



Quality Curriculum and Perceived Service Delivery in Private Universities in the Central Region in Uganda

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Abstract: This study investigated the relationship between curriculum quality and perceived service delivery in private universities in Uganda's Central Region. Despite the establishment of the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) in 2003 and the introduction of quality assurance frameworks and several statutory instruments to enable institutions establish and maintain strong internal quality assurance mechanisms, concerns persist regarding outdated curricula, weak responsiveness to labor market needs, and declining quality of services in private universities. Using a cross-sectional survey design, data were collected from 190 respondents, including students, academic staff, administrators, and quality assurance officers from four private universities. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, regression, and Structural Equation Modeling, complemented by thematic analysis of qualitative responses. Results revealed a very strong positive correlation ($r = .820, p < .001$) between curriculum quality and perceived service delivery. Regression analysis confirmed that curriculum quality significantly predicted service delivery ($B = 0.805, SE = 0.041, t = 19.51, p < .001$), explaining 67% of the variance ($R^2 = .672$). These findings highlight curriculum quality as a pivotal driver of service delivery perceptions, with weaknesses noted in stakeholder consultation, research integration, and community engagement. The study concludes that enhancing curriculum relevance and responsiveness is central to improving institutional credibility, service delivery, and stakeholder satisfaction. It recommends institutionalizing stakeholder-informed quality assurance models, linking accreditation to service delivery metrics, and prioritizing continuous curriculum evaluation to strengthen higher education outcomes in Uganda.

Keywords: Quality, Curriculum, Perceived Service Delivery, Private Universities, Uganda

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1. Introduction

Uganda's Parliament enacted the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act (UOTIA), Cap 262, in 2001, establishing the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) in 2003. The NCHE is mandated to accredit, supervise, and monitor higher education institutions to ensure that they offer quality education and value for money. Over the years, NCHE has issued various standards and frameworks (such as the Quality Assurance Framework of 2006 and University Capacity Indicators of 2014), several specific statutory instruments to guide institutions in implementing internal quality assurance mechanisms (IQAMs).

Despite these initiatives, studies have shown a continued decline in service quality within private universities, particularly in the Central Region of Uganda. The delivery of quality education services remains a critical concern, with persistent issues such as inconsistent curriculum delivery, outdated or unaccredited programs, insufficient teaching and learning materials, limited educational resources and inadequate physical infrastructure. As the demand for higher education increases, private universities have proliferated, many operating without meeting the required standards due to weak or non-functional IQAMs.

Perceived Service Delivery (PSD) in higher education refers to the degree to which stakeholders, primarily students, believe the institution is meeting educational objectives and standards. Effective PSD aligns with quality teaching, research, community engagement, and student welfare. Stakeholders' satisfaction hinges on these core deliverables, which are shaped significantly by the design and implementation of the curriculum.

The quality of the curriculum, defined by its relevance, comprehensiveness, and responsiveness to market and societal needs, plays a central role in shaping educational outcomes and student perceptions. A well-designed curriculum is expected to promote competence, innovation, and societal engagement among graduates. However, many private universities in the region suffer from outdated curriculum content, poor alignment with industry demands, and minimal student feedback integration, further weakening the delivery of quality services.

This study explores the relationship between quality curriculum and perceived service delivery, investigating how curriculum design, relevance, and responsiveness contribute to stakeholder satisfaction in selected private universities in Uganda's Central Region. It is anchored on Stakeholder Theory, Expectancy Theory, and Institutional Theory, and aims to contribute to the development of an improved quality assurance model for Uganda's higher education sector.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Private universities in the central region of Uganda continue to experience weak and non-functional internal quality assurance mechanisms, which has resulted in poor quality education, ineffective service delivery, and persistent dissatisfaction among students (Baiko et al., 2024). Despite the expansion of higher education, concerns remain regarding the quality of curriculum content, which is a fundamental component of institutional quality assurance systems. Studies have shown that poor quality university education in Uganda is reflected in inadequately designed curricula, weak alignment with labor market needs, and limited integration of research and community engagement (Katusiimeh et al., 2024).

Empirical evidence indicates that many universities struggle to implement curriculum frameworks that effectively support knowledge acquisition, skills development, and value formation among students. As noted by Kaggwa et al. (2023), private universities in Uganda are characterized by low-quality academic programs and weak research outputs, partly attributed to deficiencies in curriculum content and design. Similarly, Ayiro et al. (2023) argue that failure to deliver quality higher education has led to the production of graduates who lack the competencies required in the job market,

thereby contributing to unemployment and slowing national development.

