional assessments, while assessment of materials and resources is followed up with curriculum development and resource allocation.
6. The third to the fifth procedure, this step is a major step in the quality assurance system. These steps begin to assess the learning environment through self-assessment through assessment of all aspects of individual institutions and lecturers. In this step, university quality assurance is held.
7. This step is taken to observe how quality assurance is implemented. The implementation of this activity is known as an external quality audit. It is better that the implementation of this procedure is carried out by a separate quality assurance unit.
8. This step is to conduct a quality assessment directly on the learning environment. Assessment may be organized regularly through peer review or and in cooperation with outside assessors who monitor
9. The accountability can be conducted through audit and assessment. Both processes can be published so that all stakeholders can know, but the principle that must be considered is there are opportunities from external to access.

10. The important points that emerged during the university's quality assurance process were clarified both in terms of objectives and standards through partnerships with customers.
11. As a result of lecturer training and development, university components become more professional.

The model suggests how teaching and learning must be assured from the embedment of the university goal to the accountability audit and assessment for the customer. Also, the model suggests the domains to be reviewed by the institutional management namely management, course, and resource. By applying the Elton's (1995) model in this research, the researcher would comprehend the activities in each stage of quality assurance. Therefore, the roles of the heads of departments in the quality assurance of teaching and learning can be assessed at each stage of the Model.

However, this research would specifically see the roles of the heads of departments in the third to fifth steps in the model is the "major quality assurance activities" (Elton, 1995, p. 140). Therefore, this research would see the roles of the heads of departments as the middle level managers in the learning environment, domains review, and review follow-ups in the quality assurance system. This research is also going to examine the second stage that is the standard and objective setting. This stage, even though it is not the major three activities in the quality assurance system, is the reference of the entire quality assurance system –i.e. result of quality assurance is to set objectives and standards (Elton, 1995).

2.2.1.2. Aspects of quality in the quality assurance of teaching and learning

Elton's model of teaching and learning quality assurance shows exactly on which stage teaching and learning process occurs: the student learning environment. The stage is exactly where heads of departments could give support in addition to their role as the manager of the entire teaching and learning quality assurance. In that particular stage –teaching and learning process, there are aspects which need to be maintained, assured, and supported. When attention given to these aspects are sufficient, quality teaching and learning could be achieved.

Gibbs (2010) suggested three dimensions of quality which are known as the '3Ps' (Presage, Process, Product). The notions are similar to the input, process, and output quality indicators (c.f. Scheerens et al., 2011) and have been well adapted in many countries as the indicators of higher education quality assessment such as in Indonesia (NAAHE, 2017). The first dimension of quality according to Gibbs (2010) is the presage dimension which is "the variables that exist within a

university context before a student starts learning and being taught, and include resources, the degree of student selectivity, the quality of the students, the quality of the academic staff, and the nature of the research enterprise” (p. 12). Second, the process dimension of quality is categorised as the variables “that characterise what is going on in teaching and learning and include class size, the amount of class contact and the extent of feedback to students” (Gibbs, 2010, p. 12). This also takes in how those variables impact the quantity and quality of the student effort and level of engagement (Gibbs, 2010). Third, the product dimension of quality is the variable which “concerns the outcomes of the educational processes and include student performance, retention and employability” (Gibbs, 2010, p. 12)

This research, however, only focuses on the presage and process dimensions of quality teaching and learning. This is because the nature of the product dimension is the result or “reflection” of the input and process dimensions (Gibbs, 2010, p. 43) and that learning outcome is the result of all aspects of teaching and learning (Muljono, 2006). Table 2.1 below explains the presage and process dimensions suggested by Gibbs (2010).

Table 2.1. Presage and Process dimensions of quality (Gibbs, 2010)

No	Presage	No	Process
1	Funding The amount of institutional funding which is allocated for students learning environment including staff development.	1	Class size The (lower) number of students in the class predicts the (better) student engagement and learning achievement.
2	Student-staff ratios The ratio of staff and students, if which is proportional can enhance the quality and quantity of academic contacts.	2	Quality of teaching This includes the qualification of the teachers (presage dimension) and the quality of learning material. In addition, this also

No	Presage	No	Process
			includes the institutional support to the faculties for their professional development.
3	Quality of teaching staffs The qualification of the teacher, the experience, and how teachers are always up-to-date to the emerging knowledge and teaching methodology.	3	Level of curriculum This includes how the learning material and the whole education provision is designed to qualify the graduates in the labour market
4	Quality of students (intake) The highly competitive student enrolment process which results to quality student enrolled will determine the effectivity of teaching and learning.	4	Student engagement The extent to which the student engage in teaching and learning is proven to impact the amount of educational gain. This includes “the extent of active and collaborative learning and the extent and quality of student-faculty interaction” (p. 32).
		5	Student support This can be in the form of funding for the low income students or excellent students/group of students. Also, this can be in the form of counselling, skill development, and support for students with special needs.

2.2.2. Management in quality assurance

This section discusses the position of middle level managers in a higher education institution analysed from the organisational structure. Furthermore, the section presents some roles of the heads of departments in the quality assurance process. The roles are identified and categorised from previous research on the broader theme –higher education management– since more specific research on the roles of the middle level managers in higher education institutions in the quality assurance of teaching and learning are scarce. In addition, the section also elaborates the attributes of heads of departments. These attributes are found in the literature on the roles of the heads of departments, and such attributes have a significant impact on the success of programme management.

2.2.2.1. Heads of departments as the middle level managers in a higher education institution

According to Turban et al. (2013), management or leadership can be modelled in the level: strategic, tactical, and operational. The strategic level is the top level of management/leadership where the leaders at this position plan and create a long-term strategy for the organisation. The nature of the decision is affecting entire organisation practices. In higher education institution, these are the rectors and the boards. At the tactical level, also known as middle level management, are the deans, head of departments, heads of units/bureaus in a higher education institution. The main function of this position is to link the strategy and operation of the organisation. In addition, the power of decision-making is limited to the unit/faculty/department and still need approval from the top leaders. Meanwhile, the operational level consists of operational personnel who focus on daily activities of higher education e.g. teachers, researchers, administrative staffs, librarian, etc. The people at the operational level are the professional yet they do not have power in the decision-making activities. Figure 2.2 shows in details the structure of leadership in the organisation in higher education adapted from (Turban et al., 2013).

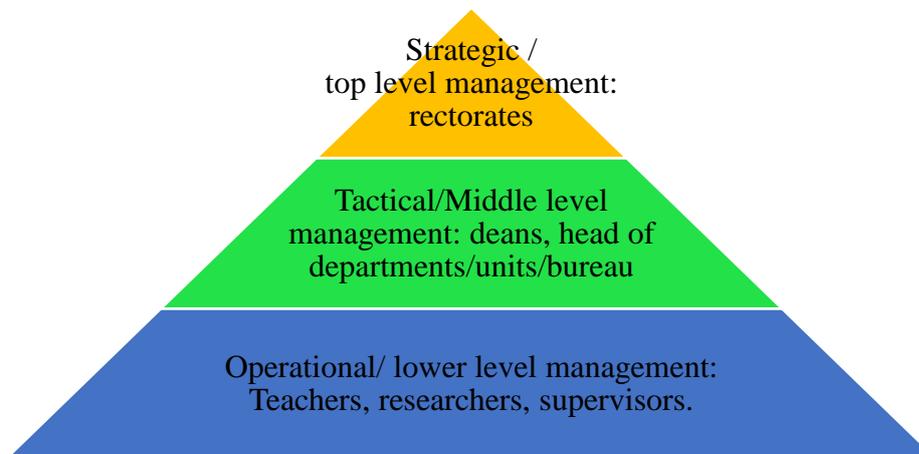


Figure 2.2. Pyramid of leadership structure in HEI organisation (Turban, et al., 2013)

Although the topic of middle level management has been researched for over 40 years (Nguyen, 2013), the concept is still debatable and there is no definitive subject of middle level managers in higher education institution (Pechar, 2010). Yet, it is becoming clear that in the complex realm of higher education, layers of decision-making powers, as well as the structure of authority, are necessary. Referring to Figure 2.2 above, middle level managers in a higher education institution are defined as tactical personnel who function to transmit the strategies, visions, and objectives of the top level management to the lower level management in the form of short term activities

(Lavarda, Canet-Giner, & Peris-Bonet, 2010; Rezvani, 2017). In a higher education institution, the middle level managers are the heads of departments, units, and bureaus in the institution.

2.2.2.2. Roles of middle level managers of HEI in the quality assurance process

The subsection can be decoded into the role of middle level managers in the process of teaching and learning, as the core of quality assurance is in the process of teaching and learning (c.f. Elton, 1995). There are rare pieces of literature found under the specific keyword of roles of middle level managers in quality assurance of teaching and learning. However, the literature on more general scope found some roles of middle level managers in higher education.

Meek, Goedegebuure, Santiago, et al. (2010) suggests that the role of middle level managers in higher education is shifting to more managerial such as “being able to define missions, objectives and strategies; having the capacity to manage financial and human resources; and to assume strong leadership” (p.1). In addition, De Boer, Goedegebuure, and Meek (2010) state that middle level managers “supply information upwards and translate and tailor strategic decisions downwards. Through mediation, negotiation and interpretation of activities, middle managers form the nexus between the strategic and operational levels of an organisation” (p. 226).

Meek, Goedegebuure, and De Boer (2010) studied the nature of middle level managers in the Australian and Dutch higher education system and found that the role of the middle level managers are including: “strategic management, including participation in setting institutional strategies and responsibilities for faculty strategy; operational management, including resource allocation and support services; human resource management, including evaluations; academic management, including overseeing teaching and research programmes and student relationships; and external relationship management or stakeholder relationship management” (p. 45). Nguyen (2013) investigated the role of the heads of departments in a university in Thailand and found that the role of the middle level managers fell into five categories such as department governance, programme management, human resource management, budget and resource management, external communication, and office management.

Indeed, most literature do not specifically address the role of the middle level managers in quality assurance, or especially in quality assurance of teaching. However, as the framework of this research, the roles of the middle level managers can be summarized in the following table:

Table 2.2. Roles of middle level managers in a higher education institution

Roles	Activities and source
Defining vision and strategies	Creating long term goals and strategy for the department (Meek, Goedegebuure, Santiago, et al., 2010); Implementing the shared goals (Leaming, 2007; Nguyen, 2013); mediation, negotiation and interpretation of activities between the strategic and operational levels of an organisation (De Boer et al., 2010).
Programme management	Planning, monitoring, and evaluating programme/activities (De Boer et al., 2010; Nguyen, 2013)
Human resource management	Staff development (Nguyen, 2013) and evaluations (Meek, Goedegebuure, & De Boer, 2010); maintaining morale and informing the subordinates about university –top management– update (Nguyen, 2013), Empowering subordinates (Choi, Goh, Adam, & Tan, 2016).
Budget and resource management	Allocation of the resource (Meek, Goedegebuure, & De Boer, 2010); proposing a budget of the department and making an annual report (Nguyen, 2013)
Academic management	“Overseeing teaching and research programmes and student relationships” (Meek, Goedegebuure, & De Boer, 2010, p. 45), leading academic conventions (Bryman, 2007; Detsky, 2011).

2.2.2.3. Attributes of middle level managers

To play the roles effectively, heads of departments as the middle level managers must possess certain attributes. The attributes are also regarded as the leadership trait of the leaders. Specifically, in quality assurance in higher education, leaders must possess several attributes as attached in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3. Attributes of middle level managers in an institution

Attribute	Functions
Academic competences	Leading academic forum and / or scientifically analysing trends, documents, and research (Bryman, 2007; Detsky, 2011); providing “advocate to the discipline or profession; explaining, arguing, promoting,

Attribute	Functions
	debating, lobbying, campaigning” the scientific approach to curriculum or management (Macfarlane, 2011, p. 70)
Empowerment	Empowering human resource to achieve goals as well as the personal development of the subordinate (Choi, Goh, Adam, & Tan, 2016); leading –to empower– the subordinate (Lieberman, 1990)
Communication skills	Building partnership needs high communication skill especially to contact with new external partners (Mohr & Spekman, 1994); communicating to the subordinate as means of executing the programs for quality assurance, empowering staffs, and transmitting goals (Hénard & Leprince-Ringuet, 2008).
Programme leadership	Succeeding institutional or program or activities in quality assurance of teaching (Sallis, 2014); positioning the leaders themselves as a leader and as a colleague (Furtner, Maran, & Rauthmann, 2017).

2.2.3. Summary

This research focuses on the management strand of teaching and learning quality assurance in higher education institution (c.f. Steinhardt et al., 2017) with the main purpose of exploring the role of the middle level manager in the quality assurance of teaching and learning. First of all, to understand how quality assurance of teaching and learning is developed and conducted, this research employs Elton’s model of quality assurance. Elton’s (1995) model forms an ideal theoretical basis for investigating the role of middle managers in the quality process for two reasons. Firstly, it begins with the demands of a university’s professionalism from the public (one of a university’s key holders). Indeed, Elton’s (1995) model centres very much on the role of stakeholders in the quality process; it requires self-evaluation from teachers, academic staff and management as well as peer and student evaluation. As O’Mahony and Garavan (2012) pointed out, middle managers are in the ideal role to deal with the majority of stakeholders. Secondly, the model adopts TQM, which is a quality management process used in many universities worldwide. It originated as a model in business but its success quickly led to it being adopted in HEIs (Kanji et al., 1999).

