

The Accreditation Challenges in Transnational Educational Ecology:

The Ghanaian Experience

An Investigative Report

Dr. Prosper Yao Tsikata¹

Assistant Professor of Communication

Dr. A. Kobla Dotse²

Director, Chemical R&D

© 2016 Prosper Yao Tsikata & A. Kobla Dotse. All Rights Reserved

¹ Prosper Yao Tsikata (Ph.D., Ohio University) is an Assistant Professor of Communication Studies in the Department of Communication Arts, Valdosta State University. He is also a journalist, a consultant, and an activist whose interest is in cross-cultural understanding of health and healing, health campaigns, and cross-cultural challenges in contemporary organizations. Correspondence to: pytsikata@valdosta.edu

² A. Kobla Dotse (Ph.D., Georgia Institute of Technology) is an educationist, a chemical technologist, innovation and technical manager, and a cultural critic. He coordinates fund raising activities in support of school projects in Ghana.

The Ethical Considerations Behind Study

Drawing on the ethos of the Society for Professional Journalists (SPJ), this report is premised on the assumption that “public enlightenment is the forerunner of justice and the foundation of democracy” (SPJ, 2014, September 6). Rightly so, this report is guided by the four key considerations of the SPJ as follows:

- I. Seek truth and report it
- II. Minimize harm
- III. Act independently
- IV. Be accountable and transparent

Executive Summary

The transnational nature of the contemporary educational ecology has placed many national accreditation boards under an enormous pressure in executing their mandate of monitoring, supervising, and granting accreditation to academic institutions and the programs they offer. In recent times, the Ghana National Accreditation Board (NAB from now on) has come under an immense public scrutiny for what the public may have rightly perceived as its failure to perform its gatekeeping role in safeguarding the credibility of educational products sold to the Ghanaian public by some unaccredited educational institutions.

Using a purposive comparative framework, we selected for interrogation cases of institutions and individuals who have come under public scrutiny for awarding and receiving academic qualifications and awards that the public considers questionable. This is to answer three pertinent questions:

- I. What is the accreditation status of institutions selected for analysis?
- II. Who are the individuals associated with these institutions?
- III. What are the motives of these individuals for acquiring these degrees/awards?

The report indicates that some of the institutions in question are in breach of the NAB's instrument of authority, while others have acquired NAB's accreditation under questionable arrangements. The report further indicates that two categories of individuals are identifiable in these accreditation controversies. While one group views higher academic qualifications as career tools, the other considers these awards as status symbols for self-actualization and a seal for the legitimization of their place of honor in the public's eye. An uncritical-propaganda-dogged media coupled with an unquestioning public continues to fuel the practice.

1. Introduction and Statement of Problem

The NAB, akin to accreditation boards in many countries, is facing enormous challenges in carrying out its constitution mandate—the monitoring and supervision of the quality of higher education and the granting and revocation accreditation for institutions of higher learning operating in Ghana—conferred on it by Act 2007 (Act 744). Recent cases of unaccredited or dubious academic institutions conferring academic degrees and awards on certain individuals attest to this state of affairs. Further testament to this state of affairs is the recent revelations by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Education, Winneba, Professor Mawutor Avoke, that 61 percent of teachers in tertiary institutions in Ghana are unqualified to teach in such institutions (GNA, 2016, April 16).

While this might look very much like a Ghanaian problem, one would argue that the problem of questionable academic qualifications has now assumed continental proportions and has infected every institution imaginable—government, higher educational institutions, the private sector, the diplomatic service, and just any human institution. A few examples: Johnny Molefe resigned as the Vice-Chancellor of Tshwane University of Technology in South Africa in 2011 when it was discovered that he had a dubious qualification (MaCfarlane, 2011, August 5); the high profile South African cabinet minister and parliamentarian who held many ministerial portfolios, Pallo Jordan, resigned in 2014 after it was discovered that his qualifications were false (Magome, 2015, April, 12); former South African Broadcasting Corporation Chair, Ellen Tshabalala, resigned after it was discovered that she had faked her qualifications (Ndenze, 2014, December 18); and in 2015, South Africa's ambassador to Japan, Mohau Pheko admitted faking her qualifications (Times Live, 2015, February 27).

In the wake of these scandals, the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA)—akin to the NAB in Ghana—introduced stringent verification modalities for evaluating both foreign and local qualifications. This was after the affected persons resigned from their positions.

In Nigeria, Ms. Stella Oduah, former Aviation Minister is on record to have faked her academic qualifications ((Mojeed, 2014, January 8). In 2013, a university professor in Nigeria was offered a fake doctoral degree for \$11,550 by a con artist, (Prof.) David Iornem, who also claims a professorial title for himself (Saharan Reporters, 2013, August 1). In Pakistan, a large number of parliamentarians are known to have acquired degrees with questionable status (Ellick, 2010, July 16). President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has also come under close scrutiny in recent times for allegations of using fake academic qualifications (BBC, 2016, June 3). With the number of dubious academic institutions offering fake academic qualifications to people around the world on the rise, the problem is a serious one that must be tackled with the seriousness it deserves.

To unpack the magnitude of the problem for public education, consumption, and, most importantly, for policy discourse, this report examines the accreditation regimes across three countries—the US, UK, and Ghana. This is to provide a context for the reader regarding the regimes that guide the accreditation processes in these countries. The report also provides a comparative analysis of what a doctoral degree in its various forms—residency, online, and honoris causa—entails. While these reviews are not exhaustive explanations regarding accreditation regimes and the structure of doctoral programs, the authors believe that these cogent and succinct background information are sufficient to provide an informative context to the reader on what he/she needs to know about the subject of accreditation and doctoral degrees to form an informed opinion on the subject matter under discussion.

Using a purposive comparative framework, we select academic institutions and individuals as cases for interrogation. Both institutional and individual cases selected for interrogation are news making cases with publicly available information on the Internet. First, we interrogate the accreditation status of the selected institutions. Second, we identify individual Ghanaians who are associated with these institutions through the receipt of qualifications and awards that the public may deem questionable. We then appraise the possible motivations behind the desire for the identified individuals to acquire these qualifications and awards. We analyze the role of the media in these processes, the attitude of the general public toward these challenges, and the impact of the situation on Ghana as a country. Based on the foregoing, we made some recommendations for immediate policy action to remedy the situation.

2. Literature Review

This section provides the context to the subject matter of interest—accreditation of educational institutions and the award of (post)graduate level degrees to individuals. The section is divided into two parts—(1) comparative review of national accreditation, and (2) earned doctoral (residency and online) and honorary degrees. The context is provided to orient the reader to the wider discourse on accreditation. This is to serve as terms of reference from which the selected cases will be evaluated.

2.1. Comparative Review of National Accreditation

Tertiary education (particularly postgraduate education), unlike primary and secondary education, is viewed by most nations as a vital lever for national development. Even in the US, where private capital can purchase everything and anything, including education, tertiary

education is jealously guided through accreditation and quality control. To be admitted into any graduate program of repute in the US, prospective students are required to take the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), the Graduate Management Test (GMAT), the Law School Admission Test (LSAT) and other discipline specific examinations. There is further filtering of students from international destinations in the admission process to determine their capability for graduate level work. Apart from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), which is a mandatory requirement for almost all graduate programs, some universities and colleges in the US further require applicants to go through the World Education Services (WES) for the conversion of their GPA or academic qualifications to a US equivalent.