The National Council for Higher Education (NCHE), mandated under the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act Cap 262, has established guidelines such as the National Quality Assurance Framework (2006) and University Capacity Indicators (2014) to ensure compliance with quality standards, including curriculum development and review. However, despite these frameworks, many private universities in the central region continue to operate with outdated or substandard curricula, undermining perceived service delivery. This is evidenced by the revocation of licenses of several institutions, including Stafford University, Busoga University, and others, due to non-compliance with quality standards.

As of 2025, a significant proportion of universities in Uganda remain on provisional licenses, with many failing to attain charter status largely due to weak internal quality assurance mechanisms, particularly in curriculum development and implementation (Munda, 2024). Consequently, institutions continue to deliver graduates who do not meet stakeholder expectations in terms of knowledge, skills, and values. This has negatively affected key stakeholders, including students, employers, government, and society at large.

Although previous studies have examined internal quality assurance broadly, there is limited empirical evidence specifically explaining how quality curriculum content relates to perceived service delivery, especially within the context of private universities in the central region of Uganda. Furthermore, existing models do not adequately demonstrate how curriculum quality translates into stakeholder satisfaction and institutional effectiveness. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the relationship between quality curriculum content and perceived service delivery in private universities in the central region of Uganda, with the aim of addressing existing gaps and informing the development of a context-specific quality assurance model.

1.2 Objectives of the study

This study set out to examine the relationship between Quality Curriculum Content and Perceived Service Delivery in private universities in the central region in Uganda

2. Literature Review

The quality of education in higher institutions, particularly private universities, has become a global concern due to its critical role in human capital development, innovation, and socio-economic transformation. Several studies indicate that curriculum quality is a central pillar of academic excellence, student

satisfaction, and institutional credibility. A quality curriculum is not only defined by its content but also by its relevance to societal needs, responsiveness to labor market dynamics, and its capacity to equip learners with competencies required for innovation and sustainability in the 21st century. Recent global scholarship further emphasizes the need to align curriculum design with sustainable development goal and industry needs to enhance graduate employability and institutional relevance (Dube, 2026).

This study is grounded in Stakeholder Theory, which emphasizes that institutions must align their outputs with the expectations of key stakeholders, including students, employers, government, and society. In higher education, this implies that curriculum content should be designed to meet stakeholder expectations in terms of knowledge, skills, and values. In addition, Expectancy Theory suggests that students' perceptions of service delivery are influenced by the extent to which their expectations are met, particularly regarding learning outcomes and future opportunities. Therefore, curriculum quality plays a significant role in shaping perceived service delivery.

In Uganda, the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) has introduced several quality assurance frameworks, such as the Quality Assurance Framework (2006) and the University Capacity Indicators (2014), the Uganda Higher education qualifications framework to guide universities in maintaining and improving curriculum standards. These frameworks emphasize curriculum relevance, periodic review, and alignment with national development priorities. However, their implementation has been inconsistent, particularly among private universities.

Recent studies in Uganda and the broader African context highlight persistent gaps in curriculum design and delivery. For instance, Kasujja et al. (2025) found that despite reforms aimed at promoting learner-centered and technology-enhanced education, many universities still rely on outdated pedagogies, weak assessment systems, and limited student engagement, which negatively affect learning outcomes and overall service delivery. Similarly, Kobia (2025) emphasizes that curriculum quality is essential for improving learning outcomes and aligning education with societal needs, yet implementation challenges continue to limit its effectiveness in Uganda.

At a broader level, recent empirical evidence shows that curriculum coherence and alignment with learning outcomes significantly influence educational effectiveness. Studies on outcome-based education demonstrate that aligning course content, teaching methods, and assessment with program learning outcomes enhances curriculum quality and improves student performance (Derouich, 2025). Furthermore, interdisciplinary and industry-aligned curriculum

designs have been shown to improve perceived quality and relevance of academic programs (Schleiss et al., 2025).

Perceived service delivery, which includes teaching effectiveness, timely feedback, administrative support, and adequacy of infrastructure, has increasingly been used as a key measure of institutional performance from the students' perspective. Musinguzi and Bakkabulindi (2019) reported that private universities in Uganda tend to score lower on service delivery indicators compared to public universities, largely due to resource constraints and weak internal quality assurance systems. More recent studies support this view, indicating that institutional factors such as digital transformation, teaching quality, and assessment practices significantly influence students' perceptions of service delivery and learning outcomes in higher education.