According to Elton's model ([Figure 2.1](#)), teaching and learning quality assurance occurs in the student learning environment –teaching and learning processes. In a shorter sentence, quality assurance in this context is how the internal stakeholders such as teachers and management are involved in the teaching and learning process. Indeed, Elton (1995) has explicitly mentioned that the third to fifth steps in the model is the “major quality assurance activities” (p. 140). This research, however, is also going to examine the second stage that is the standard and objective setting. This stage, even though it is not the major three activities in the quality assurance system, is the reference of the entire quality assurance system –i.e. result of quality assurance is to set objectives and standards (Elton, 1995).

As quality assurance in this context is how internal stakeholders are involved in the teaching and learning process, Roseveare and Hénard (2012) mention that the support for quality teaching takes place at the institution, programme, and individual level in a higher education institution. The institution-wide supports are given in the form of projects such as policy design and the systemic internal quality assurance. The programme/department level supports include the review and evaluation to improve the course design, content, and delivery within faculties, schools, or programmes. Meanwhile, the individual level support includes “initiatives that help teachers achieve their mission, encouraging them to innovate and to support improvements to student learning” (Roseveare & Hénard, 2012, p. 7).

Here, this research investigates specifically the role of the middle level managers including their supports in the teaching and learning quality assurance –the teaching and learning process. The middle level managers of the university are defined from the organisational structure perspective that is the tactical or middle-level management (c.f. Turban et al., 2013). In this research, the middle level managers are the heads of departments in the University of research case. The heads of departments as the middle level managers are generally responsible as program manager that functions to assure that all activities are realised (Nguyen, 2013) and becoming hub between the upper and lower level management (Rezvani, 2017). However, in higher education specifically, heads of departments are responsible as programme managers including planning, monitoring, and evaluating programme / activities (De Boer et al., 2010; Nguyen, 2013), human resource managers including staff development (Nguyen, 2013) and evaluations (Meek, Goedegebuure, & De Boer, 2010) and empowering subordinates (Choi, Goh, Adam, & Tan, 2016), budget and resource managers including allocation of resource (Meek, Goedegebuure, & De Boer, 2010) and proposing the budget of the department (Nguyen, 2013). In addition, as the heads of departments of an academic organisation, they are also responsible for academic management, that is assuring the

provision of teaching and research (Meek, Goedegebuure, & De Boer, 2010) and leading academic conventions (Bryman, 2007; Detsky, 2011).

Furthermore, to find out the contributions of these managers in the teaching and learning process – i.e. student learning environment (Elton, 1995)– this research employs Gibbs' (2010) dimensions of quality teaching. Specifically, the presage and process dimensions are selected because the two are determinant to the product dimension of quality (Gibbs, 2010). Muljono (2006) also said that the learning outcome is the result of all aspects of teaching and learning. Therefore, knowing the support given by the middle level managers in both presage and process dimensions of quality will benefit primarily to other middle level managers at universities and the theoretical benefit as well.

3. Research Methodology

This chapter presents the methodology of this case study. Mainly, this chapter is divided into three major sections: research design, research data/material, and research method. The first discusses the research design, the researcher position, and the brief status and governance of the university which became the object of this research. The second is research data/material which presents the types and selection data as well as the validity and reliability. The third is research method; it consists of data collection and data analysis process.

3.1. Research Design

3.1.1. Research Design

This research is designed as a single case study. Case study research design is the most suitable for this thesis as this research tries to deeply explore a phenomenon or fact (c.f. Yin, 2009). In this research, the fact that occurs is the University of which the departments achieved an excellent grade in quality assurance. According to Yin (2009), a case study explores how and why certain situation, phenomenon, or fact occurs. Meanwhile, a single case study design is selected because the case – phenomenon– is “unique” (c.f. Yin (2009, p. 47) given the fact that most Indonesian HEIs that possess A grade accreditation is very low (see appendix 3). In addition, the characteristic of this case study is exploratory. An exploratory case study tries to explore the factors, activities, or elements to “develop pertinent hypotheses and propositions for further inquiry” (Yin, 2009, p. 9) based on the data collected through interviews and document analyses. In relation to the research question, this exploratory case study design is very suitable as this research would answer to the question what are the roles the heads of departments in Case University in the quality assurance of teaching and learning.

3.1.2. Case context

This research was conducted in Case University. The case university is a private university in Yogyakarta province, Indonesia. Even though the university is still young (less than 40 years old), the quality grade achieved has always been excellent (highest grade) for the past decade. The nature of a private higher education institution in Indonesia is that it must be established under a non-profit foundation; not a corporation. The terms are differentiated because corporations are usually profit-seeking organisations, while foundation in the Indonesian context is an organisation of the society which actually functions to help the government in social issues such as education, literacy, social awareness, hygiene, orphans, charity, poverty etc.

The selected university is a private religious university, which means that it belongs to a religious foundation. Therefore, besides providing higher education services, the university brings the mission of spreading religious values and the values of the foundation. In fact, the foundation has established over 177 degree-conferring higher education institutions across the country. The foundation itself consists of parliamentary-like composition, similar to the Indonesian or any country government, with the foundation's Ministry/Board of Higher Education responsible for all institutions under the foundation.

In human resource management, for example, the foundation applies the scheme of Permanent Employees of the Foundation, like the country government applies the scheme of Permanent Civil Servant. In this case, all faculties including the rectors are nominated by the Board of the Foundation and are selected in the general assembly of the Foundation. In the faculty recruitment, the Foundation may appoint certain faculties directly to the institution, either way, the university may conduct self-recruitment but the Board will take the decision. Shortly, the management of the private university is controlled by the foundation.

Despite strong control by the foundation, the private university still has to follow the regulation from the national government. In Indonesia, policies to higher education apply to all institutions regardless of their status. The difference may only lie in the funding and faculty management where public institutions are given revenue from the government as well as the faculties possess civil servant status. Yet, both public and private institutions are subject to policies and regulation such as quality assurance, national education standards, and learning outcomes.

Case University as the object of this research has been awarded the *excellent* (A) grade in the accreditation system (see [section 2.2.1.3](#)). The label can represent that the university possesses good quality in education, research, and social service. The nature, indicators, criteria, subjects, and the process of accreditation have been discussed in the previous section (see [section 2.2.1.3](#)). The roles of the heads of departments of Case University are clearly mentioned in the Department's Profile, Accreditation Profile of the Department, and the university or department website as well. In general, the roles of the heads of departments of Case University includes planning strategies, budget, and education activities. Further can be seen in Appendix 4.

3.1.3. Researcher position

It is necessary for thesis readers to know the position of the researcher, including the educational background, the topic of interest, and the intention in this research. The researcher was a student and is a current temporary employee in the University. Researching own university has some

advantages, such as, interpreting graphs and data would be more precise because the researcher has worked in the quality assurance process, for instance preparing the Resume of Accreditation of Department, developing Profile of Department and Faculty, and conducting university research in the Centre for Teaching and Learning of the University. Furthermore, the culture of the university has been understood very well and therefore the respondents were more fervent to give information –especially in the interview.

The researcher was a student of the Faculty of Education of Case University and is interested in university teaching. In relation to higher education management, the researcher is interested in quality assurance, especially the quality of teaching and learning. Therefore, this research is a very valuable combination of the two fields of studies. This research would benefit the research as well as prospective university teachers, or managers. However, to assure the objectivity of data analysis, the researcher carefully assess the construct and the internal validity of the data. Documents read were always confirmed to the relevant authorities and the transcripts of the interviews were returned to the participants for clearer interpretation.

Furthermore, the researcher's intention regarding doing research in Case University is that, looking at the fact sheet, the majority of higher education institutions in Indonesia were still in low quality (C grade) (see Appendix 3). The researcher wants to expose the roles of the heads of departments in the quality assurance of teaching and learning so that the findings can be harnessed in a broader scope in the Indonesian universities. Also, that research on Indonesian higher education was quite scarce, this research would promote worldwide understanding of Indonesia's system of quality assurance in higher education.

There are minor challenges in researching the researcher's own institution. For instance, scheduling the interviews was not as smooth as predicted. As a member within the same institution, some participants took it lightly to schedule the meeting. Moreover, when the participants are informed that the researcher would stay for a quite long time in the research site, some yet minority of them tend to postpone the interviews and document collection to the time when they were really free, instead of prioritizing the interviews to other activities.

3.2. Research Data

There were two main data that were collected in this research. The first was documents concerning quality assurance of teaching and learning and the second were interviews with the relevant middle level managers. Both documents and participants of the interview were selected based on specific criteria. The selection of case university and the departments, from which the documents were taken

and interviews were conducted, were based on the accreditation result. In the Indonesian context, for some heads of departments, accreditation is everything. In the casual conversation prior to the interview, some of the participants did admit that accreditation result is vital for attracting student, developing the budget, and setting performance indicators. Moreover, prestigious private companies or state organisations (civil servant) only accept graduates from at least 'B' grade HEIs. This is why having an excellent quality institution ('A' grade) is the goal of every HEIs and departments. The 'A' grade accreditation result reflect the current status of academic quality of the department which is excellent according to the national standards. Therefore, the selection would allow the result of this research, how the quality assurance is managed at the department, to be of the model to other departments at the case university or even beyond the institution.

This technique of participant selection which considers certain criteria of the participants of the research is known as purposive sampling (c.f. Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). Basically, the researcher selected only the departments with the 'A' grade accreditation. There are 34 departments of bachelor degree programs at the case university. The departments are under seven faculties namely: Faculty of Medicine and Health, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Agriculture, Faculty of Economics and Business, Faculty of Social and Political Science, Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Language Education, and Faculty of Islam Religion. However, as the focus of quality assurance in Indonesian HEIs is at the institution and department level –the NAAHE only accredits universities and departments instead of faculties or schools, the researcher selected the only 'A' grade departments from each of faculties; they are: Department of Dentistry, Department of Agribusiness, Department of Civil Engineering, Department of Management, Department of Public Administration, Department of English Language Education, and Department of Education of Islamic Religion.

Besides the heads of departments, the researcher also selected the head of Centre for Teaching and Learning and the head of Bureau for Quality Assurance as the participants of this research. Both units were selected because they are responsible for the institutional quality assurance and especially the Centre for Teaching and Learning was the one responsible for the academic quality assurance, including teaching and learning. Below, Figure 3.1 illustrates the organisational structure of Case University, limited to the authorities involved in teaching and learning quality assurance. From the management level point of view, the rectorate is the top level management, whereas bureaus, centres, and departments are the middle level management. At the lower level of management, positioned under the departments are the unit of quality assurance of and concentration. The former is responsible for the quality assurance of the department –holistic, not

limited to education or teaching and learning quality; while the latter is responsible for the community of knowledge of thematic knowledge at the department. This is similar to concentrations or tracks within a department/programme. The head of this unit is managing teachers and researchers of similar interests and focusing on material development, academic forums, and curriculum review.

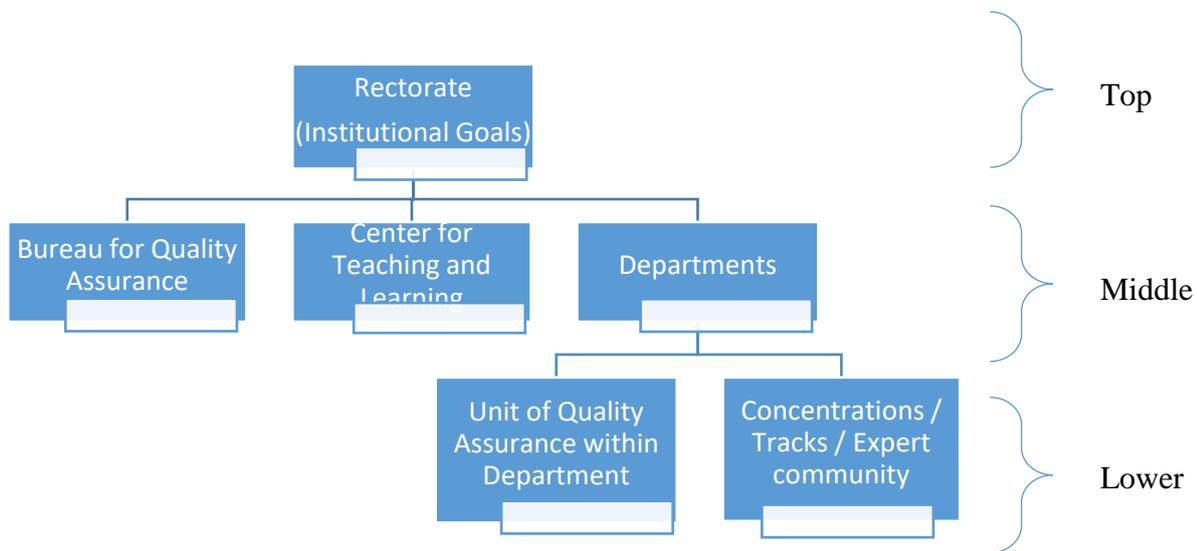


Figure 3.1. Organisational Structure –quality assurance focused.