Beyond these general requirements, institutional accreditation provides a reliable conduit among the comity of nations for the acceptance of academic degrees emanating from each other's country. For example, for a bachelor's degree holder from the University of Cape Coast seeking admission to a University in the UK, once he/she meets the academic requirements of the recipient university, he/she does not have to go through any forms of conversion or take any form of examination for the recipient university to accept his/her credentials. In the same vein, qualifications emanating from these accredited institutions become acceptable in each other's jurisdiction. National accreditation boards, thus, serve as a pivot around which trust among academic institutions revolve.

To protect the unsuspecting public from being duped by institutions which may not necessarily be delivering value for money, states set up these accreditation boards with legal instruments to monitor, regulate, and to grant accreditation to tertiary institutions that are in good standing. This creates a triumvirate relationship among states (represented by the accreditation board), the educational institution (mostly profit seeking but also the nonprofit) and the private

individual (a helpless and unsuspecting customer). The point is that the individual customer lacks the capacity to monitor or regulate the activities of educational institutions. Therefore, the regulatory agencies or institutions perform this task on behalf of government and the customer with heavy penalties for institutions that breach the public trust.

With this enormous responsibility on the shoulders of accreditation boards as gatekeepers for institutional standards, they are constantly evaluating the quality of research and pedagogy to ensure that standards are maintained and improved upon. As stated earlier, when the quality of education is dubious, it has implications for national development. Thus, beyond the role of providing institutional trust among academic institutions, the educational and national development goals can/are shaped by the accreditation boards.

The US, with the highest number of post-secondary institutions in the world, maintains a database—under the auspices of the US Department of Education’s Office of Post-secondary Education (OPE from now on)—where accredited institutions are listed on the recommendations of state agencies vested with the powers of accreditation. According to the OPE, “the Secretary of Education is required by law to publish a list of nationally recognized accrediting agencies that the Secretary determines to be reliable authorities as to the quality of education or training provided by the institution of higher education and the higher education program they accredit” (OPE, N.D.). These agencies are either national, regional, specialized, recognized for pre-accreditation services, or are recognized for Title IV purposes. These agencies, thus, develop evaluation criteria and conduct peer evaluations for institutions and programs to ensure that they are meeting the agency’s criteria and national development needs.

For the US, the various categories of agencies are available as follows:

I. List of regional and national accrediting agencies:

http://www2.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/accreditation_pg6.html

II. Specialized accrediting agencies (in the areas of arts and humanities, education training, legal, community and social services, personal care and services, and healthcare):

http://www2.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/accreditation_pg7.html

III. Accrediting agencies recognized for their pre-accreditation categories:

http://www2.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/accreditation_pg8.html

IV. Accrediting agencies recognized for Title IV purposes:

http://www2.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/accreditation_pg9.html

The US has some private organizations that also perform accreditation, but are not agencies of the OPE with its seal of authority for accreditation purposes. An example is the Council for Higher Education (CHEA). The OPE, however, warns that it cannot guarantee that the information contained on its database is accurate, current, and complete, since it depends on accrediting institutions for its information (OPE, N.D.)

For the UK, the authorities recognize those institutions which have been granted degree awarding powers by a Royal Charter, an Act of Parliament, or the Privy Council. By a statutory instrument 2013 No. 2992, the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills exercises his/her powers conferred by section 216(1) of the Education Reform Act 1988 to recognize educational institutions with the capacity to award academic degrees. The link to recognized bodies (or academic institutions) is available here:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/2992/made>

In addition to being a recognized body, these institutions undergo review by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) to remain in good standing. The QAA demands

that educational standards in the UK are being met by these recognized bodies. It also requires that any affiliated institution to the recognized bodies must also satisfy QAA standards. For example, in its April 2014 review, 3D Modern College Limited, London, failed the quality standard test and is rightly classified as such for public education:

(<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews-and-reports/provider?UKPRN=10038552#.V2bjfT9nB8E>).

Aware of phony or dubious institutions duping the unsuspecting public by awarding them unrecognized academic degrees, the UK authorities promulgated a law to bring offenders to book. According to the Education Reform Act 1988 C.40 Part IV, Section 214, any person who, in the course of business, grants, offers to grant or issues any invitation relating to any award:

- I. Which may reasonably be taken to be an award granted or to be granted by a United Kingdom institution; and
- II. Which either
 - a. Is described as a degree; or
 - b. Purports to confer on its holder the right to the title of bachelor, master, or doctor and may reasonably be taken to be a degree;

Shall be guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/40/part/IV/crossheading/unrecognised-degrees>

Zeroing in on Ghana, the NAB is in a regulatory position, conferred by the National Accreditation Board Act, 2007 (Act 744). By this instrument, the NAB is vested with powers to monitor, supervise, and revoke institutional and program accreditation of any institution that is operating in Ghana. This is to protect the unsuspecting public from unscrupulous institutions and

ensure that national development needs through education are also being met. The point is that, unlike the US, in Ghana and the UK accreditation is a sole function of the government.

However, for a developing country such as Ghana, quality control has become an enormous challenge for multiple reasons. First and specifically, with regards to online programs from foreign countries (where these programs are not accredited), the transnational ecology of higher education today makes the monitoring of these institutions a herculean challenge. The term transnational ecology is employed to underscore the fact that, today, all manner of arrangements are available to deliver higher education to individuals anywhere around the globe. A prospective student may take an online degree from a far-flung country like Australia without necessarily having to set foot into that country. Some foreign institutions are also operating across the borders of their home countries in an attempt to bring education to the doorsteps of those who can afford it. But even in the face of the constraints associated with monitoring these programs, the NAB has been able to identify some of these institutions and listed them on its website as unaccredited to operate in Ghana. A good example is the Atlantic International University (Available at <http://www.nab.gov.gh/unaccredited-institutions>).

Second, for what looks like the lack of resources coupled with the lack of personnel with the right mix of skills to investigate, evaluate, and to ensure that measurable criteria are consistently applied may account for confusion around the accreditation status of many mushrooming universities and colleges operating in Ghana. Third, with regard to some unaccredited institutions operating in Ghana, a critical evaluation of arrangements at the Ghana National Accreditation Board (NAB) reveals that, at least, there is one individual board member who might be cited for conflict of interest. As a member of the NAB, Paul Buatsi partners the Swiss Management Center (unaccredited by the Swiss Accreditation Council (SAC) in its own

home country Switzerland) which is operating in Ghana. On Buatsi's own LinkedIn page, he boldly states "as partner for Ghana, I represented the interest of the Swiss Management Center University in Ghana." (LinkedIn, 2016, June 19). The dates on Buatsi's LinkedIn page indicate that between March 2012 and December 2015, Buatsi represented the SMC. Within the same period, February 2012 to July 2016 (at the time of writing this report), Buatsi was also a member of NAB without any inkling that he was in a conflict of interest position.