Additionally, evidence from recent studies in developing countries suggests that weaknesses in curriculum implementation such as limited practical orientation, inadequate resources, and insufficient staff capacity continue to undermine service delivery in higher education institutions. For example, research in the African region shows that while there is a shift toward competency-based and learner-centered approaches, gaps in assessment practices, infrastructure, and staff training constrain effective implementation (Mupaikwa, 2025).

Despite the proliferation of quality assurance mechanisms, there remains limited empirical research examining how the design and implementation of curriculum directly influence perceived service delivery in the Ugandan higher education context. Much of the existing literature focuses on structural issues or general service quality, with limited attention given to curriculum as a strategic driver of perceived institutional value. Recent global reviews further confirm that although curriculum reforms are widely implemented, there is still inadequate evidence linking curriculum quality directly to stakeholder perceptions and service delivery outcomes.

This study addresses this gap by examining how curriculum quality, measured through relevance, responsiveness, and coherence, affects stakeholder perceptions of service delivery in private universities in the central region of Uganda. By integrating insights from Stakeholder Theory and Expectancy Theory, the study seeks to provide a deeper understanding of how curriculum-related factors shape students' expectations and experiences. The findings are expected to inform policy, curriculum review processes, and quality assurance practices in private higher education institutions in Uganda.

3. Methodology

This study employed a cross-sectional survey design, which allowed for the collection and analysis of data from a diverse group of respondents at a single point in time. This design was particularly suitable for examining the relationship between quality curriculum and perceived service delivery in private universities in Uganda’s Central Region. The approach enabled the integration of both quantitative and qualitative data, thus enriching the analysis and enhancing the depth of interpretation. The design also offered the advantage of efficiency in data collection across multiple institutions within a limited timeframe.

The study population comprised academic staff, students, quality assurance officers, and university administrators drawn from four purposively selected private universities: Clarke International University, St. Lawrence University, Ndejje University, and Cavendish University. These universities were selected based on factors such as accreditation status (chartered or provisionally licensed), ownership diversity (secular or religious), geographical location (urban or rural), and a documented history of quality assurance engagement. A stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure proportional representation across the respondent categories. Data were collected from 190 participants using structured questionnaires (for students and academic staff) and key informant interviews (for administrators and quality assurance officers), providing both quantitative measures and qualitative insights.

Data analysis involved a combination of descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Quantitative data were analyzed using STATA 18, where descriptive statistics

(frequencies, percentages, and means) summarized respondent characteristics and general trends. Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to assess the strength and direction of relationships between variables, followed by multiple regression to determine the predictive power of curriculum quality on perceived service delivery. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was employed to explore mediation effects and model relationships. Thematic content analysis was applied to qualitative responses, providing contextual depth to support the statistical findings. Instrument validity was assured through expert review and alignment with established theories (Stakeholder Theory, Expectancy Theory, and Institutional Theory), while reliability was confirmed using Cronbach’s Alpha, which exceeded the threshold of 0.70, indicating strong internal consistency.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Respondent characteristics

This section presents the demographic and background characteristics of the respondents who participated in the study, providing a basis for assessing the representativeness and reliability of the findings. The analysis covers key variables including respondent category, year of study, period of service, employment status, nationality, sex, and level of education. These characteristics offer important insights into the composition and diversity of the sample drawn from private universities in the central region of Uganda and help to contextualize respondents’ views on internal quality assurance mechanisms and perceived service delivery. The information is presented using tables and figures to enhance clarity and ease of interpretation.

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents by category

Respondent	Freq.	Percent
Student	92	48.42
University Staff	98	51.58
Total	190	100

Source: Primary data 2024

The table presents the distribution of respondents by category, showing that out of a total of 190 participants, 92 (48.42%) were students, while 98 (51.58%) were

university staff. This indicates that the sample was nearly evenly split, with a slightly higher proportion of staff members.

Distribution of students by year of study

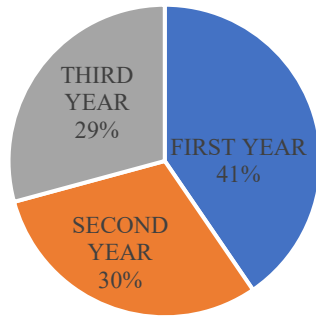


Figure 1: Distribution of students by Year of study

Source: Primary data 2024

Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of students by year of study, showing that 41% are in their first year, 30% in their second year, and 29% in their third year. The higher proportion of first-year students suggests participation in

the survey. The relatively balanced distribution across the years suggests a fairly stable participation across the groups.