In total, there were nine interviews proposed to the university: seven to the heads of departments and two to the head of the Centre/Bureau. However, interviews and informal conversation with participants and other authorities (vice rectors, deans, heads of Bureau for Public Relation, and the staff at Bureau for Quality Assurance) regarding quality assurance of teaching and learning revealed that Bureau for Quality Assurance is responsible for the holistic quality assurance and the specific quality assurance on teaching and learning is the responsibility of the Centre for Teaching and Learning. Therefore, there were eight interviews conducted in this research.

In addition to interviews, the other data collected in this research was documents in relation to quality assurance. The researcher had collected the necessary documents regarding quality assurance at both department and institutional level. The documents include the following:

Table 3.1. Documents containing information of teaching and learning quality assurance in Case University.

No	Types	Scope	Year
1	Resume of Accreditation of Case University	Institution	2017
2	Book of Quality Standard of Case University	Institution	2017
3	Guideline for Curriculum Development for Departments in Case University	Institution	2017
4	Accreditation Book of Department A	Department	2016
5	Accreditation Book of Department B	Department	2018
6	Curriculum of Department A	Department	2016
7	Curriculum of Department F	Department	2017
8	Quality guide of Department D	Department	2014
9	Course content for academic year 2017	Department	2017
10	Index of Strategic Performance of Department F	Department	2018
11	Profile of Faculty F	Department	2018

The documents related to the quality and quality assurance of teaching and learning at the institution level were collected from the Centre for Teaching and Learning and the Bureau for Quality Assurance. The Centre indeed is the supporting unit mandated to enhance the curriculum of the institution, including the teaching and learning process and evaluation at all Departments in Case University. On the other hand, the Bureau for Quality Assurance is responsible for the systemic quality assurance at the institutional level. Its work is not limited to education quality but also concerning infrastructure, management, human resources, and institutional goal and strategies. However, the bureau receives the report from the Centre for Teaching and Learning regarding education quality and Centre for Research and Social Service regarding research and social mission of the university.

3.3. Data Collection and Analysis

3.3.1. Data collection

It took approximately three weeks (16 May – 8 June 2018) to collect the documents and conduct the interviews. The amount of time is counted from when the researcher got official research permit from Case University. However, prior to research permit granting, the researcher had already contacted each participant through non-formal means of communication, and asked for the specific

documents and scheduled the interview. Then, during the site visit, the researcher presented the research permit and informed consent. Prior to data collection, the informed consent was given to and signed by each participant. The informed consent contains information regarding the research topic, the importance of the data, and research ethics. The research permit from the case university is attached on Appendix 2.

The interviews were conducted to all of the proposed participants except the head of the Bureau for Quality Assurance. However, the researcher managed to have an informal discussion on the research topic with one of the staff at the bureau. Losing one prospective participant in the research did not significantly impact the quantity and quality of data collected. First, the interviews to other participants and the official documents confirmed that the one who plays a more significant role – has more authority– in the teaching and learning quality assurance is the Centre for Teaching and Learning; the Bureau for Quality Assurance is dealing with of systemic quality assurance, not specifically on teaching and learning and only acknowledging report from the Centre. Second, even though the head was not able to be involved in the interview, the researcher managed to meet one of the staffs and conducted an informal discussion on the research topic. The unrecorded discussion confirmed that the role of the Bureau was more general, of wider scope; and specific matters on teaching and learning quality are handled by the Centre for Teaching and Learning. Third, the results of the interviews with the other participants confirmed the saturation of the data, i.e. the role of the middle level managers in teaching and learning quality assurance had been identified through six to seven interviews, and there were no different assumptions stated by the eighth participant. The interview guideline is attached on Appendix 1.

The data were taken mainly on the site of Case University. Some obstacles faced by the researcher were scheduling for the meeting and documents preparations. In addition, to the researcher, collecting and finding necessary information from hard-file documents was found more difficult than the electronic ones. Since the documents are official and are only for internal use, the researcher had to go to the offices of the departments, the Bureau, and the Centre to read and analyse the documents. By this means the researcher analysed the documents by checking and confirming to the authorities over there regarding the meaning of certain sentences, figures, numbers, etc. The documents were mainly in a form of hardcopy; there was almost zero available electronic form or soft copy of the documents. Only one document was in the form of an electronic file and the researcher had to go face to face with the related official regarding the meaning, clarity, and ambiguity of the documents. This particular document was sent to the researcher before going to the research site. On the other hand, all interviews were conducted on the site of the case

university. On-site interview provides better data clarity and can identify a certain expression of the participants (Stephens, 2007).

3.3.2. Data analysis

The results of this research are expected to understand the roles of the middle level managers in the higher education provision and in the quality assurance of teaching and learning. The analyses of data in this research were done using abductive reasoning –a mix between deductive and inductive reasoning. “Inductive reasoning uses the data to generate ideas whereas deductive reasoning begins with the idea and uses the data to confirm or negate the idea” (Thorne, 2000, p. 68). Deductively, the researcher used the framework described in the Literature Review chapter to identify the roles and the support given by the heads of departments. However, as the research is exploring more specific roles of the middle level managers in the quality assurance in teaching and learning which are not specified in the framework, the researcher also analysed the data inductively. The data obtained from the interviews and documents were analysed by giving a code and placing the data based on the suitability of the theme. Furthermore, the data are grouped based on the similarity of the theme and analysed manually to identify the final results of the study. With this, the researcher would find either conforming/neglecting findings to existing literature; the researcher might also find new finding –the roles which are not covered in the literature.

In practice, the process of data analysis, the interview, was as follows. Initially, the recordings of the interviews of all the participants were transcribed; this step is called Verbatim. The second step was a compact of fact. It was the step to break down information from the participants and the interpretation of the interviews. Interpretation is the conclusion from the compact of fact. Saldaña (2013) stated that the aim of the compact of fact is to gather psychology fact from the data. The third step is probing. The researcher made some notes to clarify the interview. Probing is needed when the researcher feels if the participant has not answered the research questions. The fourth step is the accumulation of the same fact. In this step, the researcher collects the same information from the participants. The fifth step is to categorize. Researcher categorized the accumulation of the same facts and the interpretation. The sixth step is to report the data, where the researcher put the finding in the following chapter.

The second data, document, are analysed as follow. The researcher started to identify the documents needed and the information needed in the document. This was done using the analytical framework –how quality assurance is implemented and the support given to the quality dimensions. The main points of the documents were extracted and categorised according to the theme in the research

analytical framework. The data were then matched with the interviews or vice versa. The function of document analysis is to strengthen the finding –that how quality assurance is implemented and what the heads of departments give to quality dimensions are proven formally.

3.3.3. Research validity and reliability

In a case study research, according to Yin (2009), the validity of the research can be assured when the criteria namely construct, internal, and external validity are fulfilled. The construct validity in this research is seen from the use of multiple sources of evidence e.g. document analysis and interview. The evidence –documents and interviews– were collected and shows that the roles or activities or support of the heads of departments in the quality assurance were in accordance –what is explained by the head of Centre for Teaching and Learning as the supporting unit confirms what is said by the heads of departments, as well as revealed in the documents.

The internal validity according to Yin (2009) is mainly to be used in a causal situation so it is not suitable in a descriptive or exploratory study such as this research. However, some points in the internal validity were fulfilled in the data analysis of this research. Internal validity in this case study was assured in coding the interviews and document analysis. As mentioned in the previous section, the results of the interviews were returned to the participants for member-checking.

Member-checking is to confirm whether there are some points which need to be omitted, clarified, or added. In document analysis, the researcher went directly to the office and ask the authorities the specific meaning of sentences, graphs, or data. This means, every information taken has been confirmed and is acknowledged by the relevant authorities. In addition, in the discussion section, the researcher presents the proposing arguments which strengthen the findings to the existing literature.

In external validity of case study, Yin (2009) mentions that it needs to use the “replication logic” instead of “survey logic” –it is how this research finding can be generalized even though the case only focused in one institution (p. 43-44). Yin (2009) asserts, in replication logic, “a framework must state the condition under which a particular phenomenon can be found” (p. 54). In this research, the framework that are used –Elton’s (1995) model of teaching and learning quality assurance and Gibb’s (2010) dimensions of quality as well as the literature on the roles of middle level managers– are applicable at any type and size of higher education institutions. The findings, therefore, are supposed to conform to the existing framework or identify new empirical shreds of evidence –the roles or supports in the quality assurance of teaching and learning.

Meanwhile, the reliability of this case study, according to Yin (2009) can be seen from the use of study protocol and study documentation when doing data collection. This is assured by that the case study sticks to the framework –model of quality assurance, dimensions of quality, and so on. In addition, Biggam (2011) suggests that the reliability of this research could be seen from the proof of all documents including the transcripts of interviews, research permits, and every protocol in the data collection.

4. Findings and Discussion

This chapter presents the findings of the research which mainly answer the research questions as well as the discussion. This chapter is organised into two major sections. The first section discusses the roles of the heads of departments in the quality assurance of teaching and learning in Case University. The roles are presented under each stage of quality assurance in the Elton's (1995) model (standard setting, management review, course review, and resource review). The second section discusses the support that the heads of departments give to the presage and process dimensions of quality teaching and learning. In addition, challenges perceived by the heads of departments in the implementation of teaching and learning quality assurance is presented. In addition to findings, the discussion of each finding is presented under the finding theme, instead of having a separate discussion chapter. In the discussion. The researcher justifies how the findings are related to the previous research that have been presented in chapter two.

4.1. Roles of the heads of Departments in Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning in Case University

To explain how the teaching and quality assurance is implemented and the activities of the heads of departments in Case University, the researcher adapted Elton's (1995) model of quality assurance as presented in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1. Quality assurance of teaching and learning and the activities of heads of departments

Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning			Activities of MLM
<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #4F81BD; color: white; padding: 5px; margin: 0 auto; width: 80%;">Standard and Objective Setting</div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">↓</div>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translating the mission of University into standards and objectives • Empowering subordinates and building partnership
<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #4F81BD; color: white; padding: 5px; margin: 0 auto; width: 80%;">Teaching and Learning Process</div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">↓</div>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring, controlling, reviewing the quality of teaching and learning • Leading academic convention • <i>Support to presage and process dimensions of quality</i>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #4F81BD; color: white; padding: 5px; margin: 0 auto; width: 60%;">Management Review</div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">↓</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #4F81BD; color: white; padding: 5px; margin: 0 auto; width: 60%;">Course Review</div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">↓</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #4F81BD; color: white; padding: 5px; margin: 0 auto; width: 60%;">Resources Review</div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">↓</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing each theme; Planning, doing, checking activities/agendas to maintain/improve the quality;

Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning			Activities of MLM
Training and Development	Curriculum Development	Resources Allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following up the result of review; implementing the agendas/activities; evaluating the activities.

Table 4.1 also shows the activities of the heads of departments in each stage of quality assurance. Based on the interviews and document analyses, the researcher categorised the roles of the heads of department in the quality assurance of teaching and learning into seven categories namely (i) translating university’s vision into concrete benchmark, (ii) empowering subordinates and building partnership with other parties, (iii) monitoring and controlling quality teaching and learning, (iv) planning, managing, evaluating programs for quality assurance, (v) becoming hub between top and lower level management, (vi) leading academic convention, and (vii) fund tactician. In this chapter, the role of heads of departments in the quality assurance of teaching and learning are classified under each stage of quality assurance in the Elton’s (1995) model.

Stage 1. Standard and Objective Setting

The roles of the heads of departments as the middle level managers in Case University under this stage are categorised as translating university’s definition/mission into a more concrete benchmark and empowering subordinate. In setting the standard and objective in the quality assurance process of teaching and learning, the roles of middle level managers were as follow:

Role 1. Translating university’s definition into concrete benchmark

This particular role is noticeable in the stage of standard and objective setting –it is when middle level managers must set quality courses according to the university’s definition of quality teaching and learning. Case University defines quality teaching and learning as transformation; teaching and learning process is considered of quality when students gain additional value or skills and competences beside the cognitive skills. This was actually stated by the head of Centre for Teaching and Learning as indicated in the following excerpt.

“...The learning process can be said of good quality when it empowers the student... Simply put, we want to assist the students so that they can face the reality in the world; a world full of competition, labour market, and professionalism-challenging. So we are challenged to do the link and match between the curriculum and the labour market...”

Participant 1, Interview 2018

The definition of quality as transformation becomes the core of the teaching and learning quality assurance at all departments in the university and was confirmed by the heads of departments as shown in the following excerpt.

“...it is that makes them (students) become an interpersonal-self. Interpersonal skill. Adding values that they need to obtain. To me, if the students got improvement, it is a good teaching...”

Participant 8, Interview 2018

Whereas the definition of quality teaching is perceived, a university must have a certain approach to assess whether quality has been reached or, more fundamentally, whether the education in the university has followed the perceived definition of quality. According to the Guideline for Curriculum Development for the Departments of the Case University, every course in every department gives grade to the student soft skills which weight 20% of the student’s total grade. The soft-skills is the additional skills or values which need to be possessed by the graduates of Case University. According to Participant 8, soft skills are the affective skills that are related to interpersonal skills, which is the ability of students to lead, communicate, and behave in their personal, academic, or professional life. Such scoring to these aspects indicates that the university does pay serious attention to its quality definition –that the students are equipped with added value, skills, and competence. The soft-skills are indeed important in nowadays professional market –it has a greater impact than the cognitive or hard skills (Pereira & Costa, 2017).