2.2. Earned Doctoral (Residency and Online) versus Honorary Doctoral Degrees

An honorary degree or honoris causa (Latin: "for the sake of honor) is an academic degree for which universities (or other degree-awarding institutions) waive the usual matriculation, residency, and examination requirements for its recipient. Unlike earned doctoral degrees, its recipients are honored for contributions to a specific field or to society in general. This degree does not have the same stature as earned doctoral degrees and must not be presented as such. To prevent misrepresentation, most institutions in the UK, as a matter of policy, ask recipients of honoris causa to place h.c in parenthesis (e.g., "Dr. (h.c)", "HonD," HonDMus," etc.) after the title to differentiate it from an earned doctoral degree. Specifically with US universities, the following are noticeable: LLD (Doctor of Laws), LittD (Doctor of Letters), HLD (Doctor of Humane Letters), ScD (Doctor of Science).

There are three important points of note here: (a) honorary doctorates do not correspond to or equate to earned doctorate degrees; (b) an awarding institution must be accredited to confer an honorary doctorate; and (c) nominees are normally screened by a high-level university committee to determine their contributions to a field of human endeavor or society in general and their suitability as an individual who will promote the image of the institution.

Earned doctoral degrees on the other hand follow a rigidly prescribed program of study. In the US, most doctorate programs (Doctor of Philosophy or Ph.D.) on a fulltime basis take between 5-6 years to complete (with a minimum residency of 3-4 years). In continental Europe and the UK, it takes between 3-4 years (with a minimum of 2-3 years residency to complete). One important difference one must be aware of is that, while in the US doctoral students must accumulate a required number of credits to progress into candidacy (irrespective of the number of credits one had accumulated at the masters level), in the UK and European universities a doctoral student can begin his/her dissertation research immediately after finishing research methods. The outcome is that US doctoral degree holders tend to have more grounding in their areas of specialization compared to their European and UK counterparts.

In both cases, however, the residency aspect of doctoral education is supposed to instill in its recipient collegiality and the opportunity to work with renowned academics and researchers in the students' area of interest. This affords students the opportunity to design research topics, research techniques, and to present papers at professional meetings and academic conferences. For American universities where Teaching and Research Assistantships/Teaching and Research Associates are the norm, residency is an opportunity for classroom and laboratory/field research mentorship. The doctoral student learns how to work closely with undergraduate students (in some cases graduate students) through the teaching of courses, acquire classroom management skills (including federal regulations for managing students' record), and gain understanding and use of the university's virtual course management system (e.g., Blackboard or D2L), among other important skills needed to be successful in an academic environment.

For online qualifications generally, the question of rigor and accreditation are still nagging issues. In spite of the opportunity to acquire your Ph.D. at a minimal expense and with

the flexibility to tailor your academic schedules to suit your career and other life engagements (Dupuis, 2016; Gagne & Shepherd, 2001), its deficits in research, networking and collegiality, teaching experience, and lack of accreditation and questions about its integrity are well documented (Patti, 2007; Sapp & Simon, 2011; Schrock, 2009). For some academic institutions with even online doctoral programs, they would not recruit online doctorate holders as professors for their universities and colleges. Even at the K-12 level the State of Florida would not recognize Nova Southeastern online doctoral degrees for administrative positions (Patti, 2007). Grossman and Johnson (2016) highlight negative industry perceptions of online education. According to the duo, “employers are significantly more willing to offer employment to an entry-level job applicant whose baccalaureate degree in accounting, from an AACSB-accredited institution (take note AACSB is different from ACBSP), was obtained in a traditional (on campus) or hybrid (blended learning) environment as opposed to an online environment” (p. 91). Furthermore, employers tend to be more accepting of lower-level, as opposed to upper-level, online-accounting coursework and favor applicants who complete a baccalaureate-degree on-campus and an online-M.B.A., or vice versa, over those who complete both degrees online.

At the university and college levels, Guendoo (2008) points out that community colleges are more receptive to online doctoral degrees than universities and other colleges. Karl and Peluchette (N.D.) in an interview with 99 US faculty members indicate that 70% of them would not hire a candidate with an online degree for a tenure track position in management for reasons of lack of mentoring, networking, rigor, integrity and preparation because they believe these issues impact directly on the mentoring of future managers.

The point is that on-campus earned doctoral degrees are more favorable for academic positions than online academic qualifications. For honorary degrees, we might simply classify them as pseudo-academic decorations with no value at all in the academic world.

3. Methodology: Comparative Purposive Sampling Technique

This report adopts the comparative purposive sampling technique in selecting its cases—both institutions of interest and the individuals of interest—for analysis. The comparative purposive sampling technique is deliberately adopted for a couple of reasons:

- I. Due to the qualities of the cases of interest at the individual level: i.e., (a) Individuals who are thought to have achieved the first four levels of Maslow's human needs and are thought to have sought opportunities for self-actualization by any means possible, including receiving an honorary doctorate. (b) Individuals who have sought and acquired academic qualifications which may be deemed by the public as dubious. These two groups would then be compared for any similarities and differences between them.
- II. This report also selects institutions whose accreditation statuses are considered by the public to be in doubt, but have conferred academic degrees, including honorary degrees on some individuals (Teddle & Yu, 2007). Based on these unique characteristics with the purpose of evaluating the accreditation status of the degree awarding institutions of interest and the individuals who have been awarded these qualifications, the cases are purposive rather than random (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003a).

To qualify as a case for interrogation, based on the above characteristics, both the individuals and the institutions under investigation must have been in the news. In this case, information on the selected cases and individuals can be deemed public information, which is also accessible to the general public. The cases—both institutions and individuals—which have already been in the news are selected. The names of these individuals and the associated institutions are then placed in Google search engine for any public information on them. Through critical evaluation, the status of the individuals and the accreditation status of the institutions in question are determined. This is to answer the following questions: I. What is the accreditation status of the institutions selected for analysis? II. Who are the individuals associated with these institutions? III. What are the motives that drive these individuals to acquire these degrees/awards?

The report begins with a comparative overview of accreditation regimes in the US, UK, and Ghana. This is followed by a comparative analysis of doctoral degrees—residency, online and the honorary. This is to provide the reader with a context for understanding the selected cases. This is then followed by the method for selecting the cases and the selected cases. Analysis of the cases, implications, recommendations, and discussion and conclusion then follows.