Table 2: Distribution of University staff by period of service

Period of service	Freq.	Percent
1 - 5 YEARS	45	45.92
6- 10 YEARS	49	50
11 YEARS AND ABOVE	4	4.08
Total	98	100

Source: Primary data 2024

Table 2 presents the distribution of university staff based on their period of service. Among the 98 staff members, the majority, 49 (50%), have served for 6 to 10 years, while 45 (45.92%) have been with the university for 1 to 5 years. Only 4 staff members (4.08%) have served for

11 years or more. This distribution suggests that most staff have medium-term experience, with a significant proportion in the early years of service, while long-serving staff are relatively few. This could indicate a relatively high turnover rate or recent staff expansion.

Distribution of students by employment status

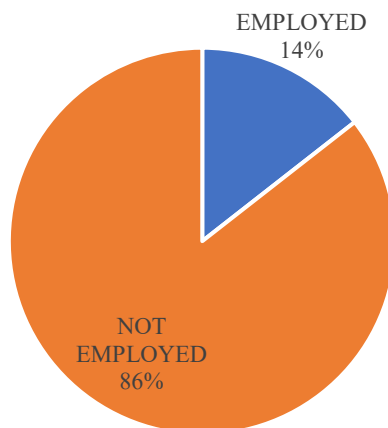


Figure 2: Distribution of students by employment status

Source: Primary data 2024

Figure 2 presents the employment status of 92 students. It shows that only 13 students (14.13%) are employed, while the majority, 77 students (83.7%), are not employed. This indicates that most students are likely focused on their studies without active engagement in

employment. The low employment rate could be due to factors such as academic workload, limited job opportunities for students, or a preference for completing studies before seeking employment.

Table 3: Distribution of students by Nationality

Nationality	Freq.	Percent
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT	15	16.3
UGANDAN NATIVE	77	83.7
Total	92	100

Source: Primary data 2024

Table 3 presents the nationality distribution of 92 students. It shows that the majority, 77 students (83.7%), are Ugandan natives, while 15 students (16.3%) are international students. This indicates that the private universities in central region primarily serve local

students, with a smaller proportion of international students. The presence of international students suggests some level of global diversity and attractiveness of the private universities in central region to non-Ugandan learners.

Table 4: Sex of the respondents

Sex	Freq.	Percent
FEMALE	99	52.11
MALE	91	47.89
Total	190	100

Source: Primary data 2024

Table 4 reveals that out of the 190 total respondents, 99 (52.11%) were female, while 91 (47.89%) were male. This indicates a slightly higher proportion of female

respondents compared to males, with the combined total of both sexes making up 100% of the sample.

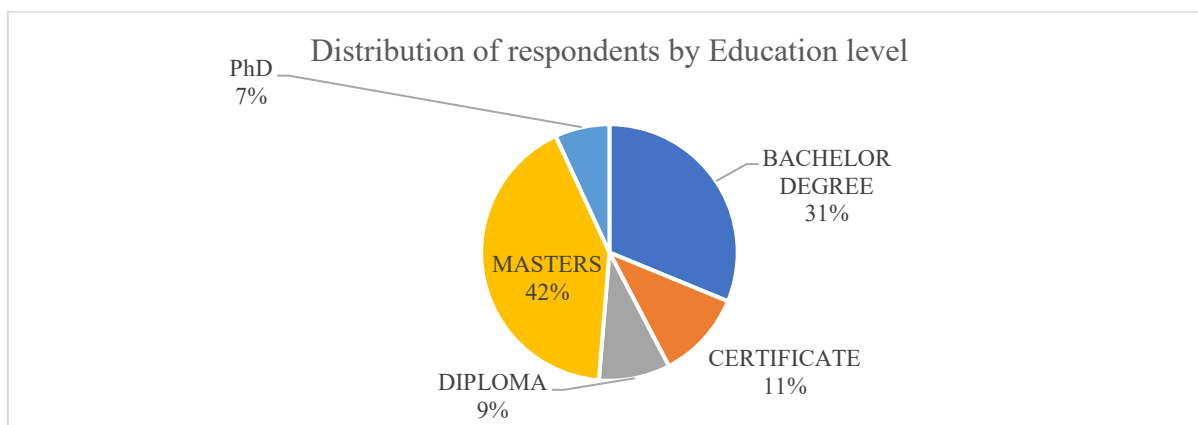


Figure 3: Distribution of respondents by Education level

Source: Primary data 2024

Figure 3 provides an overview of the educational qualifications of the 190 respondents. It shows that the majority of respondents have either a Master's degree (41.58%) or a Bachelor's degree (31.05%), indicating a relatively high level of education within the sample. A