Even though the policy of scoring lies in the top level management, the heads of departments are subject to find ways to embed this soft skills so that students can reach good soft skills to possess the maximum 20% of the course grade. Below are excerpts indicating the initiatives of heads of departments in realising the achievement of interpersonally skilled students.

“...it (quality teaching and learning) must be designed according to the university guideline. However, specifically for this department, we include some elements which do not exist in the CTL’s document, because they are too general. We, in this department, have the quality unit and focus on the education value which does not exist in CTL’s. So we have uniqueness.”

Participant 2, Interview 2018

“We have integrated and separated teaching of soft-skills. As you remember, we have a course named bridging soft-skill. We initiate that.”

Participant 7 asserted that the soft skills are taught integrated into other courses or in separate courses. The bridging soft-skills is a two day course found in the Index of Strategic Performance document and a department's Course Content for Academic Year 2012 and 2017 in which students and tutors camp, live together, and enhance teamwork, motivation, and personalities.

So, middle level managers in a university are expected to translate the vision of university teaching and learning into quality standards and objective and transmit them to the lower level management (c.f. Lavarda, Canet-Giner, & Peris-Bonet, 2010). In the specific regard of teaching and learning quality, the middle level managers are subject to decide the curriculum content, graduate competencies, and quality standard of the teaching and learning. Such function applies at the Case University, too, where heads of departments must possess academic quality (Bryman, 2007; Detsky, 2011) to identify and analyse such trends and formulate the curriculum, as expected in the excerpt below.

“The heads of departments must be capable of reading the changes of the curriculum. The curriculum will always be changing according to the needs, so they must perform needs analysis...”

Based on the details above, some conclusion can be extracted. First of all, quality teaching and learning in Case University is perceived as one that can give students additional or interpersonal skills to survive in the future professional world. At this stage of quality assurance –standard and objective setting, heads of departments must translate the definition of quality into more concrete benchmarks. In other words, to know what skills or added-values that the students need to possess, heads of departments must incorporate several materials such as student, teacher, and graduate employer feedbacks and expert panels. To end with, to succeed in all these activities, heads of departments must possess academic competences which able them to identify and analyse trends to formulate curriculum.

Role 2. Empowering subordinates and building partnership with other parties

Based on the interview with the Head of Centre for Teaching and Learning and the website of the Faculty/Department (see Appendix 4), in setting the standards and objectives, the heads of departments must empower their subordinates, collaborate with other parties, and be aware of the

global and local trends especially when formulating the curriculum and the quality standard and objectives. It is indicated in the excerpt below.

“The heads of departments must be capable of reading the changes of the curriculum. The curriculum will always be changing according to the needs, so they must perform needs analysis, communicates with external parties so that the curriculum improved. So, what are their role? They must be creative. They must read the changes and invite their subordinates to formulate the curriculum changes ... and that of the role is curriculum leader.”

Participant 1, Interview 2018

Based on this particular finding, the roles of the heads of departments is to empower. The finding resonates what Choi, Goh, Adam, and Tan (2016) have stated that to empower human resource is indeed crucial to not only achieve the institutional goal but also the development of the subordinates. The empowerment of subordinates is also a form of approach to the definition of quality as transformation, where a higher education institution is achieving quality when it empowers its human resource (c.f. Harvey & Green, 1993). Nevertheless, this research is limited to discussion on the quality of teaching and learning, not necessarily systemic quality of the institution.

Besides to empower, the role of the heads of departments is also to collaborate with other parties. More specifically, in the process of standard setting, the heads of departments must be able to program agenda, invite experts, and generate a meeting conclusion. Meanwhile, for improvement of teaching and learning quality, all participants stated that the departments of Case University collaborate with the Centre for Teaching and Learning, Centre for Research and Social Service, and the library for improvement of teaching techniques and material references. The excerpts below are two of the eight participants' answer indicating the accordance of the statement.

“So we have supporting units for that specific purpose (quality improvement). They are the library, research centre, and also this Centre.”

Participant 1, Interview 2018

“... yes we got assistance from the Centre (of Teaching and Learning).”

Participant 2, Interview 2018

Therefore, as the middle level managers, the heads of departments must master partnership design such as selecting the partner, collaboration theme, and mutual purpose while at the same time upkeep the requirements from the top-level guideline (Sanzo, Myran, & Clayton, 2011). To succeed

both empowerment and collaboration, the heads of departments must have interpersonal skills especially communication skill (Hénard & Leprince-Ringuet, 2008; Mohr & Spekman, 1994). Such communication skill is necessary as Mohr and Spekman (1994) asserts that “communication captures the utility of the information exchanged and is deemed to be a key indicant of the partnership’s vitality” (p. 138). Therefore, it is important to select managers, especially at the middle level, who possess such skill.

However, according to two participants, the selection of middle level managers in Case University is collegial. The collegial system may or may not give a positive impact to the success of empowerment and collaboration. On one hand, at a collegial system, the appointed managers might not be the best in their field, as Sahlin and Eriksson-Zetterquist (2016) said that collegial system tends to have weak leaders in pursuing changes. This can lead to ineffective collaboration or empowerment. On the other hand, the collegial system can give such smoother “academic interchange and collaboration” and allow “a group with a common goal to deal with contention and competition in a constructive rather than a destructive fashion” (Laws, 1992, p. 301). Sahlin & Eriksson-Zetterquist (2016) also further state that collegial university leaders indeed may have a stronger sense of responsibility, as the “leaders work with a mandate from their peers” (p. 8).

Stage 2. Teaching and Learning Process

The teaching and learning process is the most fundamental aspect of higher education and is the core activity in the teaching and learning quality assurance. At this stage of quality assurance, the main actors are the students and teachers. The core purpose of the quality assurance in this state is to make sure that the objectives of teaching and the standard of accomplishment is confirmed, or surpassed. In the Case University context, as discussed earlier, teaching and learning process is successful if by the end of the course students obtain additional values which prepare them for the labour market. Therefore, at this stage, the heads of departments are responsible for the success of teaching and learning. However, interviews found two major roles of the heads of heads of departments as the middle level managers in Case University under this stage. The first is monitoring and controlling quality teaching and learning and, second, leading academic convention.

Role 3. Monitoring and controlling quality teaching and learning

One interview found that at the stage of teaching and learning process, one of the roles of the heads of departments in the quality assurance of teaching and learning is to monitor and control the quality of teaching and learning. Participant 6 said,

“...it is our (head of the department) responsibility, but it is impossible if we come into the class, one by one. But in the teaching and learning process, we can go through the coordinator of concentration/tracks. We can also monitor through the class coordinator. Their function is to observe and monitor whether the teaching material, lesson plan, etc. have been in accordance with the curriculum.”

Participant 6, Interview 2018

Such role of the heads of departments has been mentioned in the Faculty Profile actually. However, the finding confirms what Meek, Goedegebuure, and De Boer (2010) have found that one of the roles of heads of departments, in general, is to monitor teaching and research activities in the departments. The excerpts can conclude that at the stage of teaching and learning process, the role of middle level managers, specifically the heads of departments is to monitor and control. Moreover, in addition to the roles as programme managers, the role of middle level management at this stage can be seen from the support given to the process of teaching and learning. The detailed discussion on this matter is presented on in [section 4.2](#) and [section 4.3](#).

Role 4. Leading academic convention

As the main functions of a higher education institution are teaching and research, a department consists of teachers and researchers. Therefore, the academic environment in the department must be led by a head of department who is capable of leading the academics. Three participants state that in the quality assurance process, heads of departments as the middle level managers are subject to decide the curriculum content, graduate competencies, and quality standard of the teaching and learning.

“The heads of departments must be capable of reading the changes of the curriculum. The curriculum will always be changing according to the needs, so they must perform needs analysis, communicates with external parties so that the curriculum improved. So, what are their role? They must be creative. They must read the changes...”

Participant 1, Interview 2018

The findings confirm what De Boer et al., (2010) state that a head of department is also called an academic leader. The academic leaders steer the academic direction of a department, including what to include in the curriculum, learning outcomes, and graduate competencies (De Boer et al., 2010). Therefore, heads of departments must possess academic quality (Bryman, 2007; Detsky, 2011) to identify and analyse such trends and formulate the curriculum.

Regarding the academic competences of the head of the department, while the Indonesian authorities set the minimum qualification of a university teacher is to have Master degree, all participants acknowledged that Case University had recently regulated its teachers, as well as the heads of department/bureau/units, to have Doctorate degree. By such qualification, the university is putting effort to have only intellectuals at any managerial or professional/teaching position including heads of department. Positioning intellectuals who function to steer the academic direction of the department including curriculum development indeed is vital, for instance, as “advocate for the discipline or profession; explaining, arguing, promoting, debating, lobbying, campaigning” the scientific approach to curriculum or management (Macfarlane, 2011, p. 70) Nevertheless, teaching and learning process, in fact, comprises of management review, course review, and resource review. These basically are the mechanism or activities implemented during and/or after teaching and learning process. Therefore, the next section is about the three subdivisions in which the researcher describe the mechanism and activities implemented during or after the teaching and learning process. As the core of quality assurance is the teaching and learning process itself, the institution’s self-appraisals are purposed to control, maintain, and improve the quality of teaching and learning (Elton, 1995).

Stage 3. Management review, Course Review, and Resource Review

Based on the analyses of interviews, the roles of the heads of departments as the middle level managers in Case University under this stage fall under major roles that are categorised as planning, managing, and evaluating course review; creating a bridge of aspiration between lower and top level management; and fund tactician. The roles were categorised by the researcher after each participants’ answers were patterned, grouped, and categorised.

The management review, according to Elton (1995), is purposed to assess and improve the administration or management and is followed by training and development for staffs. At Case University, the procedures of training and development are explicitly written on a document such as the *Indeks Kinerja Strategis* (Index of Strategic Performance, *IKS*). This document, which every department is obligated to develop, contains all programmes proposed to the Faculty for the annual budget of the department. In fact, the Faculties of the Case University are semi-autonomous where grants from the University are given in blocks to each Faculty.

Therefore, the programmes for training and development is actually planned at the beginning of the academic year by conducting some analysis of feedbacks, reviews, and needs assessment. In addition, the department must develop the *IKS* from which the programmes of teacher training and

development are proposed. So, management review in the departments at the Case University is basically the audit of the Performance Index. At this point, as the subject to be reviewed is the department. Moreover, the ones who play significant role are also the heads of the departments because the follow up to the audit determine the funding and performance as indicated on the excerpt above.

Meanwhile, course review in Case University is conducted in the form of teaching review, teaching methods improvement, and course evaluation. Teaching review is conducted through mandatory student evaluation toward teaching implementation as well as public hearing. Meanwhile, course evaluation in Case University targets the learning content, student performance and achievement, and construction of learning outcomes. The evaluation of the courses also incorporates feedback from the graduate employers which identify the missing graduate competencies. The specific competencies or soft-skills will be embedded in the course either integrated into the existing subject or developed as a separate course, as indicated in the following excerpts

“...so we ask the users of our graduates. For example; where are you teaching at? So we will call your boss. And ask, how does this person perform in teaching? Is there any suggestions for us to make a better graduate?”

Participant 8, Interview 2018

The findings of the evaluation are then followed by actions from the department. Regarding teaching review, the heads of departments usually conduct an evaluation of the teachers in a form of small discussion with the teaching staffs. The discussion is purposed to monitor and control the quality of teaching according to the student’s evaluation and curriculum. Practically, the head of a department invites the teachers and delivers the student feedback regarding the teaching of that teacher.

Following up the course evaluation activities is curriculum development. Case University employs the findings of the course evaluation as well as analyses of needs and local and global trends to improve the curriculum. At this specific activity, the head of department is regarded as the curriculum leader as mentioned in the following excerpt.

“The heads of departments must be capable of reading the changes of the curriculum. The curriculum will always be changing according to the needs, so they must perform needs analysis, communicates with external parties so that the curriculum improved. So, what are their role? They must be creative. They must read the changes and invite their subordinates to formulate the curriculum changes ... and that of the role is curriculum leader.”

The next of quality assurance of teaching and learning is the resource review. Resource in this context is the funding allocated by the department for higher education activities including education, research, and social mission. Yet, specifically in the teaching and learning quality assurance, resource review according to Elton's model is the appropriateness of funding including the regular salary, honorarium, teacher rewards for excellence, and student funding. The correct resource allocation at a university in these aspects especially the regular salary and reward for excellence is expected to boost performance and quality teaching and learning (Elton, 1995)

Based on all interviews, in Case University, however, the first two aspects that are the regular salary and honorarium are standardized at the university level. Therefore, the departments at the Case University are only able to allocate the resource into the teacher's reward for excellence and student funding. These two, as well as the other allocations for education improvement, staff improvement, research, and social mission, are in fact been programmed by the department in a form of Index of Strategic Performance (*IKS*). The *IKS*, as discussed earlier, is a form of funding where departments are funded based on its performance by planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating some activities including teaching and learning quality assurance.