Table 1: Selected Institutions and Associated Individuals

Name of Institutions	Associated Individuals
Atlantic International University, Honolulu, Hawaii	(Dr.) Hassan Ayariga, Presumptive presidential candidate of the All People Congress (APC) Ms. Charity Afua Boateng (Ph.D. Candidate), University of Professional Studies
Dayspring Christian university of Mississippi and local affiliates, Global Center for Transformational Leadership and Pan African Clergy Council	(Dr.) Kwesi Appiah, former Ghana Blacks Stars Coach (Dr.) Gifty Dansoa Anti

	(Dr.) Joseph Kobina Essibu
	(Dr.) Wisdom Khehor
	(Dr.) Akua Sarpong Ayisu
	(Dr.) Patience Abolo Agbaza
	(Dr.) Gabriel Canaco
	(Dr.) Gabriel Canaco
	(Dr.) Gilbert Abeiku Aggrey (Abeiku Santana)
	(Dr.) Bernard Otabil
	(Dr.) Prince Kofi Kludjeson
	(Dr.) Jessie Quist
	(Dr.) Kofi Asamoah
	(Dr.) Salwa Helen
	(Dr.) Bertha Ivy Owusu
	(Dr.) Maxwell Kofi Awuku
	(Dr.) Sherry Ayittey
	(Dr.) Kofi Portuphy, NDC Chairman
	(Dr.) John Kudalor, IGP
Almeda College/university, Atlanta, GA	Aquinas Tawiah Quansah, (B.A.)
European-American University, Commonwealth of Dominica and affiliates in Lagos, Nigeria	(Dr.) Bernice Adiku Heloo, MP
American Century University, Albuquerque	Dzifa Aku Ativor, (B.Sc. & M.A.), Former Minister
Thomas A-Bucket University Canterbury, Kent, UK. Affiliates: Pan African Mission Association, Lagos, Nigeria, and African Institute of Technology, Nigeria	(Dr.) Patrick Kobla Agboba
Swiss Management Center (SMC), Zurich, Switzerland	(Prof. Dr. Dr.) Goski Alabi, University of Professional Studies (Dr.) John Gatsi, University of Cape Coast (Dr.) Tetteh Nettey (Dr.) Albert Puni, University of Professional Studies Mr. Stephen Teye Akrobor, (Doctoral candidate), University of Professional Studies
University of Dublin, California	(Dr.) Theophilus Tay (aka Theophilus Worgbale),
University of California	King David Medical Center

(Dr.) Nana Yaa Jantuah, Public Utility Regulatory Commission
(Dr.) Sampson Effah Apraku, Samara Company Limited
(Dr.) Moses Asaga, National Petroleum Authority
(Dr.) Kwame Acheampong-Kyei, GLICO Group
(Dr.) Daniel Mckorley, McDan Shipping Company
Very Reverend (Dr.) Sam Nmai Ollenu, West African Examination Council
(Dr.) Benedict Kwesi Tandoh, BBS Group of Companies
(Dr.) Kay Kwao-Simmonds, GIHOC Distillery Limited
(Dr.) Kwame Antwi-Boasiako, Ghana Institute of Management
(Dr.) Kofi Amoah-Abban, Rigworld International Services Limited
(Dr.) George Yaw Gyamfi-Osew, National Lottery Authority

This is by no means an exhaustive list

3.1. Case Description and Analysis of Institutions and Persons Associated with them

This section contains a case-by-case description and analysis of selected institutions and individuals who have come under public scrutiny in recent times through the award and acceptance of questionable academic qualifications.

3.1.1. Atlantic International University, Honolulu, Hawaii. First, a critical examination of accredited universities registered on the website of the OPE was conducted but Atlantic International University was not listed among the accredited universities in Hawaii.

Second, a wide Internet search was conducted for any information on the accreditation status of this institution. This second level search revealed that the Atlantic International University is listed on the NAB website as an unaccredited institution. Further to this, the search revealed that in 2002, consumer protection law suit was brought against Atlantic International University for operating as an uncredited university. (The case against the university can be accessed via the following link: http://files.hawaii.gov/dcca/ocp/udgi/lawsuits/AIU/atlantic_intl_u_c.pdf). This second level search also revealed that academic qualifications from the Atlantic International University are listed as fraudulent and substandard, thus, illegal to be used in the state of Texas per Texas Penal Code (Section 32.52). The offense of using any academic qualifications from this institution is classified as Class B misdemeanor, meaning one is liable for a year's jail term for the offense (This information is accessible via the following link:

<http://www.theccb.state.tx.us/?objectid=EF4C3C3B-EB44-4381-6673F760B3946FBB>)

In spite of all these red flags (Dr.) Hassan Ayariga, the presumptive presidential candidate of the All Peoples Congress (APC) claims to have acquired a doctoral degree from this university and would insist to be addressed as a doctorate holder in a TV interview. Sadly, he tags a sleeping Ghanaian media along in that regard. Instead of any journalist of substance who interviews this man conducting a thorough investigation on this university in order to confront him with the facts, the media presents him as he claims and the public unquestionably accepts that and addresses him so. Ms. Charity Afua Boateng, University of Professional Studies, is also currently “pursuing” a Ph.D. in this institution, in spite of the fact that this institution is listed on the NAB website as unaccredited.

3.1.2. Dayspring Christian University of Mississippi and its Local Affiliates, Global Center for Transformational Leadership, Pan African Clergy Council, and the World Council for Evangelical Clergy. These institutions have been under public scrutiny for some time now. On September 18, 2014, the NAB published a report that discredited the honorary doctorate degree conferred on (Dr.) Kwesi Appiah, Ghana's head coach in the 2014 World Cup. The board categorically stated that the above institutions are in no way certified to honor any Ghanaian with a doctorate degree (Ghana Soccer, 2014, September 18). Prior to the action of the NAB, the following individuals were awarded similar doctoral degrees:

(Dr.) Gifty Dansoa Anti

(Dr.) Joseph Kobina Essibu

(Dr.) Wisdom Kpehor

(Dr.) Akua Sarpong Ayisu

(Dr.) Gabriel Canaco

(Dr.) Patience Abolo Agbaza (Ghana News Agency, 2012, April 15)

Other individuals who were also awarded similar academic degrees were:

(Dr.) Bernard Otabil

(Dr.) Prince Kofi Kludjeson

(Dr.) Jessie Quist

(Dr.) Kofi Asamoah

(Dr.) Salwa Helen

(Dr.) Bertha Ivy Owusu

(Dr.) Maxwell Kofi Awuku

(Dr.) Kofi Portuphy

(Dr.) Sherry Ayittey

(Dr.) Gilbert Abeiku Aggrey (Alias Abeiku Santana).

It is important to note here that, with the declaration of Kwesi Appiah's honorary doctorate null and void by the NAB on September 18, 2014, that precedent quashes all other doctoral awards by the aforementioned institutions. That being the case, one would expect a reputable media organization such as the Daily Graphic to respect the legal instrument of the NAB. Contrary to this expectation, on December 16, 2014, in the run-up to the NDC congress at which Kofi Portuphy was elected as the NDC Chairman, the Daily Graphic carried a profile feature on Portuphy. In this piece, Kobby Asmah and Kofi Yeboah, quoted Portuphy's discredited honorary doctorate degree to promote his candidacy. According to the duo, "The Dayspring Christian University in the United States of America conferred an honorary doctorate degree in humanitarianism on Mr. Portuphy this year. The award was based on Mr. Portuphy's selfless devotion to humanitarian activities which spanned more than three decades" (Asmah & Yeboah, December 16, 2014). If this is not institutional failure and a wanton disregard for the laws of the country, then what would constitute such?