smaller proportion has a Certificate (11.05%) or Diploma (8.95%), suggesting that these respondents have lower formal educational attainment. The smallest group, with 13 respondents (6.84%), holds a PhD, representing a highly specialized level of education. Overall, this

distribution highlights a sample with a strong representation of individuals with advanced degrees, such respondents have good knowledge of the private universities in central region in which they serve and are therefore resources to the study in terms of providing valid information on quality assurance mechanisms and perceived service delivery. This may have implications

for the findings or interpretations of the study, potentially reflecting higher education access or the type of population surveyed.

4.2 Quality Curriculum Content Analysis

Table 5: Perceptions of the respondents Quality Curriculum Content

Quality Curriculum Content	N	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Likert Mean	Stan dev
My university has a functional policy/guideline on development, review, assessment of curriculum.	184	23.37	19.02	33.15	24.46	3.587	1.098	
The university has established structures for consideration and approval of curriculum.	182	8.79	31.87	39.56	19.78	3.703	0.886	
My university undertakes market surveys on each programme before submitting it for accreditation	187	33.69	17.65	29.95	18.72	3.337	1.131	
The university has undertaken a graduate tracer study to ascertain whether all its programmes are still relevant to the job market	188	29.26	21.81	32.98	15.96	3.356	1.068	
In my university, all Schools undertake programme reviews regularly and submit reviewed programmes for reaccreditation	188	6.38	31.91	42.55	19.15	3.745	0.839	
All programmes in my university are accredited by National Council for Higher Education and the relevant professional bodies.	187	6.95	19.25	39.57	34.22	4.011	0.904	
All schools /Faculties in my university undertake regular course evaluations and issue out course evaluation reports to inform programme reviews	188	27.13	22.34	27.13	23.4	3.468	1.125	
The university undertakes Programme assessment on all programmes that are due for review.	187	0.53	26.74	16.04	37.97	18.72	3.476	1.094
The university undertakes stakeholders consultations on the quality of the curriculum and uses stakeholders feedback to improve the quality of the programmes	186	31.72	16.13	33.87	18.28	3.387	1.115	
The university has a clear structure for curriculum monitoring that provides regular feedback on the status of compliance of the university to accredited curriculum.	187	8.56	29.95	36.9	24.6	3.775	0.917	
Quality assurance reports on curriculum have improved the quality of university programmes continuously	184	9.24	22.28	48.91	19.57	3.788	0.864	
University stakeholders including students, staff, alumni and employers are generally satisfied with all university programmes .	188	17.02	34.57	32.98	15.43	3.468	0.950	

Quality Curriculum Content	N	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Likert Mean	Stan dev
The university undertakes regular staff appraisals on staff and shares feedback for staff to improve on the weak areas.	188	26.06	22.34	34.04	17.55	3.431	1.060	
The university system of benchmarking with other institutions on matters of curriculum has improved the quality of the programmes offered.	185	39.46	23.78	30.27	6.49	3.038	0.980	
Average	188					3.541	0.632	

1 – Strongly Disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Agree, 5 – Strongly Agree

Source: Primary data 2024

The quality of curriculum content in private universities in the Central Region is generally perceived positively, though several areas require improvement. Respondents moderately agree on the existence of curriculum policies and approval structures, with mean scores of 3.59 (SD = 1.10) and 3.70 (SD = 0.89) respectively. However, 23.37% and over 33% of respondents are either neutral or disagree, indicating gaps in awareness or implementation.

Practices such as market surveys (mean = 3.34, SD = 1.13) and graduate tracer studies (mean = 3.36, SD = 1.07) receive less favorable responses, with over 30% of respondents disagreeing on their consistent use, raising concerns about program relevance to the job market. Regular program reviews and accreditation are acknowledged positively (mean = 3.75, SD = 0.84), though some respondents express doubts about the timeliness and thoroughness of these processes.

Stakeholder engagement scores (mean = 3.39, SD = 1.12) and feedback mechanisms (mean = 3.78, SD = 0.92) indicate room for improvement in how feedback is incorporated and communicated. Benchmarking with

other institutions, with a mean score of 3.04 (SD = 0.98), is less convincingly endorsed, as 39.46% of respondents disagree that it has effectively improved curriculum quality.