Role 5. Planning, managing, evaluating programs for quality assurance

Based on the synthesis of the interviews of all the participants, the heads of departments in the stage of management review, course review, and resource review plays the role as program managers, monitor, and evaluator. The findings in Case University confirms what De Boer et al. (2010) and Nguyen (2013) classified –programme management. In Case University, at these stages, the heads of departments as the middle level managers are given room for initiatives to hold activities of quality assurance including budget allocation, as indicated in the following excerpt.

“To trigger their (teachers) desire, we provide rewards. So, we department want to make sure that all teachers are able to create such learning. So, we create some training, and we even make it (the learning development) as competition for them... yes, this kind of reward is our initiative.”

Participant 6, Interview 2018

“... because we must be creative to create concrete programs for development, we proposed some initiatives in the form of activities which actually is written in the *IKS*.”

Participant 4, Interview 2018

“We even have our own student assessment system that does not exist in other departments. And we hope that our method can be model for other departments or same departments in other universities. So, yes, other activities outside the *IKS* can be proposed to the university level.”

Participant 3, Interview 2018

The existence of room for initiatives for the heads of departments of Case University indicates that the process of quality assurance in the university is not necessarily top-down, but some bottom-up activities which is actually the part of education strand of quality assurance (c.f. Steinhardt, Schneijderberg, Götze, Baumann, & Krücken, 2017) are also found in the Case University quality assurance system. Nevertheless, this research is limited only to the management strand of quality assurance.

Here, the question is how to maintain such program, or what should the middle level managers do to succeed in planning, monitoring, and evaluating a program as well as in dealing with human resource –empowering and mediating or hub. Some participants believe that the success of such activities is due to the leadership trait of the middle level managers as indicated in the excerpts below.

“So as the head of this department, I have to energetically remind them (subordinates). I also need to be firm. The ambience when I talk with Ms (teacher) in a casual conversation will be different with when I call her dealing with some agendas she’s in charge at.”

Participant 8, Interview 2018

“...sometimes it is difficult to manage people who are senior in age, especially to invite them for change or reform. But, I use the power I have. I harness my position. The authority must be used for a positive intention...”

Participant 5, Interview 2018

Based on excerpts above, in the teaching and learning quality assurance, the leadership trait of middle level managers is important (Sallis, 2014). This was affirmed by Lieberman (1990) who mentions that leadership is crucial to succeeding institutional goals as well as the development of personnel. Leaders indeed must position themselves –i.e. when to be bold and when to be soft– with their subordinates (Furtner et al., 2017). Shortly, to have an effective role, middle level managers must possess good leadership skills.

Role 6. Creating the bridge between top and lower level management

The other role of middle level managers of a university especially in teaching and learning quality assurance is as the hub between the top and lower management. Hub in this particular context is defined as how the message of university goals are concreted by the lower level management and how both levels can have a mutual understanding on the specific context. At the Case University, for instance, two participants state the heads of departments must provide a room of aspirations from the lower level to the upper level.

“... yes, you know, top management or even my level has different expectations with the lower ones, especially the workload. The upper management only wants to know the result, and the capacity of lower level management to make it is our responsible... I mean we are the one who should encourage their understanding as well as the performance.”

Participant 7, Interview 2017

“Sometimes I feel sorry for them (subordinates) because I know exactly their workload. And, sometimes my subordinates have a lot of initiatives for agendas that are not planned in the IKS. So, I have to deal with, propose, and report these initiatives to the upper management.”

Participant 8, Interview 2018

The two interviews show that workload is the most concerned expectation. Therefore, the roles of the heads of departments as the middle level managers in university is to facilitate and provide a clear understanding between the top and lower level management. So far, previous research indicate contrast expectation of lower management toward the top management on employer attractiveness (Bakanauskienė, Žalpytė, & Vaikasienė, 2014), workload or values of job flexibility (Huang & Gamble, 2015), and salary or pay system (Stråberg, 2010).

This specific result of the interview –becoming the hub, however, was not specifically anticipated in the literature on higher education presented in the analytical framework. Nguyen (2013) indeed has identified that maintaining morale and informing the subordinates about university –top management– update is one of the heads of department. Yet, there is less specified manner on how this bridging –meeting lower and top lever expectation at the same time– is done. However, from the general management perspective, this is quite well addressed in the human resource management. Rezvani’s (2017) literature review suggests that one of the key functions of middle

level managers in an organisation is to handle the conflict between the upper and lower management.

Role 7. Fund tactician

The analyses of the documents, especially the *IKS* of departments and the Accreditation Resume, found that a department as the subject of quality assurance does allocate funding to both teacher reward for excellence and student activities while also allocating for education and research budget. Also, all participants confirm the existence of such rewards and student funding at the university level, such as shown in the excerpts below.

“...there is also grant from the university and we have to compete with other departments from another faculty... the activities are such as research, teacher and student development, and other projects.”

Participant 6, Interview 2018

In Case University, there were diverse answers regarding the appropriateness of the resource allocated by the university. Three of the participants indicate satisfaction towards the resource allocated by the university, as indicated at the following excerpts.

“Yes, there is funding from the university (top management) for student activities. And it is a quite big for us. So we use them for the activities in or off the campus.”

Participant 2, Interview 2018

“Regarding funding, Thank God now this university gets stronger. We do not have any problem, the high or low salary is relative. But our salary may not be the highest compared to other.”

Participant 6, Interview 2018

“The obstacle is I think the funding. My assumption is that the funding for the Centre is cut, and is allocated to each department. Therefore, when we want to conduct activities, we need to collaborate with the department.”

Participant 1, Interview 2018

From the details above, some conclusion can be extracted. First of all, the role of heads of departments is finance management. This is in accordance with Meek, Goedegebuure, and De Boer (2010) that heads of departments are subject to allocate funding. That the heads of departments in Case University are to propose the budget to the upper management is also in accordance with

Nguyen (2013) who suggest that proposing a budget of the department and making an annual report is one of the key activities of the middle level manager. Second, in finance or the budget allocation, departments in Case University possess limited authority. Authority in this context is how such position determine the likeliness of realisation of the proposal (McKenzie, 2003). McKenzie (2003) further argue that the authority of heads of department, specifically, in the context of resource review is getting more influence from the top management, i.e. the degree of autonomy is limited.

4.2. Support in the Presage Dimension of Quality Teaching and Learning

The presage dimension of quality teaching and learning includes funding, student-staff ratio, quality of teaching staffs, and quality of student in the intake. In general, the heads of departments as the middle level managers have limited authority in funding and maintaining student-staff ratio yet strong authority in student intake and teaching staff recruitment. In this context, authority means to decision making power to adjust these dimensions of quality; which leads to the likeliness of the realisation of their initiatives for quality improvement.

4.2.1. Funding

Funding in this context is the amount of fund allocated to teaching and learning activities. This is not as the same as what has been discussed –that heads of departments possess room for creativity to allocate or propose funding to teacher reward for excellence and student activities. Basically, funding in this context is the amount of fund given to general teaching and learning activity such as teacher salary, teaching media, learning infrastructure, student assessment, etc. In the Case University, however, such “basic funding” (Ziegele, 2013) has been formulated by the respective Faculties, and that the heads of departments are only allowed to propose what Ziegele (2013) called as excellence funding, as shown in one excerpt below.

“...when you saw the Accreditation Form, you noticed that the funding for education has been set and teacher’s salary or honorarium is regulated by the university’s Bureau for Human Resource. Because they set everything. And in this (document: pointing at *IKS* form) is where we can propose funding for other purposes.”

Participant 8, Interview 2018

Therefore, not necessarily only at the Case University, it is indeed a bit hard to identify how big the support is given by the heads of departments in funding matter as it depends on the size, autonomy, and reputation of the university (Munari, Sobrero, & Toschi, 2015). In other words, bigger and more reputable higher education institutions tend to have sufficient basic funding for teaching and

learning activities which leads to quality teaching and learning. In addition, the sufficiency of funds tend to increase the creativity of the leaders and that the effort, ideas, and initiatives are easily realised (Banaji, Cranmer, & Perrotta, 2013).

Nevertheless, what a head of department must do is to propose beyond basic funding allocation to the university for instance to the teacher reward for excellence and to the student activities like what happen in the Case University. This can be done by creating programs for teaching and learning improvement. Even though such funding is not necessarily basic funding of teaching and learning, it can improve the quality of the teaching and learning as well (Eales-Reynolds & Rugg, 2009).

4.2.2. Student-staffs ratios

Even though all levels of management including the professionals at a university understand the necessity of having the ideal student-staff ratio, the decision on student-staff ratios lies at top level management. The same situation was found at Case University. The heads of departments as the middle level managers did not have the power to limit a certain number of enrolled students since the university was in a prior advanced stage. Two heads of departments said that in order to gain more funding to the growing university, the ideal student staffs ratio is unheeded for some years. Such idealisation of student staff ratio is then implemented at Case University where the other sources of funding are secured –not only from tuition fees, as shown in the excerpt below.

“I think you noticed when you were a student in this university that we accepted 33% bigger number of new students. Our capacity is 4500 students but I guess we accepted 6000 at that time. But you notice from this chart (pointing to a Department Profile) that there is a decline of students enrolled in 2015. This is where new policy regulated, our finance is so stable like never before.”

Participant 7, Interview 2018

Similar to funding sufficiency as presage dimension of quality, the achievement of the ideal student-staff ratio at the university are varied based on institution size (McDonald, 2013). Such instances indeed occur at Case University. Interviews revealed that throughout its history, Case University had gone several instabilities in the student staff ratio due to funding and the quantity of human resource as indicated in the following excerpt.

“...when we were just a small institution, it (student-staff ratio) was below ideal. Our focus was to establish the institution, first. But now, thank God, we can press the student number.”

Participant 6, Interview 2018

Nevertheless, the heads of departments as the middle level manager can contribute to the achievement of ideal student-staff ratios. The synthesis of the interviews found that the heads of departments basically have two methods: supporting the students to graduate on time and adding more staffs to the department. The first is likely to happen while the latter is not, unfortunately, due to the granting authority at the top level management. Below are the excerpts indicating some programs initiated by the heads of departments to accelerate student graduation as well as the proposal for recruiting the new staff.

“We have the programme for students at the 6th semester to present their thesis proposal by the end of the semester. So, we do not want to waste time. We want them to finish as soon as possible. And gratefully, our Department’s graduation rate is one semester more advance, means students only need 3.5 years from the normal 4 years of study”

Participant 2, Interview 2018

“Sometimes the students are just too reluctant. They are not enthusiastic about finding regulations, information, and Department/University guidelines for graduation or remedial for those who have some low grades. Then, we have to be the one who comes to them and ask them their needed documents including what subjects they have to retake and how to proceed with the remedial. Same happens with thesis student.”

Participant 3, Interview 2018

“At the end of the third year is an internship programme for students. Before they go to various hosts, we give them awareness and guidelines of thesis writing in a specific seminar. We also encourage teachers to support student’s thesis writing. We need them to graduate on time, or sooner in their fourth year.”

Participant 4, interview 2018

“Lately we have initiated programs for thesis acceleration. It is where we invite teachers and all final year students in a three days of workshop. At least students must have a clear idea of what to write in their thesis... Until this moment, we have not known the result, but I am sure it is positive. We begin that program to the batch 2014 students, and now we see some of them have registered for thesis defence just by the end of the 7th semester.”

Participant 8, Interview 2018

Based on these findings, it seems that the idea of accelerating graduation is focused at final year students, especially in their thesis writing. Actually, in the Indonesian context, study duration is also

included the criteria of quality higher education institution according to the national accreditation system. That most Indonesian HEIs still achieve B or C grade quality label indicates likeliness in the unpunctuality of graduation. In fact, the Accreditation Resume reveals that in the last three years, about one-tenth of students of Case University need to have at least one extra semester to finish their study regardless of their motives. Furthermore, empirical research at many Indonesian universities (Amira, 2016; Hartato & Aisyah, 2015; Ihsan & Zaki, 2015; Widarto, 2017) shows that the period in which students are progressing slowly is at the thesis writing as the Final assignment/credit due to various factors. Therefore, the support given by the heads of departments at maintaining student-staff ratio by creating some programs for thesis writing acceleration is precise.

On the other hand, to maintain the student-staff ration by adding more staffs to the department is very rational yet challenging. At the Case University, human resource attainment is authorised at the top level management and such recruitment is evaluating at and will affect the university funding as well. Thus, heads of departments are subject to wait until the readiness of the university to hire another staff. This, however, leads to the next support to presage quality dimension, the quality staff.

4.2.3. Quality of teaching staffs

Even though staff recruitment is conducted at the university level, heads of departments play determining role in assuring that only quality staffs are hired. The Accreditation Book of the Case University and interviews with all heads of departments revealed that the process of staff recruitment including academic qualification and achievement assortment, psychological test, and the Foundation's test –to assess to which extent the prospective staffs acknowledge and value the values of the Foundation. Basically, some requirements of teacher candidates are doctorate qualification, number of publication, experience, motivation, and that of Foundation's value acknowledgement. These are common at other Indonesian institution, however, the Case University applies higher qualification for a teacher.