With the current hullabaloo about a doctoral degree awarded to Ghana's foremost policeman, IGP John Kudalor, from the same Dayspring Christian University (Larnyoh, Pulse News, 2016, June 21), it raises questions about the mental capacity of (Dr.) Kudalor to lead an investigative organization such as the Ghana Police Service. As the foremost police officer, the public expect the IGP to be the one protecting Ghanaian institutions, not the one breaking their instrument of authority. Besides, as the foremost investigative officer, if even the IGP is unaware of Kwesi Appiah's case, it should have occurred to him along the line to do a thorough search on the credibility of the institution that was about to award him with no other

degree than an academic doctoral degree. What to do with the IGP on this issue is left to his appointing authority.

A search conducted on this institution uncovers a communication between a Ghanaian journalist, Emmanuel Dogbevia, and Dayspring Christian University in which the journalist approached the institution feigning interest in its honorary doctorate. The institution responded by requesting an amount of \$500.00 from him for the award to be conferred. When Dogbevia delayed in responding to the offer, the institution offered to reduce the fee by \$75.00 (Follow the link to Dogbevia's communication with this institution <https://www.ghanabusinessnews.com/2016/04/10/155569/>) (Dogbevia, 2016, April 10).

3.1.3. Almeda College (variously known as Almeda University, Almeda College and University, or Almeda International University), Atlanta, GA and Boise, ID. First, a search was conducted on Almeda College/University on the website of the OPE, but the institution was not listed among its list of accredited institutions. Second, a Google search was conducted on Almeda College/University. This search results revealed that Almeda was a non-accredited American institution that offered various academic degrees, including online certificates. Until it folded up, Almeda College boasted of accreditation from the Council for Distance Education, The Interfaith Education Ministry, and the Association for Online Academic Excellence. All the aforementioned accreditation bodies are themselves not agencies recognized by the OPE (Get Educated, N.D.).

At least an individual in the NDC government is associated with this institution. Mr. Aquinas Tawiah Quansah, former Deputy Minister of the Central Region and current Member of Parliament for Mfantsiman West Constituency claims to have obtained a B.A. degree from

this institution. This implication is that even the office of the Chief of Staff of Ghana's presidency is not spared of these phony qualifications because the human resource department of the presidency fails to do a thorough job on its appointees.

3.1.4. European-American University, Commonwealth of Dominica with affiliations in Lagos, Nigeria. Being a non-American University, this university displays a catalogue of affiliations and accolades under accreditation on its website. First among these accolades is its "international status." Under its international status, the European-American University indicates that it operates on the basis of a corporate charter granted to it by the Commonwealth of Dominica. The university further claims to hold two Royal Charters "from HM the Omukama of Bunyoro-Kitara (which also incorporates the University in the Kingdom of Bunyoro-Kitara), and, additionally, from HRH the Chief of Gomoa Nyanyano, Ghana" (European-American University, 2013). The question is: has Ghana's NAB been replaced by a Royal Charter from the chief of Gomoa Nyanyano?

One (Dr.) Bernice Adiku Heloo, a member of Parliament for Hohoe Constituency claims to have acquired a "Ph.D." from this institution in Sociology after studying between 2008 and 2010. This is in the face of other career engagements she must have been involved in. If she is that smart to pursue a Ph.D. in two years, in spite of all other engagements, the question is: why not in university in Ghana?

3.1.5. American Century University, Albuquerque, NM or San Jose California. First, a search was conducted on the OPE website both in the state of New Mexico and California, but in both cases the results indicated that the American Century University is not

listed in either state as accredited by the OPE. Second, an Internet-wide search was conducted to augment the initial search. On this score, one discovers a ton of information indicating that the institution is a diploma mill that is not accredited by the OPE (Foreign Credits International Experts, 2013).

A former Minister of Roads and Highways, Dzifa Aku Ativor, claims to have obtained both B.Sc. Administration (2007) and M.A. Human Resource Management (2012) from this university. An interesting observation is that as a Deputy Minister between 2009 and 2012, she was also a student pursuing her Master's degree with the aforementioned university. If her appointing authorities based part of their decisions to appoint her on the basis of these qualifications, it again demonstrates the failure of the human resource entity of the executive to do a good job on the background of its appointees.

3.1.6. St. Thomas A-Bucket University Canterbury, Kent, UK

([https://www.facebook.com/pages/St-Thomas-A-Becket-](https://www.facebook.com/pages/St-Thomas-A-Becket-UniversityCanterburyUK/250357125002771)

[UniversityCanterburyUK/250357125002771](https://www.facebook.com/pages/St-Thomas-A-Becket-UniversityCanterburyUK/250357125002771)) and its affiliates: **Pan African Missionary Association, Aba, Nigeria** (<http://www.netministries.org/ministries/CM07536>), and **African Institute of Theology** (non-existent). In this case, first, the list of recognized bodies—as universities and colleges with accreditation to operate in the UK are called—was ran. But St. Thomas A-Bucket University Canterbury, Kent, was not listed. Second, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) website was also interrogated but St. Thomas A-Bucket University Canterbury, Kent, UK, failed to show up at all. As a third filter, an Internet-wide search was conducted on this institution. This search uncovered St. Thomas A-Bucket University Canterbury, Kent, UK, as an unaccredited institution. Further, its Facebook page

shows it has only 7 likes, indicating inactivity. For its affiliates, the African Institute of Theology and the Pan African Mission Association, they either do not exist or do not have an Internet presence. Just as their associate St. Thomas A-Bucket University Canterbury, Kent, they have a doubtful existence.

His purported Royal Majesty, Hon. (Dr.) Torgbui Sri III (aka Patrick Agboba), Awomefia of Anlo State is on record to have received an honorary doctorate degree in leadership and national development from these institutions recently. Like Kudaor, Agboba was a senior police officer at the rank of deputy commissioner. As usual, the conferment of this fake doctoral degree by these dubious institutions was reported in the Daily Graphic of Tuesday May 3, 2016 without any critical checks on the claimant and the institution conferring the award.

3.1.7. Swiss Management Center (SMC), Zurich, Switzerland. First, this institution came to public attention based on an open letter penned by one David Amoah, who identified himself as a concerned professor, about the activities of the SMC. In this letter, Amoah lamented how “there are several individuals teaching in our public institutions with certificates from unaccredited institutions, some disguisedly registered under the Ghana [National] Accreditation Board.” The author then queried if the NAB can “explain to Ghanaians why [,] for example, the Swiss Management Center (SMC), which is not accredited in Switzerland is registered under the Board and offering an online Doctoral Certificate in Business Administration in 1-2 years” (Amoah, 2016, March 21). This letter was copied to the Vice Chancellors, Ghana, (VCG); the NAB; and the Speaker of Parliament. On sighting this letter, an Internet-wide search was conducted on the accreditation status of this institution.

Multiplicity of issues emerged regarding its accreditation status. These are: I. the SMC is not accredited by the Swiss Accreditation Council (SAC), a Swiss federal institution that monitors the quality of higher education in that country (SAC, 2015). II. A letter was sent to the NAB and its Executive Secretary by Dr. A. Kobla Dotse, based on this observation. In his response, the Executive Secretary of the NAB, Mr. Kwame Dattey, indicated that the NAB's accreditation granted to the SMC is based on SMC's accreditation by the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP), an accrediting body under the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) in the United States (see appendix for communication).