Overall satisfaction with university programs is mixed, reflected by a mean score of 3.47 (SD = 0.95) and 34.57% of respondents expressing dissatisfaction. Staff appraisal mechanisms are moderately recognized (mean = 3.43, SD = 1.06), but feedback and improvement processes require strengthening.

In conclusion, while private universities in the Central Region show positive efforts towards curriculum quality, significant improvements are needed in stakeholder consultation, curriculum relevance to the job market, and consistency in review and accreditation. The variation in responses, as indicated by standard deviations and disagreement percentages, highlights the necessity for clearer, more systematic quality assurance practices.

4.3 Perceived Service Delivery

Table 6: Respondents perception on Perceived Service Delivery

Perceived Service Delivery	N	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Likert Mean	Stan dev
Quality Teaching and Learning								
There is an operational policy on teaching and learning in my university	185		23.24	15.68	36.76	24.32	3.622	1.092
My university operates on teaching time tables that are strictly adhered to by all staff who teach the required contact hours.	181		8.29	21.55	43.65	26.52	3.884	0.896
All lecturers in my university teach efficiently	182		12.64	14.29	49.45	23.63	3.841	0.930

Perceived Service Delivery	N	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Likert Mean	Stan dev
Students are highly satisfied with the quality of teaching and learning in my university	180		11.11	22.22	43.33	23.33	3.789	0.927
During teaching and learning in my university, the content coverage is commendable	183		9.29	25.14	42.08	23.5	3.798	0.906
The rate of attendance to class by teaching staff is excellent	184		11.41	28.8	39.67	20.11	3.685	0.922
The practical classes in my university equip the students with required practical skills needed on the job market	183		27.87	21.31	27.32	23.5	3.464	1.133
Teaching and learning in my university is so excellent to the extent that it equips the student with subject knowledge necessary for the job market.	185		10.81	36.76	28.65	23.78	3.654	0.961
My university runs the best examinations that are guided by an exam policy with the highest integrity and transparency.	185		7.03	18.38	46.49	28.11	3.957	0.865
The Continuous assessments administered in my university foster learning and enable student to improve during final exams.	184		9.24	19.57	48.37	22.83	3.848	0.880
The university system ensures timely marking of examinations and issuance of results to students.	186		22.04	20.97	36.56	20.43	3.554	1.050
Average	186						3.734	0.657
Quality of Students Welfare								
I know that my university has a policy governing overall students welfare services	183		6.56	35.52	37.7	20.22	3.716	0.862
The university's accommodation services to students are excellent	185		18.92	33.51	30.27	17.3	3.459	0.989
My university offers the best meals to its students	181		19.34	29.83	34.25	16.57	3.481	0.987
The university sickbay offers the best medical services to students and staff.	184		15.22	29.89	35.33	19.57	3.592	0.971
My university offers the best games and sports services to its students	184		6.52	22.28	45.11	26.09	3.908	0.860
The university offers students avenues to socialize and build cohesion and networks through its excellent inter and intra - cultural promotion.	185		8.11	21.62	49.73	20.54	3.827	0.848
The university am bias and overall environment is beautiful to extent that it enables students to enjoy life at the university	186		8.06	29.57	43.55	18.82	3.731	0.859
I know for a fact that recreational services at my university highly	185		9.73	26.49	47.03	16.76	3.708	0.860

Perceived Service Delivery	N	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Likert Mean	Stan dev
meet the needs of the students and staff								
It is vividly evident that all staff and students in my university are satisfied with the quality of student welfare	185		14.59	32.43	32.97	20	3.584	0.970
Average	187						3.669	0.576
Quality Research and Community engagement								
I know for a fact that majority of staff at my university are undertaking research and publish	185		23.78	31.89	30.27	14.05	3.346	0.994
The quality of research output in my university is excellent	185		28.65	28.11	27.03	16.22	3.308	1.057
The quantity of research in my university highly meets the expectations of university stakeholders	186		29.03	23.66	32.26	15.05	3.333	1.054
My university is running a lot of regional , continental and international based research grants	186		39.25	18.82	24.73	17.2	3.199	1.138
The ratings of my university based on the continent and globally is satisfactory to all university stakeholders	182		43.41	16.48	27.47	12.64	3.093	1.101
Staff at my university has participated in regional and international research conferences which have improved the university research base.	187		39.04	19.25	27.81	13.9	3.166	1.097
The amount of articles published by students and staff in internationally peer reviewed journal is overwhelming.	186		43.01	24.73	24.19	8.06	2.973	1.000
My university owns a research journal that enables students and staff to publish their articles.	183		44.26	18.03	22.95	14.75	3.082	1.124
Generally the quality of research and publication services in my university is satisfactory to university stakeholders.	186		39.78	22.04	26.88	11.29	3.097	1.056
I have observed successful joint projects between my university and the community.	187		41.18	16.58	24.6	17.65	3.187	1.156
The university community engagement services are commendable	184		38.59	17.93	27.17	16.3	3.212	1.128
Faculties in my university have embraced the community in teaching and learning.	184		44.57	11.96	23.91	19.57	3.185	1.200
There are noticeable tangible benefits to the community that emanate from the university deliberate service to the community.	186		37.63	12.9	29.57	19.89	3.317	1.172