Case University standardises its teachers or prospective teachers to have Doctorate degree, even though the Indonesian government approves a Master graduate to be a teacher. This has been discussed in the earlier section, actually, that the idea of having high-qualified teachers is to have intellectual teachers with fresh and updated knowledge (Bryman, 2007; Detsky, 2011). Such reasons are identified in the excerpts below.

“National regulations allows Masters to become university teachers. But, this is quality, so we go beyond average. We only accept Doctors, preferably from abroad, who are fluent in English, to be able to produce scientific publication in English... They must have publications in international journals.”

Participant 5, Interview 2018

“80% of our teachers are graduates from renowned foreign universities. And we will only accept new teachers of better qualifications and various experiences of different contexts... For sure, they must possess the spirit of the Foundation. Frankly, not all of them are from the same background, but once they get in, they must be the part of the Foundation, and share our values... We have programs for the enrichment of these values for teachers.”

Participant 2, Interview 2018

“We do not just recruit a new teacher. They must become an intern in our department first. We will see their mastery and teaching skills, then induct understanding towards style of teaching in this department.”

Participant 3, Interview 2018

Further, after selection of the candidates based on qualifications and several stages of tests at the university level, the teacher candidates are assessed and evaluated by each department for micro teaching and interviews. This is to identify the candidate’s mastery toward the field of discipline and teaching skills. Finally, the heads of departments are the subject to make the decision regarding the newly recruited staffs.

Here, some departments apply different approaches to select the participants. The researcher found that not all departments at Case University hire the highest qualified teachers –doctorate degree, publications, teaching experience, etc. Instead, two heads of departments hire the alumni of Case University even though some other candidates have a higher number of publication and more teaching experiences. They believed that hiring people who already know the work and ambience of working at a particular place is better to achieve the institutional objectives (c.f. Gusdorf, 2009). This is because the newcomers do not need to spend the time to adapt to the institution. A head of department said that the department values the soft-skills of the teachers more than their academic competences, as shown in the excerpt.

“We have decision making power for those candidates. Not only from those of tests have we had a soft skills assessment. It is because indeed, our graduate user analysis shows that soft-

skills have a bigger score in job recruitment. In our department, too, because we will work together with those people (teacher candidates), we must value their soft skills. We have to make sure we will have a cooperative partner.”

Participant 6, Interview 2018

This is similar to research (Lowden, Hall, Elliot, & Lewin, 2011, p. vi) which assert that employers “require graduates also to demonstrate a range of broader skills and attributes that include team-working, communication, leadership, critical thinking, problem-solving, and managerial abilities.” (p. vi).

Based on the findings above, some conclusions can be extracted. First, heads of departments as the middle level managers have the power to select the teaching staffs even though the recruitment procedure must follow the university regulation. Second, to hire the quality teaching staffs to assure the quality of teaching and learning, heads of departments do not only see the candidates’ qualification and competencies but also soft skills.

Yet, to further provide a more realistic recommendation for other Indonesian HEIs in the regard of teacher recruitment, it must be admitted that to have all highly qualified degree teachers in every Indonesian HEIs is difficult. This is due to the diverse size and reputation of the universities in the country. Indeed, higher qualified candidates expect a higher salary and not all four thousand and more degree conferring higher education institutions in Indonesia are of the same financial condition (Kusworo, 2017; Raharjo, 2017). Thus, what heads of departments from all grades and sizes of HEIs can do is to select the most capable candidate according to the academic requirement but the most passionate referring to the capacity of the institutions.

4.2.4. Quality of student intake

The last presage dimension of quality teaching and learning is the quality of enrolled students. This can mean the strictness of student admission. Based on Accreditation Book of each department and interviews with different heads of departments from the diverse field, each department in the Case University has its own mechanism of enrolment –the natural sciences student recruitment are different with the social sciences. In addition, there are two ways of student enrolment at the Case University: test and non-test. The first is selecting prospective students through university admission test while the latter is selecting excellent high-school graduates based on their grades during the study in the school.

Again, the selection criteria depend on the quality, size, and reputation of the university. In short, the more reputable university tend to increase the standards or grades of the students enrolled. Such also happens at the Case University as indicated in the following excerpts.

“We have experienced when we were a very low institution. But recently the proportion of students applied and accepted is 17:1. That means, from 17 students, we accept only one. When we were far below quality, what we do to market our department and gain more students is through student achievement. For instance, when we send our students to national or national competitions, people started to acknowledge us. So, quality is our marketing techniques.”

Participant 6, Interview 2018

“When we achieved only C grade level, not so long ago, we just want to accept students. Whoever wants to study in this department, we accept them. I think this is common practice everywhere. However, now that we are an A grade department, we really select students. We raise the minimum student score to get accepted to our department.”

Participant 8, Interview 2018

Thus, the decision toward the students enrolled is quite flexible and varies among institutions depends on the stage of development of the department. The focus of growing or newly built department in Indonesia indeed is primarily to gain more students, regardless of their quality, to stabilise the general process of higher education (Kusworo, 2017). Ideally, after several years of activities, programs, and treatment, the quality of a university is elevated which will elevate the quality of student enrolled (Kusworo, 2017; Raharjo, 2017)

Speaking about the roles of the heads of departments in student admission, the middle level manager must analyse carefully the data of applied prospective students including their average grade and some additional attributes such as student achievement in high school, as indicated in the following excerpt.

“I have to call the Bureau of Admission and thoroughly look at the trends of students applied and students accepted. And I also decided to give some points for student non-academic achievement. Also, students from different provinces will have different scoring. We differentiate advanced and poor provinces in term of human resource and infrastructure development.”

Participant 5, Interview 2018

Therefore, heads of departments in assuring the quality of enrolled student is subject to set the minimum score of the students to get enrolled. This must be done carefully by seeing the trend of previously applied students, the capacity of the university, and the need for the quality student. In addition, it is important to give the opportunity of students from poorer provinces. This is to achieve equality of higher education (Salmi & Bassett, 2012)

4.3. Support in the Process Dimension of Quality Teaching and Learning

The process dimension of quality teaching and learning includes class size, quality of teaching, level of curriculum, student engagement, student support.

4.3.1. Class size

Class size in this context is the ideal number of students in a classroom. The departments in Case University has diverse implementation regarding the ideal size number. Interviews with all participants reveal that the majority of departments in Case University already have ideal class size according to the Standard by the government –35 students for natural science studies and 30 students for social sciences studies. The discussion on class-size is related with the student-staff ratio. Yet, the decision on a specific number of student in the class is fully taken by the heads of departments as the middle level manager whereas student-staff ratio is more of university wide decision. In addition, interviews also found that sometimes university must ignore the ideal size of the class, depending on the autonomy level of a university (see excerpt in [section 4.2.4](#)).

One head of department suggests that small or developing university can first focus on the infrastructure and development which is strongly related to funding. In fact, the rationale that lower student in the class will affect to better student achievement is also followed by the fact that university will get lower income compared to a bigger number of students. The statement can be seen in the excerpt below.

“I think you noticed when you were a student in this university that we ever accepted 33% bigger number of new students. Our capacity is 4500 students per enrolment but we accepted 6000 at that time. But you notice from this chart (in a Faculty Profile) that there is a decline of students enrolled in 2015. This is where new policy regulated, our finance is so stable like never before.”

Participant 7, Interview 2018

Therefore, the heads of departments, in this case, are subject to perform need analysis to determine the class size by considering the capacity of teaching staffs, university stage of development, and

the funding condition of the university. Nevertheless, Gibbs (2010) suggest that the lower the class size, the better the teaching and learning quality, as the bigger number of students may for example compete for the library, research laboratories, and teacher time. However, Gibbs (2010) also asserts that “negative class size effects are not inevitable and a certain amount is known about how to support good quality learning despite large classes.” (p. 21).

4.3.2. Quality of teaching

In general, the roles of the heads of departments as the middle level managers in higher education institution is to monitor and control the teaching process in each class –as discussed in section 4.2.2. However, the quality of teaching as the process dimension of quality teaching is specifically defined as the quality/qualification of teaching staffs and the quality of teaching material (Gibbs, 2010).

First, with regard the qualification of teaching staff, the roles of the heads of departments have been described in the section of presage dimension of quality. That is, how teachers are selected based on several criteria and through the strict recruitment process. This may seem overlapping but the teacher and staff development activities initiated by the heads of departments are also the support given by the heads of departments as the middle level managers in this specific dimension of quality. In other words, as Craft (2003) mention, quality assurance activities are intertwined where some activities are purposed to improve particular or broader dimensions of quality.

Second, the quality of teaching is assessed from the content or teaching material. Therefore, the roles of the heads of departments is to monitor and evaluate the teaching material. In the Case University, all interviews show that heads of departments collaborate with the Centre for Teaching and Learning in the development of teaching material. In addition, heads of departments must also provide some support or initiative to stimulate teacher creativity to develop quality teaching material. In Case University, for instance, one participant asserts that teachers should be able to create textbook or student book based on the teacher research interest or field expertise, as indicated in the following excerpt.

“Quality teaching is one that is supported by scientific research. So, research result/product is worthy when it is usable for teaching... The teacher must do research, collaborate with another researcher, and publish research in international journal... We can prove to our students, that when they read textbook developed by our teachers, they can see the references and data are all up to date. Indeed, our teachers will have similar references incorporated by other famous authors or scholars. So, we can say that our teaching material

is as the same level as material developed by international experts... Therefore, we give support to teachers to research and create their own textbooks.”

Participant 5, Interview 2018

The finding above indicates, first, that the head of department's support to quality of teaching can be in the form of capacity development to create teaching material. This, as Participant 5 suggests, refers to Bloom's taxonomy of learning, where creating own perception, postulates, hypothesis, and ideas is the highest stage of learning comprehension. Similarly, the teacher who creates own material based on careful analysis can be called a good teacher. Second, incorporating teacher research in the development of teaching material is essential. One participant suggests the product of teacher comprehension toward discipline or particular interest must be concreted in the form of learning material such as textbook or scholarly articles for the students. More importantly, third, heads of departments must possess excellent academic and curriculum awareness (Hammond, 1999), especially to review and evaluate the teaching material and the quality of research. After all, the heads of departments in some contexts (e.g. Australia: Meek et al., 2010; the UK: Hammond, 1999) are defined as the academic leader – a person who leads/drives the academic direction of the department.

4.3.3. Level of curriculum

The level of the curriculum is the design of the courses, instructions, and the whole education provision which purposed to qualify the graduates in the labour market. More specifically, it is the level of courses adjusted with the student development. Based on the Courses Catalogue of one department in Case University, for instance, contents or courses are structured with the level of student development. For example, students of the early year are taught the introduction to and basic principles of a particular science, while the upper year students are taught more detail and application of the knowledge in the real work.

To assure such relevance of the course or curriculum level, the support given by the heads of departments in this process dimension of quality teaching, again, is intertwined with the discussion on the previous section about curriculum review. However, more specifically about assuring the level of curriculum, Gibbs (2010) proposed that community of practices, concentration, or expertise within a department must work to document and analyse the previous and existing curriculum. Therefore, the role of the heads of departments is to manage (i.e. monitor, control, supervise) the lower level management – the community of concentration/tracks/expertise. Below are excerpts indicating the role of middle level managers in maintaining the level of curriculum.

“We (the head of the department) have our second hands, they are the coordinator of concentrations/tracks. We also have a coordinator for the course –one course is taught by two or more teachers. Therefore their responsibility to us (the head of the department) is to make sure that teaching has been in accordance with curriculum.”

Participant 6, Interview 2018

“We have the so-called team teaching: one course is taught by several teachers. So, one of the roles of the Unit of Quality Assurance within a department is to make sure that all teachers succeeded to deliver the materials and that students gained different, complementary materials from different teachers.”

Participant 4, Interview 2018

“Our (the head of the department) role is to coordinate and monitor. The block teams should teach, reviews, evaluates, and plans the course. Each team is responsible for managing workshop and seminars for students as well. So we only monitor and evaluate their reports.”

Participant 3, Interview 2018

Besides managing the concentrations/tracks within the department, all participants agreed that to maintain and improve the level of curriculum, heads of departments of Case University must collaborate with the other units such as the Centre for Teaching and Learning and the Centre for Research and Social Service of the university. To succeed in managing the lower level management and collaborating with external parties, some traits and abilities must be possessed by the heads of department. Leadership, communication skills, and academic or scientific competences are some prerequisites that the heads of departments must have to achieve the goal of quality academic (Shahmandi, Silong, Ismail, Samah, & Othman, 2011).

4.3.4. Student engagement

Student engagement is defined as the active participation of the students in the class and the student-faculty interaction (Gibbs, 2010). In the Case University, the heads of departments monitor and evaluate student participation through feedback collection. The feedback is utilised to know how the students engage in the class with the teacher. The follow up of this feedback is teacher evaluation that the teachers must improve their teaching to trigger student activeness and participation, as indicated in the excerpt below.

“Students can just report to me, informally, the teacher who does not follow the syllabus. Because they feel a bit unmotivated with the teachers. This applies to the thesis supervisor

as well. Thesis supervisor must be reachable by the students and provide comments and suggestions within the agreed time (7-10 office days). I will call the teachers who are reported by the students.”