Second, the information from the NAB triggered a further search on the link between the SMC, the ACBSP, the CHEA, and the OPE. The following facts were unraveled: I. The ACBSP is not recognized by the OPE as one of its accreditation agencies (in other words, the ACBSP does not have the seal of authority from the US Department of Education). The ACBSP derives its accreditation powers the CHEA which is a private organization and also not an agency of the OPE. II. According to the ACBSP itself, it “does not accredit the institution, only the business programs at the institution” (ACBSP, 2016, June 10). III. The ACBSP provides caveats to students. According to the ACBSP, “most businesses and universities reviewing transcripts and accepting degrees for employment or advanced degrees base their decisions on the existence of action by a local, regional or national authority regarding the institution and the authority to grant degrees” (ACBSP, 2016, June 10). IV. Specifically, the ACBSP points out that “for institutions located within the US, regional accreditation of the institution is required for membership accreditation eligibility” (so, instead of the NAB evaluating the SMC on its merit to determine the fit of the content of its

programs to local needs, it based its decision on that of the ACBSP which is not even recognized by the US Department of Education as one of its accrediting agencies. What is clear is that since the SMC may not operate in the US, the ACBSP does not really matter. The implication is that it is up to any country in which the SMC operates to decide what they want to do with the SMC). V. Further attempts to alert the NAB about these facts and to seek further clarification went unanswered (see appendix for communication).

Third, the failure of the NAB to respond to queries prompted a third level search. The following observations were made: I. Paul Buatsi who is a member of the NAB was concurrently the SMC representative in Ghana—a clear conflict of interest situation (Buatsi, 2016, June 19). II. Some professors listed on the SMC website display academic qualifications that are different from their instructional areas even though graduate level instruction requires specialization. Examples are: Dr. Hardy Bouillon, whose training is in philosophy (Doctor in Philosophy both M.A. and Ph.D.) but professes economics; and Dr. Michael Leube whose training is in Anthropology (B.A., M.A., Ph.D.), but professes political economy. III. Individuals who acquire the SMC doctorate are likely to have another doctorate degree (Ph.D.) from the Central University of Nicaragua.

The following individuals are associated with this center:

(Prof. Dr. Dr.) Goski Alabi, University of Professional Studies, Accra, Ghana

(Dr.) John Gatsi, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana

(Dr.) Tetteh Nettey, Founder and President of High Point Academy, Accra, Ghana

Stephen Teye Akrobor, University of Professional Studies, Accra, Ghana

Albert Puni, University of Professional Studies, Accra, Ghana

3.1.8. University of Dublin, California. First, an individual purporting to be a physician was arrested and sentenced to prison (Follow the link to events <http://www.modernghana.com/newstthread1/296886/1/>). When he returned from prison, he continues with the practices that sent him to prison in the first place. His Facebook page reveals that he studied at University of Dublin, California, and then studied medicine at University of California. A search on University of Dublin, California, reveals that it is a diploma mill. Second, contacts were made with all the campuses of University of California to establish the veracity of the claims to have attended a medical school on one of its campuses where he studied obstetrics and gynecology, but the feedback indicated that the individual was unknown to all the UC campuses. (Dr.) Theophilus Tay (aka Theophilus Worgbale) claims to be associated with the above universities, where he studied medicine.

3.1.9. The Commonwealth University and London Graduate School. First, this institution came to public attention when it conferred an honorary doctoral award on Nana Yaa Jantuah and eight other Ghanaians in 2016 (refer to the individuals in the table above). The aura around the conferment carried hallmarks of a diploma mill, inviting proper scrutiny of the activities of this institution. At this stage, it was discovered that the institution is registered in Belize but maintains a London address. The institution boasts of being accredited by the International Association for Distance Learning, UK. It must be noted that in the UK, accreditation is the sole preserve of the government. Thus, any claims of being accredited by an agency other than the Royal Charter/Privy Council/Act of Parliament as a recognized body which is under the scrutiny of the QAA must be red flagged. Second, with the red flag properly observed, a thorough search of the QAA website and the list of recognized bodies in

the UK revealed that the Commonwealth University and the London Graduate Schools are not listed by these agencies as recognized bodies/academic institutions per the UK yardstick. As a third and final filter, an Internet wide search reveals that the so-called (Prof.) David Iornem who was arrested for attempting to sell dubious degrees to another professor in Nigeria for \$11,550 in 2013 is associated with this University as the director of its international operations. Any perceptive mind should uncover the scam by simply looking at the CV of (Prof.) David Iornem, who claims to be the Director of Operations for the Commonwealth University (Please follow the link to the conman's CV here <http://www.davidiorner.com/cv.html>)(Saharan Reporters, 2013, August 1).

4. Observations

This segment discusses the cases in parts—(1) general observations, (2) uncritical-propaganda-dogged media, (3) an unquestioning public, (4) the registrar's office. First, a general observation is discussed. This observation dovetails with the media environment, the public response, and the role of the registrar's office. The idea is to explicate what these entities could have done differently.

4.1. General Observations

From the cases presented, two categories of institutions are identifiable. First, academic institutions without accreditation with the NAB but awarding academic qualifications of higher learning to Ghanaians are identifiable. These institutions are: Atlantic International University, Dayspring Christian University and its Ghanaian affiliates, American Century University, Commonwealth University and London Graduate School, and St. Thomas A-Bucket University

Canterbury, Kent, UK. For the European-American University, it claims to be operating under a Royal Charter from the chief of Gomoa Nyanyano. Specifically, with the European-American University, the question of when the NAB ceded its authority, or parts of its authority, to chiefs to accredit universities in Ghana or elsewhere arises. Since the regulatory instrument of NAB for monitoring and accreditation is solely vested in its Board and its Executive Secretary, the information on the website of the European-American University is not only misleading but it is also in breach of the ACT 2007 (744) of the NAB. For the rest in this group, especially the Dayspring Christian University which has consistently defied the legislative instrument establishing the NAB, it is evident that even as a Christian organization it has reckless disregard for the rules that govern educational attainments and resultant awards. This action undermines the civilized relationship that the accreditation mechanism is supposed to uphold among the comity of nations. For the St. Thomas A-Bucket University, there is no record anywhere demonstrating that it exist as a university. Thus, the St. Thomas A-Bucket University Canterbury and its affiliates only exist in the imagination of their purveyors and awardees, who are in clear breach of the legislative instruments of accreditation for the UK. On the part of the Atlantic International University, the Almeda University, University of Dublin, California, and University of California Medical School (more on this later as a single case of interest), and the American Century University, they cannot be said to be in breach of NAB's instrument of authority. It is the individuals who acquired dodgy degrees from these institutions who knowingly and willingly employed those dubious qualifications to dupe the Ghanaian public by using those qualifications as a way to promote their entry into public office. In this case, not even the medical profession is spared of these practices.