Perceived Service Delivery	N	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Likert Mean	Stan dev
I have seen my university cooperating with community on matters of community enhancement.	186		29.03	18.82	32.26	19.89	3.430	1.109
Generally the community is greatly satisfied with the university services geared to wellbeing of community.	185		37.3	15.14	22.16	25.41	3.357	1.221
Average	188						3.222	0.875
Overall Average	188						3.498	0.621

2 – Strongly Disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Agree, 5 – Strongly Agree

Source: Primary data 2024

Perceptions regarding quality teaching and learning in private universities in the Central Region reveal moderate awareness and satisfaction. Only 47.76% of respondents agreed on the existence of an operational policy on teaching and learning (M = 3.62, SD = 1.09), with nearly 40% remaining neutral or disagreeing, suggesting gaps in policy awareness or implementation. Adherence to teaching timetables was positively viewed, with 69.17% agreement (M = 3.88, SD = 0.85), while 58.92% agreed that lecturers teach efficiently (M = 3.84, SD = 0.94). Satisfaction with teaching quality and content coverage was moderate (M = 3.79, SD = 0.97; M = 3.80, SD = 0.95, respectively), though some respondents reported inconsistencies across courses or lecturers. Teaching staff attendance and practical classes received mixed ratings (M = 3.69, SD = 1.02; M = 3.46, SD = 1.13), and preparation for the job market was perceived as moderate (M = 3.65, SD = 1.05). Examination integrity was highly rated (M = 3.96, SD = 0.88), as was continuous assessment (M = 3.85, SD = 0.90); however, timeliness of exam marking was less satisfactory (M = 3.55, SD = 1.14).

Regarding student welfare, awareness of welfare policies was moderate (M = 3.72, SD = 1.00), while accommodation and meal services were rated poorly (M = 3.46, SD = 1.06; M = 3.48, SD = 1.02). Medical services yielded mixed results (M = 3.59, SD = 1.03). Sports and social cohesion services were positively rated (M = 3.91, SD = 0.82; M = 3.83, SD = 0.88), with moderate satisfaction for campus environment and recreational services (M = 3.73, SD = 0.94; M = 3.71, SD = 0.97). Overall satisfaction with welfare services was mixed (M = 3.58, SD = 1.01).

Perceptions of research and publication quality were generally negative. Staff engagement in research had low approval (M = 3.35, SD = 1.07), as did the quality and quantity of research output (M = 3.31, SD = 1.06; M = 3.33, SD = 1.04). Dissatisfaction extended to research funding and conference participation (M = 3.20, SD = 1.09; M = 3.17, SD = 1.08). Publications in peer-reviewed journals and availability of university research journals were rated poorly (M = 2.97, SD = 1.11; M = 3.08, SD = 1.10), with overall low satisfaction regarding research services (M = 3.10, SD = 1.08).

Community engagement received similarly low ratings. Collaboration on community projects and engagement services were rated poorly (M = 3.19, SD = 1.05; M = 3.21, SD = 1.03), as was integration of community perspectives into teaching and learning (M = 3.19, SD = 1.04). Perceptions of community benefits, cooperation, and satisfaction with university services were moderate to low (M = 3.32, SD = 1.01; M = 3.43, SD = 1.02; M = 3.36, SD = 1.00).

Overall, the aggregated mean score for service delivery across categories was 3.50 (SD = 0.62), indicating moderate satisfaction. However, substantial variability suggests notable gaps across teaching, research, student welfare, and community engagement, underscoring the need for targeted improvements in private universities within the Central Region.

4.4 Correlation and regression analysis

Table 7: Correlational and Regression Analysis of Quality Curriculum Content and Perceived Service Delivery

Variable	1	2
1. Quality Curriculum Content	1.00	
2. Perceived Service Delivery	.82***	1.00

N = 190. **p < .001.