Participant 8, Interview 2018

Therefore, the heads of departments must give room for appreciation and initiative for student engagement. While Case University only applies student feedback as the tool to grasp the level of student engagement, heads of departments can go beyond that. Heads of departments may, for instance, support more co-curricular activities, maintain an attitude of the faculties, and raising the awareness of the faculty to student engagement (Umbach & Wawrzynski, 2005).

The second definition of student engagement is “the extent of student-faculty interaction” (Gibbs, 2010, p. 33), especially outside teaching. The Accreditation Form of two departments and interviews with all heads of departments show that Case University provides Academic Supervisory, where a teacher is appointed for supervising a number of students regarding their performance and achievement. Here, the students are free to directly share their aspirations regarding teaching or management of department or university. In addition, all interviews from all participants also confirm that heads of departments in Case University share their private mobile phone number to students and parents as the platform to deal with students’ urgent issues or complaint.

“We have an Academic Supervisor, who is responsible for assisting the students need regarding their study. However, I even provide my personal phone number. Not only students, but some parents also contacted me regarding the performance of the students. Actually, they should contact the Supervisor first instead of myself, but it is OK.”

Participant 4, Interview 2018

“There is a mandatory meeting of Academic Supervisors with their students, at least once per semester. These supervisors will have to identify the student issues, especially in academic performance. The supervisors’ phone number is publicised to the students so that they can interact outside the working hours. Then, any findings will be brought up at the department meeting, and we (management) will find the solution.”

Participant 2, Interview 2018

Some interesting finding is also found at a department of Case University. In the Indonesian context, or perhaps Asian school cultural context, students and teachers have a strong barrier where

students should keep off distance with the teacher. Research (e.g. Ho, 2009; Kinoshita & Bowman, 1998) show that it is common for Asian students to be anxious to their teacher, and at some Indonesian universities, this still occurred where teachers are highly saluted and students must bow to them. However, interviews found the trend does not apply in some Departments of the Case University, as indicated in the excerpt below.

“We try to shorten the gap between students and teachers or administrations through counselling, some student activities, and even we embed this value in the class. You can see that in our department the way our students greet us and talk with us, perhaps other people will call it impolite. However, they are so close to us. You can see here in this office students come without an anxious feeling, in the class as well. You can compare with another department, or another university.”

Participant 8, Interview 2018

The heads of these departments believe that removing the anxiety barriers between students and teachers can increase trust and later will increase student performance. This is in accordance with Keller (1987), but some scholars e.g. (Jones, 2004) are contra to the statement, especially when seeing the cultural context.

Nevertheless, findings above reveal that the role of the heads of departments is to provide room for direct communication between student and faculty. Heads of departments may also increase the trust of the students with the teachers by embedding such anxiety-matter understanding in the course, which is telling students not to have the anxiety barriers with the teachers. Such supports by the head of department in student engagement is essential as Gibbs (2010) proposes that the level of student engagement with the faculty correlates positively with student performance and achievement.

4.3.5. Student support

Student support as the process dimension of quality teaching is given in the form of funding for low-income students or excellent students/group of students (Gibbs, 2010). Gibbs (2010) further explain that student support can be given in the form of “counselling, skill development, and support for students with special needs, and so on”. Excerpts below show the supports given to students in Case University.

“We (department) allocate in the *IKS* fund for students activities such as extracurricular, student organisation, and student events. In an academic year, there is a basic fund for them

given to each student organisation. However, for a bigger event that needs bigger fund, students will come to us and propose for the fund. If it is not enough, we will help students to create a proposal for funding from the university-level.”

Participant 6, Interview 2018

“There is a research funding for students, however, the process to gain it is a bit bureaucratic and inflexible. Thus, we give them some funding first and the university can just reimburse us. We shall support students.”

Participant 4, Interview 2018

“The university and the Foundation provide a lot of scholarship covering tuition fees, accommodations, and even Master/Profession education scholarship. For low-income students, it is actually provided by the Foundation and Province government. This university, nevertheless, only provides scholarships for excellent students regardless of their financial background. But for excellent and unfortunate students, we give them even a free education from undergraduate until they become doctors. But that is Foundation’s scholarship.”

Participant 3, Interview 2018

“We, with the help from the student union, organise some activities for students so that they are close to us. Then, they can feel it comfortable and less anxious to interact with us. They also build a stronger bond with other students. I think that is how we support them, that is, by facilitating them to feel the more relaxed atmosphere in this department.”

Participant 8, Interview 2018

Based on the details above, the heads of departments of a university can give a lot of support to attain, retain, and develop students’ skills. However, some supports which require big funding such as free tuition fee and may not be idyllically achieved; depending on the size and reputation of the university or department. Nevertheless, heads of departments must initiate some activities to retain students, with the existing fund. In addition, support in the form of student counselling is also necessary to maintain student engagement and performance (Shaterloo & Mohammadyari, 2011).

4.4. Challenges in Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning

This research further finds out some challenges in the quality assurance especially those faced by the heads of departments. First of all, the position as the hub between the top and lower

management is challenging when the performance of the lower level is stagnant –but acknowledging the workload of the lower level management– while at the same time being pushed by the top level (see [section 4.1](#)).

In addition, in the implementation of programs for teaching and learning quality assurance, heads of departments in Case University do not face significant challenges from top management other than funding allocation, contrary, they face challenges in monitoring subordinates, staffs, and the lower leaders. This lack of professionalism may occur in other Indonesian universities as well (Darwin, 2015; Fitriantoro, 2009). Excerpts below shows that managing subordinates are challenging due to their reluctance to the change.

“Sometimes they (subordinates) could not balance our (head of the department) progress. However, some want to change and learn something new, but some are too reluctant to some changes. Usually, they are seniors... Yes, we have created some training for them (staffs), still, their response is just as a formality. Not essentially willing to change for a better performance.”

Participant 2, Interview 2018

“Managing staffs is harder than managing students. Staffs who are more senior in age tend to think we as the newcomers want to be a hero. I cannot blame it because it is a collegial university. We have the very friendly ambience of work, but this result to some unprofessionalism... If we have some senior teachers or staffs who are reluctant, we could not do the very strong penalty. This is due to that our university is collegial. So what I did is to exploit and empower the younger and fresher human resource. Usually, they are more idealistic people.”

Participant 5, Interview 2018

Excerpts above tell that the heads of departments face some challenges in the management of change, especially for the seniors. This actually is common practice at some Indonesian universities (Novitasari, 2014). To resolve this, Participant 2 and Participant 5 suggest focussing on empowering the younger and more energetic human resources. This particular way of dealing with various type of subordinates especially in the collegial university has been discussed by Cho (2005).

Next, one interview implicitly tells that having the collegial system itself is problematic. One participant believes collegial system at the university hinders the positioning of the strongest candidate of heads of departments or middle level managers, as indicated in the excerpts below.

“...because we are collegial, everyone has the same opportunity, regardless their competence, records, and achievements. And I know in this university, for a very important position like this, people appointed based on their obedience to the Foundation, even though they are also excellent leaders.”

Participant 5, Interview 2018

The tone of the participants implies that there are some other goods or better people for the position, yet not selected. This leads to various responses from the heads of departments about their significance.

“So, I think my influence is not that significant. Because this is a collegial university. The department is so strong not because of my leadership only, but the willingness, awareness, and contribution of every individual. I am chosen because this is the turn.”

Participant 6, Interview 2018

“I feel my position is very strong. And I think my leadership has been successful. So, regarding teaching and learning quality, I do not know either we have very smart students, or very good teaching, because their average grades are high... And other than that, you can compare with other departments or universities how the friendly ambience is maintained in this department.”

Participant 8, Interview 2018

Last but not least, the challenge in managing programme and activities which require professionalism of the lower leaders or programme leaders is mainly due to the lack of professionalism of these lower level manager. Furthermore, this research found some strategies to face this particular challenge.

“...our culture is that if there is no money, people will not be working. I really understand that.”

Participant 2, Interview 2018

“...we still have very poor awareness of professionalism. Some people will work only if there is some honorarium. You know, if we look at developed countries, they are very willing to improve themselves...So, I use my authority. I am bold. The wave of opposition

will only last for two until three weeks. Somehow they can finish the job although the result is not maximum... that is the reality of collegial university.”

Participant 5, Interview 2018

To sum up, the position of the heads of departments as the middle level manager in higher education institution is challenging as they are pushed by both low and top management. This research also reveals that challenges faced by heads of departments in quality assurance of teaching and learning derive essentially from the lack of professionalism of the subordinates and lower leaders, not necessarily from the students and upper management. In addition, it is believed that the collegial system hinders the positioning of the strongest candidate of heads of departments or the middle level managers (c.f. Sahlin & Eriksson-Zetterquist, 2016).

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1. Summary and conclusion

The Master's Thesis purposes to explore the roles of the heads of departments in the quality assurance of teaching and learning. In this research, the heads of departments are perceived as the middle level managers in a university who are responsible for the entire provision of education, research, and social services in a department in a university. With specific regard to quality teaching and learning, the roles of middle level managers are analysed from their activities in the stages of quality assurance process and the supports given to the dimensions of quality teaching and learning.

This research uses Elton's (1995) model of quality assurance of teaching and learning. The model suggests three major stages of quality assurance under which the roles of heads of departments in the quality assurance are analysed. The first major stage of quality assurance is setting standards and objectives. In this stage, the role of heads of departments as the middle level managers are, first, to set strategies and objectives of the department. This includes setting the goals and objectives of quality teaching and learning by initially translating the university mission. Second, middle level managers are subject to empower subordinates and to create partnerships. This includes involving staffs and other parties in the activities of quality assurance.

The second stage of quality assurance is the learning environment –the teaching and learning process (c.f. Elton, 1995). At this stage, teaching and learning take places and the roles of all stakeholders are intertwined to contribute to achieving quality teaching and learning. Under this stage, specifically, the heads of departments are responsible for, first, teaching and learning quality. This means the quality of learning materials, instructions, and teachers are subject to be assessed by the heads of departments. Second, in the learning environment stage (c.f. Elton, 1995), the heads of departments are academic conventions leaders. They must lead any academic forums, including setting, analysis, and reviewing the curriculum or the education goals of the department.

The third major stage consists of the reviews of management, curriculum, and resources. The stage is actually followed by follow-up activities, namely staff training and development (management review), course development (course review), and resource allocation (resource review). Under this stage, the heads of departments are mainly department managers. Their roles are to plan, manage, monitor, and evaluate every department activities including quality assurance of teaching and learning. In addition to the roles as programme managers, the middle level managers are the hub

between upper and lower management. In this case, heads of departments must become communicator and aspiration container from either deans or rectors and the lower level managers or teachers. Last but not least, the quality assurance of teaching and learning expect the heads of departments as fund tacticians, as the authority on funding is limited. The main role under this term is to propose and allocate budget for activities of quality assurance.

This research also explores the two main domains in which the heads of departments can give significant supports namely presage and process dimensions of quality teaching (Gibbs, 2010). The presage domain consists of funding, student-staff ratio, quality of teaching staffs, and quality of enrolled students. In funding and student-staff ratios, however, the heads of the departments in Case University has limited authority which leads to the unlikeliness of the realisation of such expectation. This is very common, though, since funding and student-staff ratio depends on the size and reputation of the university. Nevertheless, the heads of the departments still have to initiate programmes for quality teaching and learning. For instance, in funding, even though the basic funding is limited, the heads of departments could propose some excellence funding to the top management. Also, in student-staff ratios, heads of departments can propose activities to accelerate student graduation so that the number of students is balanced with the number of staffs. On the other hand, the heads of departments play a significant role in teaching staff recruitment that is to make sure that the accepted teachers are met university expectation, academic qualification, and university capacity. Also, in student enrolment, heads of departments are subject to set the minimum score of the students to get enrolled. This must be done carefully by seeing the trend of previously applied students, the capacity of the university, and the need for quality student.

Furthermore, in the presage dimension of quality teaching, heads of departments have limited room for support in determining the class size. Indeed, class size is a university-wide matter and the decision to the class size needs to consider the capacity of teaching staffs, the university stage of development, and the funding condition of the university. On the other hand, heads of departments have full authority to support the quality of teaching, level of curriculum, student engagement, and student support. To the quality of teaching, head of department's support can be in the form of creating activities or programme for teaching staffs to create their own teaching material, such as by incorporating their research into teaching material. Meanwhile, support to the level of curriculum is given by empowering the lower level management concerned with curriculum –concentration or tracks community- and collaborating with other unit related to curriculum development such as the library and the research centre. Furthermore, in maintaining student engagement, heads of departments in Case University provide room for direct communication between student and faculty

and increase the trust of the students with the teachers by embedding such anxiety-matter understanding in the course. Also, Case University collects feedback from students to observe their engagement in the class with particular teachers. The feedback is utilised for teacher evaluation to maintain student engagement. Last but not least, in student support, heads of departments in Case University provides scholarships for the students of underprivileged, reward for students of excellences, and room for counselling for students.

Moreover, to succeed the entire quality assurance of teaching and learning, heads of departments must possess academic competencies, leadership traits, communication skills, collaboration skills, and creativity to initiate programs for quality improvement. In addition, the middle level managers are also to cope with some challenges such as such as reluctance of the subordinates to change, lack of professionalism of the lower leaders, and that the position as a hub between the top and lower management is challenging.