Turning the spotlight on the Commonwealth University and London Graduate School, one wonders if it has come to the attention of the NAB yet. In spite of its unaccredited status, in a span of one year this bogus institution has conferred in excess of 10 doctoral awards on some unscrupulous Ghanaians who lack the critical mind to evaluate what they were submitting themselves to. A few questions will be appropriate in this regard: does the Commonwealth University also confer doctoral degrees on individuals in its home country, Belize, or in the UK, where its offices are located? How many honorary doctorates do University of Ghana, University of Cape Coast, and the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science & Technology, combined, confer on deserving individuals in a year? All these are questions a perceptive mind should ask before submitting himself/herself to this scam.

For the second category of institution (s), precisely the SMC, it is obvious that the institution was accredited by the NAB based on some erroneous considerations and under some dubious organizational arrangements. These are: I. The NAB based its accreditation of the SMC on the accreditation of ACBSP, an institution which requires regional accreditation as a prelude for its own accreditation of members. II. Paul Buatsi, being an SMC representative and at the same time NAB member (a conflict of interest situation indeed). III. The SMC not accredited in its own home country precisely for the reason that it is an online program whose research and pedagogical quality cannot be ascertained and monitored effectively by the SAC. As of the time of compiling this report, the NAB indicated that the SMC's accreditation had elapsed, raising questions of why it is still continuing to run academic programs in Ghana. IV. Further concern is that universities cannot be ran like professional programs such as ACA, ACCA, etc., whereby program accreditation by a professional body is enough to warrant national accreditation. Universities have a research component to what they do. Thus, faculty members who teach must

have a profound understanding of their areas of expertise through research mentoring while in training. As seen from the data above, it is doubtful if those receiving SMC's online training in Ghana can claim such privileges.

With regard to the individuals under scrutiny in this report, two groups of individuals can be observed based on their motivations for acquiring a higher academic laurel. One group, largely the associates of the SMC, who view doctoral degrees as working tools necessary for their careers and career progression. While the argument can be made that because most of these individuals are in fulltime employment and do not have the luxury to pursue fulltime education, this position is weakened by the dubious acquisition of double doctoral degrees by some of these individuals within a short span of time. If fulltime on-campus doctoral degree in the US takes a minimum average of 5-6 years to complete, how on earth would someone who is pursuing these courses on part-time basis be able to acquire two doctoral degrees in a short amount of time (say 3-4 years)? This in itself cast a lot of doubt on the rigor of the programs and the integrity of the institutions awarding qualifications in such doctoral programs.

Turning to the case of University of California Medical School, it is symptomatic of a huge institutional failure that this individual without even an undergraduate degree could operate as a physician, train assistant physicians without being discovered by even the Medical and Dental Council of Ghana. What is even more troubling is that after serving a prison term of two months, the omnipotent obstetrician-cum-gynecologist returns to continue doing what he knows best—quackery. Unfortunately, in an era of social media, there are admirers and devotees on Facebook cheering this charlatan on. Even though his unprofessional behaviors online and his general demeanor sends a lot of questionable signals about him, and people could simply resort

to Google to learn more about this character, the society and its institutions are trusting and believing the hype.

For the second group of individuals—the likes of Ayariga, Portuphy, Ativor, Heloo, Agboba (aka Torgbui Sri III), Jantuah, Ollenu, Asaga, Antwi-Boasiako, Kudalor, etc.—it can be argued that these are individuals who have attained the first four levels of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. For this group, they see the doctoral award as a conduit to self-actualization and are motivated by such aspiration to acquire it by any means possible. To this group of individuals, self-actualization implies access to the political stage, prominence among peers, and cultural capital. Sadly, even in contravention of the laws of the land, these individuals shamelessly pursue their single-minded desire of acquiring doctoral awards even if that is from nonexistent institutions or institutions of dubious standing. In the wake of their acts, they leave behind a trail of very bad examples that do not augur well for our society and its institutions.

4.2. Uncritical-Propaganda-Dogged Media

Ghanaian media generally has received many accolades in recent years for being free. The notion of free media must be contextualized. To be precise, it will be more appropriate to say that the Ghanaian media operates in media ecology where guns are not being pointed at the heads of its media operatives and journalists for what they choose to publish. This does not mean that media houses, journalists, and media operatives in Ghana use this prevailing free media ecology in ways that advance the national discourse—exposing crime, following up on corruption, educating the public on processes, conducting critical analysis of issues for the sake of a subject matter, and holding both the ruled and the rulers accountable, etc. In the exception of a few resolute anti-corruption crusaders who also tend to put their work through time-tested

critical processes, leading to media products that can be deemed wholesome for a democratic discourse, the generality of the media in Ghana leaves so much to be desired. The works of Ghana's foremost journalist, the late Komla Dumor (when he was with Joy FM in Ghana and later the BBC) are online and can attest to the quality of his work. Investigative journalist Anas Aremeyaw Anas, Sampson Lardi Anyenini, and, recently, Manasseh Azure and a few others have shown great promise in that direction. But generally, apart from being driven by brazen propaganda, there is so much ignorance in the Ghanaian media that makes you question the training of Ghanaian journalists in general. An interesting observation is that in the exception of Dumor, Anyenini, Anas, and a few others who are not trained journalists but have excelled extraordinarily, the majority are trained journalists.

The issue of questionable academic credentials is a case in point to demonstrate how uncritical the Ghanaian media is. What does it take for a media house or a journalist to conduct a thorough search on an individual who claims to have this or that academic qualification who is seeking publicity on their network—since in today's Ghana the fad is to get some dodgy qualification from some unaccredited university somewhere and legitimize it with a full front page or middle page newspaper publication? In some of these cases, the information needed to confirm, disconfirm, or controvert these claims are simply a finger away from Google. Indeed, information on the accreditation status of most universities in the developed world is online. Even in the developing world, a Google of a doctoral degree awarding institution is enough to raise a red flag which should call for extra scrutiny of the claim, if the journalist understands his/her work as a critical exercise.

As it were, Ghana's so-called premier newspaper, the Daily Graphic, with nationwide coverage, has become complicit in purveying these untruths without due regard for critical

evaluation of claims that look too good for even the untrained mind to be true. But because of the unique position the Daily Graphic occupies in the Ghanaian political space, once these dubious claims are published, they become legitimated, unquestionable, and are then promoted in the public space as such. Daily Graphic and other media platforms that engage in this practice have, therefore, become accessories to the institutional decays that Ghana is experiencing. When even some of these individuals are exposed as in the case of (Dr.) Theophilus Tay, a simple online search would have provided a trail of information from his Facebook page to bolster the case of the prosecution for a stiffer punishment. But a media which is asleep on its social responsibilities and critical duties is only interested in purveying propaganda for individuals or political party A or party B. Let us consider all the following awards and ask if there were any attempts on the part of the media houses that carried these publications to do any searches on the individuals and the institutions that provided the information for publication. It is obvious that in most, if not all, cases slothful journalists published the scripts as they were presented to them. Follow the link to some of these features about the awards:

- I. <http://www.graphic.com.gh/news/politics/profile-kofi-portuphy-the-man-for-ndc-chair.html>
- II. <http://www.myjoyonline.com/news/2016/January-6th/commonwealth-university-honours-ghanaian-entrepreneur.php>
- III. <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/diaspora/Two-foreign-universities-honour-Rigworld-Boss-Kofi-Amoa-Abban-421198>
- IV. <http://theheraldghana.com/dr-portuphy-sherry-ayithey-others-doctorate-degrees-discredited/>

4.3. An Unquestioning Public

Societies can only be as critical as the institutions that interpellate them—the schools, the family, the media, and the church, etc. With emphasis on rote learning in Ghana, family systems that teach absolute submission to authority, religious structures that indoctrinate the people to leave it to God, and uncritical media at the forefront of its political discourse, Ghana has the right mix of ingredients that will ensure that the status quo remains intact or even worsen with time as the signs are depicting. A wealthy individual pays to publish his so-called doctoral degree in a newspaper, most probably the Daily Graphic. This dubious publication is then culled from the original publication and posted on social media for the most part by agents and affiliates of the claimant (See an example in the Daily Graphic of Tuesday, May 3, 2016; Graphic Online Friday, April 17, 2015). For the advocates of the claimant, this becomes an absolute truth that must not be questioned by anyone.