Source: Primary data 2024

A Pearson correlation analysis revealed a very strong positive correlation between quality curriculum content and perceived service delivery in private universities in Uganda's Central Region, $r(188) = .82, p < .001$. This indicates that higher levels of curriculum quality are strongly associated with more favorable perceptions of service delivery among stakeholders. This finding is consistent with recent empirical studies in higher education. For instance, Nakabugo, M. G. et al. (2020) found a significant positive relationship between curriculum quality and student satisfaction at Makerere University, emphasizing that curriculum relevance and instructional effectiveness are key determinants of

perceived service quality. Similarly, Agyemang, F. G. and Osei, B. (2023) reported that curriculum content and academic service quality significantly influence student satisfaction and institutional performance in higher education contexts. Furthermore, Sharma, P. and Mishra, S. (2024) confirmed that curriculum responsiveness and teaching quality are strong predictors of student satisfaction, reinforcing the central role of curriculum in shaping perceptions of service delivery. Collectively, these studies support the present findings by demonstrating that curriculum quality is a critical driver of how stakeholders evaluate service delivery in higher education institutions.

Table 8: Regression analysis showing the relationship quality curriculum and Perceived service delivery

Predictor	B	SE	t	p	95% CI for B
Constant	0.646	0.148	4.35	< .001	[0.353, 0.939]
Quality Curriculum Content	0.805	0.041	19.51	< .001	[0.724, 0.887]

$N = 188, R^2 = .672, \text{Adjusted } R^2 = .670, F(1, 186) = 380.63, p < .001, \text{Root MSE} = 0.357.$

Source: Primary data 2024

A simple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the predictive effect of curriculum quality on perceived service delivery. The results indicated that quality curriculum content is a significant predictor of perceived service delivery, $B = 0.805, SE = 0.041, t(188) = 19.51, p < .001$, with a 95% confidence interval of [0.724, 0.887]. This implies that a one-unit increase in curriculum quality leads to an approximate 0.81-unit increase in perceived service delivery, holding other factors constant. The model explained a substantial proportion of variance in perceived service delivery, $R^2 = .672, \text{Adjusted } R^2 = .670$, indicating that about 67% of the variation in stakeholders' perceptions is accounted for by curriculum quality. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was supported, confirming that curriculum quality significantly influences perceived service delivery in private universities in the central region of Uganda.

These findings are consistent with prior empirical studies. For instance, Harvey, L. and Green, D. (2020) emphasize that curriculum design and relevance are central determinants of perceived quality in higher education institutions. Similarly, Marginson, S. (2021) argues that curriculum responsiveness to labor market demands significantly enhances student satisfaction and perceived institutional value. More recently, Agyemang, F. G. and Osei, B. (2023) found that curriculum quality is a strong predictor of student satisfaction and perceived service quality in higher education institutions. Likewise, Sharma, P. and Mishra, S. (2024) established that curriculum relevance and instructional quality significantly influence students' perceptions of service delivery. Collectively, these studies reinforce the present findings by demonstrating that curriculum quality is a critical driver of perceived service delivery and overall institutional performance.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

The strong, statistically significant relationship between curriculum quality and perceived service delivery highlights the pivotal role curriculum content plays in shaping the educational environment and stakeholder experiences. These findings suggest that private universities in the Central Region should prioritize enhancing curriculum development and implementation as a strategic approach to improve overall service delivery and satisfaction. Investing in curriculum quality is likely to yield substantial benefits in terms of institutional reputation, student outcomes, and stakeholder trust. Therefore, ongoing evaluation and refinement of curriculum content should be integral to quality assurance and institutional development initiatives.

5.2 Recommendations

Enhance Curriculum Relevance and Responsiveness:

Private universities should regularly review and revise their academic programmes by engaging key stakeholders, such as employers, alumni, and community leaders, to ensure alignment with market demands and societal needs. This will improve student satisfaction and strengthen perceptions of service delivery.

Institutionalize Stakeholder-Informed Quality Assurance Models:

Universities should adopt strategic internal quality assurance frameworks, such as the SII-QAM model, that emphasize stakeholder feedback and impact-oriented improvements in curriculum design, teaching quality, and learning outcomes.

Link Accreditation to Service Delivery Metrics: Policy makers and the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) should tie university licensing and charter renewals to clear indicators of curriculum quality and stakeholder satisfaction to promote accountability and continuous service improvement.

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