Finally, the research concludes, from the management strand of quality assurance, to position, train, and support the heads of departments in a higher education institution is crucial as their responsibilities and roles are determinant to the achievement of quality teaching and learning.

5.2. Thesis implications and recommendations

5.2.1. Implications

This study produces empirical results that are accommodating for higher education policy makers, primarily at the university level. The stakeholders especially the rectorate and the board would be aware of, first, the importance of appointing middle level management due to the roles they are responsible for. This would affect the policies related to the recruitment or selection of heads of departments; i.e. the person to be appointed must possess the competences to conduct the activities of quality assurance and give support to the dimensions of teaching and learning quality. This is in line with the second awareness that is the importance of initiatives. Given the importance of achieving quality teaching, upper-level management must review and grant the initiatives proposed by the middle level management. Therefore, there needs to be a clear policy or guideline which encourages and facilitates the heads of the departments to propose the initiatives to support the quality dimensions or quality assurance process in general. For instance, the *IKS* which is implemented in Case University or other performance-schemed funding such as incentives for successful heads of departments.

5.2.2. Recommendations

This research is basically a case study of best practice so that other universities can learn how quality assurance of teaching and learning is succeeded, specifically in the perspective of heads of departments. In findings and discussions chapter, the practical recommendations –what the heads of departments must do in quality assurance– have been presented under each role. In short, some recommendations for heads of departments are as follows.

First of all, in the selection of heads of departments, some attributes must be carefully looked. Placing the right person in a critical position such as middle level managers is very important. Therefore, the first recommendation goes for university management in general that is to select the best person for heads of departments.

Secondly, also for university management, it is important to make sure that the vision and mission of the university have been translated into more realistic and achievable benchmark. Furthermore, the university must have a clear definition of quality teaching and learning and that the definition has been reflected in the teaching and learning process. To ensure this, synergy amid the top, middle, and lower level management is prerequisite.

Thirdly, heads of departments must always maintain their leadership attributes. This is important because to conduct all the roles in the quality assurance and give significant support to quality dimensions, heads of departments must be equipped with leadership attributes such as communication skills, academic competences, and empowerment. Therefore, both university management and the person in charge must be aware of the attributes and continuously conduct leadership development programs.

5.3. Significances and limitation of the research

5.3.1. Significances

This research would benefit scientifically to studies of quality assurance in higher education and practically to the university stakeholders especially the heads of department. Scientifically, as the topic is very narrow and innovative – the roles of the middle level managers in teaching and learning quality assurance, the findings will contribute, at least empirically, to the knowledge and comprehension regarding quality assurance especially teaching and learning quality assurance. In addition, as research regarding this topic in the Indonesian, Asian, or developing countries contexts are less, this research will promote the understanding of Indonesian quality assurance context for further research. Furthermore, practically, this research would benefit the stakeholders in higher

education institution as the findings will improve their awareness of their position and possible contribution to quality teaching and learning.

5.3.2. Limitation of research and recommendation for further research

There are many factors influencing the quality of higher education, ranging from the government's will and strategies for higher education and institutional commitment. In a more specific institution-wide commitment is the role of heads of departments in the quality assurance of teaching and learning. This case study reveals the success of quality assurance of teaching and learning in the specific university from the perspective of heads of departments as the middle level managers. Began from Elton's (1995) model of quality assurance, this study explores the activities and contribution of the heads of departments in the dimensions of quality teaching and learning (c.f. Gibbs, 2010).

The narrowness of the topic of this research perhaps become the limitation. During the case study, the researcher found that, first, it is very necessary to have an akin perception of quality definition for all layers of stakeholders. It is important to scientifically research whether or not teaching and learning in a university which follows the quality definition lead to the success of quality teaching and learning. Therefore, further research on the relationship between the understanding of the quality definition and quality achievement is necessary.

Second, the study also found the funding mechanism which is proposed by the top level management which results in effective quality assurance program management. As the decision maker for some dimensions is in top level management, heads of departments as the middle level managers experience role ambiguity –their authority in some domains are limited. So, the question is to what extent the middle level managers can be very supportive. This research, even though has richly described the role of middle level managers, does not come into a comparative conclusion – whether the level of the role is high, medium, or low.

In addition, the findings suggest that the collegial system of a higher education institution prevents the placement of the strongest leaders in the layers of the organisation. However, this research did not dig deeper as it is beyond the topic. Therefore, it is perhaps necessary to research the relationship between the higher education system and quality assurance –whether the system of governance in the university affects the quality of teaching and learning.

Last but not least, another limitation of this research is that it is very context-based. Therefore, the result might have less implication for higher education institutions in other countries or in a different context. So, it is necessary to conduct further studies in different contexts to draw out a

valid pattern of the roles of the heads of departments as the middle level manager in a higher education institution in the quality assurance of teaching and learning.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Interview Guidelines

1. What is quality teaching and learning to you
 - a. What is quality teaching and learning to the university? Has it been understood by all managers?
 - b. Are you following the national approach (quality as standard conformation)?
2. How are you (MLM) involved in the process of developing quality assurance?
 - a. Do you hold the decision making power?
 - b. To what extent is your involvement in the decision making of quality assurance mechanism
3. General roles of HOD/MLM. What do you think are the roles of the HOD/MLM in teaching and learning QA?
 - a. _____ (deeper, deeper)
4. Who set the standard of quality?
 - a. How to set the standard? (**see documents**)
5. How is the review of management?
 - a. The activities for staff development? (**see documents**)
6. How is the review of course?
 - a. What are done to improve the content, teaching and learning?
7. How is the review of the budget?
 - a. How is the funding of the department?
 - b. How is the funding other than the 'basic' funding?

8. What kind of QA activities, for example, that have been initiated by this department (c.f. TTEL, 2016) (**see documents**)

9. In addition, to maintain quality, what kind of support you give to
 - a. Presage dimension

How is the funding of the university? What are the initiatives? How?

How is the student staff ratio? How to maintain

How do you manage the student enrolment? What are the considerations? Who decide?

How is the teacher recruitment? What are the considerations? Who are you in the process?
 - b. Process dimension

What do you think is the class size? What do you do when it is not ideal?

Quality of teaching: contact for students outside the class?

How is the curriculum developed and improved?

Student engagement – what to do to make students stably perform in the course?

Student support – what are support for the students?
10. The success of the role, the effective role played
 - a. What do you think make you succeed in these roles? Personal trait?
 - b. How do you do _____ ?
11. So, what do you think is the significance of MLM in the quality assurance of teaching and learning? (decision maker, or initiator, or hub between upper and lower leaders, or none?)
12. What do you think are the traits that are necessary to lead the quality assurance process
13. What are the challenges? How do you still cope with the challenges and got an A in the accreditation?

Appendix 2. Research permit from Case University



No. : 058/A.1-III/V/2018
Hal : Izin Penelitian

14 Mei 2018

Kepada Yth.
Sdr. Abdul Rasyid Ghazali
Di tempat

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Menindaklanjuti permohonan Saudara tanggal 30 April 2018 perihal Izin Penelitian:

Nama : Abdul Rasyid Ghazali
NIM : AG426511
Program Studi : *Master in Research and Innovation in Higher Education,*
University of Tampere, Finlandia
Judul Penelitian : *The Role of Middle Level Managers in The Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning (Peran Manajemen Tingkat Menengah dalam Penjaminan Mutu Pembelajaran)*
Lokasi/Subyek :
Waktu : Mei s.d. Juni 2018

Perlu kami informasikan beberapa hal sebagai berikut :

1. Pada prinsipnya kami tidak keberatan dan dapat menyetujui permohonan tersebut.
2. Izin melakukan penelitian digunakan semata-mata hanya untuk kepentingan akademik.
3. Kepada yang bersangkutan diminta untuk menyerahkan 1 (satu) rangkap hasil penelitian kepada

Demikian surat ini dibuat agar dapat dipergunakan sebagaimana mestinya. Terima kasih.

وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ

a.n. Rektor,
Kepala Biro Akademik,

Tembusan:

- Nama-nama terlampir



TRANSLATION

Universitas 

No. : 058/A.I-III/V/2018

14 May 2018

Subject: Research Permit

To: Abdul Rasyid Ghazali

Peace be upon you.

Following up to your later dated 30 April 2018 on research permit,

Name : Abdul Rasyid Ghazali

Student No. : AG426511

Programme : Master Degree Programme in Research and Innovation in Higher Education,
University of Tampere, Finland

Research title : Exploring the role of heads of departments as the middle level managers in higher
education in the quality assurance of teaching and learning.

Location : _____

Time : May to June 2018

We would like to inform you the following:

1. We are pleased to give the research permit.
2. The research data is only for academic use.
3. We would like you to give one copy of the file to our repository.

In witness whereof, it is made for proper perusal.

p.p. Rector

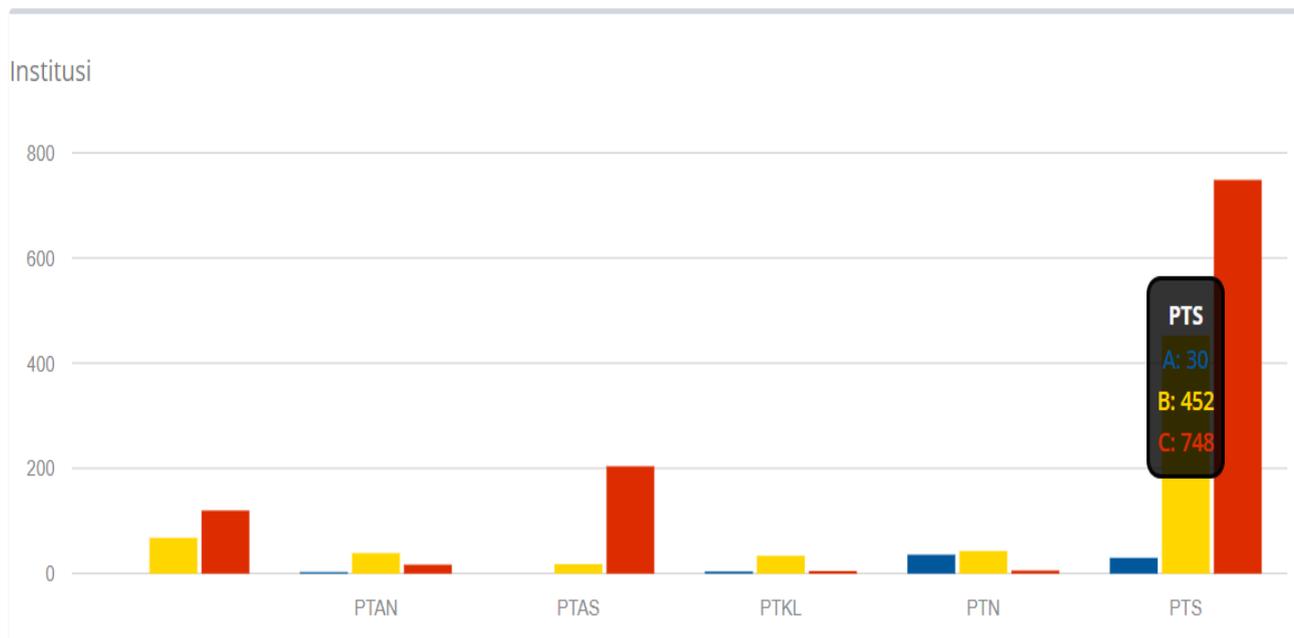
signed, stamped

Vice Rector of Academic



Cc: list of proposed participants name and position.

Appendix 3. Accreditation status of Indonesian HEIs



*)

PTAN : State Religious HEIs

PTAS : Private Religious HEIs

PTKL : Ministry-owned HEIs (e.g. Ministry of Health, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Public Affairs, etc.)

PTN : Public HEIs

PTS : Private HEIs

A –Blue bar: Accredited A (Excellent)

B – Yellow bar: Accredited B (Good)

C – Red bar: accredited C (Fair)

Retrieved from https://banpt.or.id/grafik_per_jenis

Appendix 4. The roles of heads of departments (public access)

E-Mail Address [REDACTED] **Responsibilities**

(1) Planning and creating strategies and policies within the [REDACTED] Department which include: education, research, public empowerment, resource, student service and quality production and preservation.

(2) Planning and organizing budget plans for [REDACTED] Department activities which include: education, research, public empowerment, resource, student service, and quality production and preservation.

(3) Planning activities in cooperative MOU and agreements between the [REDACTED] Department and other universities, government agencies, or privately owned agencies to develop academic aspects which include: education, research, public empowerment, resource, student service, and quality production and preservation.

(4) Plan the career and competence of [REDACTED] Department lecturers which include: education, research, and public empowerment.

(5) Nurturing extracurricular activities, devotion, student organizations, and student development in [REDACTED] Department levels.

(6) To create a level of service that satisfy stakeholders.

(7) To organize a yearly operational plan for the [REDACTED] Department.

(8) To implement an information system for academic management

(9) Observe and perform evaluation on academical activities of the [REDACTED] Department which include education, research, public empowerment, student service, and promotional activities.

(10) Document the product of every activity in either hard copy or soft copy.

(11) Organize a periodic accountability report at the end of the service term.

(12) Accompany new executives during the transition period for one month after the election of a new head of