With a dangerously evolving social media norm whereby those who probe and ask critical questions regarding these issues are labelled “HATERS,” people who do not want to celebrate the achievements of others or are too arrogant to recognize the achievements and contributions of others, coupled with institutional failures, whereby institutions like the Daily Graphic which should be probing these dangerous developments have become accoutrements in promoting them or the NAB being impotent in the face of all these, the situation would only degenerate if the public continues to allow this state of affairs to prevail.

Recently, the Daily Graphic, as usual, posted one of such stories online (Follow the link: <http://www.graphic.com.gh/news/general-news/from-watchman-to-doctor-the-story-of-tetteh-nettey.html>). Some agents and affiliates of the said individual culled the news from the Daily Graphic online post and posted it on social media for adulations. It was a story worth celebrating

indeed! *From watchman to doctor: The story of Tetteh Nettey*, the caption announced. Who in this world would not recognize such tenacity on the part of the recipient of this academic degree? Upon reading the story, a member of this research team realized that the name of the university that awarded the degree was not even in the story. His first instinct was that if the doctoral degree is at the apogee of the achievements of the nobleman, and indeed what is to be celebrated, why would a journalist worth his salt not even mention the awarding institution in the story even in passing? Being the “HATER” that Dr. Prosper Yao Tsikata has always been, he posted the following comments: “well done, Dr. Nettey. What’s the name of the institution that conferred the degree?” This simple question degenerated into a contentious thread of conversation on Facebook long enough for a book chapter. One post from the advocate of (Dr.) Tetteh Nettey asked: “why, Prosper? You have a problem with wherever he had his PhD program? There were other very offensive comments in response to the simple question of which university conferred this academic degree. However, in this conversation, Prosper maintained the focus of his question: what is the name of the university that conferred the degree? We are only incorporating this information into this report because it was a public conversation.

One public that could have made a huge difference in these matters matter is academia itself, whose ranks are being infiltrated and watered down by this wholesale conferment of academic qualifications on undeserving individuals by institutions of dubious standing. But the silence of the academy is more deafening than the ordinary public. In Ghana, the desire for public intellectual activities these days is not about social issues of this nature. The academy, just like the society from which it derives, has become more political than the politicians themselves. If the issue is not about party A or party B, then it is a non-issue and must not be allowed media space.

4.4. The University Registrar's Office

The university registrar's office remains the administrative hub of any university. Recruitment decisions, the management and supervision decisions are all handled or carried out by this vital entity within the university system. While administrators within this vital unit can conduct background checks on individuals to ascertain the veracity of qualifications they tender in to these units in the recruitment process, it is presumable that the issue of accreditation is at the purview of accreditation boards. The implication is that once a prospective student or jobseeker satisfies the engagement requirements and are accepted or employed, we cannot blame the registrar's office for the lack of monitory and calling institutional accreditation into question (perhaps as the norm). But as the times demands, it is important that the registrar's office of our universities begin to conduct their own investigations on individuals and academic institutions of dubious standing. This way, they can even take action on some of these issues before they even come to the attention of the NAB.

5. Impact and Recommendations

This section is divided into two parts—(1) the impact of dubious academic qualifications and awards, and (2) recommendations. The impacts of this matter on the socio-economic development of Ghana are examined with recommendations for policy action stipulated.

5.1. The Impacts of Dubious Academic Qualifications and Awards

The impact of individuals with dubious academic qualifications and awards can be categorized into two. First, the impact of those who acquire these qualifications and find themselves in the classrooms and other professional environments; and second, the impact of

individuals who receive these dubious honorary doctoral awards. For the first group, the impact of being poorly trained is directly felt in our classrooms and in industry. If postgraduate level qualifications –master’s and doctoral degrees—are considered as working tools, then the inability of these individuals to employ these tools effectively in their areas of specialization in the training of their students or the discharge of their duties imply that students leave our academic institutions ill-equipped for industry. For those in industry, for example, the fake physician only heaven knows how many lives have been lost through his criminal activities. If there is a correlation between skill acquisition and efficiency and effectiveness at the workplace, then poor job performance, lack of understanding of one’s job description and role, and poor productivity would be the end result. These conditions have rippling effects across the workforce. If a trained teacher is poorly trained, it has implications for the students he/she would subsequently train. If a police officer is poorly trained, he/she may not appreciate the time-tested investigative procedures, the ethical considerations embedded in these processes, and he/she may be a danger to society than being at its service. As the entrepreneur and educator, Patrick Awuah, pointed out “everyone who goes to college by definition is running this country [Ghana] one day;” they will be running the courts, designing roads and buildings, they will run the hospitals and schools, etc. (Duthiers & Ellis, 2013, May 1).

Leading from the above, the ill-trained instructors will be drawing wages from their employers, pretending to be performing duties that are commensurate to their qualifications when in fact all they are doing is polluting their students and receiving wages for a bad work done. The same applies to the fake physician who is being paid for killing unsuspecting patients. The danger is that the organization which is harboring these ill-trained individuals lose out in the long-run.

Particularly, with those so-called doctoral degrees that are completed between 1-2 years, they undercut the concept of fair play. This can be explained with the analogy of running a marathon. While some work hard to finish the 26 mile stretch, others lurk in the dark alleys and sneaked into the tracks from the 20th mile, doing only six miles to complete the race, but would also want to revel in the rights and privileges that accompany those who finish the full lap of the race. This indeed undermines the concept of fair play.

For the second group of individuals who received honorary doctorates from unaccredited institution, it speaks to a certain mindset within the Ghanaian society, i.e., the rich, the prominent, and the influential can undermine our laws with impunity and get away with their criminality. If leaders of political parties, the executive class, senior police officers, and chiefs can act with this level of impunity, it undermines the notion of “playing by the rules of the game.”

In both cases, the potentials of these individuals representing Ghana in important negotiations and decisions both nationally and internationally, based on the erroneous assumptions that they have the required qualification, is already a reality. Our world today is a knowledge-based world with individuals selected to negotiate on behalf of their nations in other parts of the world because they are the best their countries can offer in their fields of human endeavor. As a friend who once worked for a Washington-based fund organization once intimated, “our leaders came unprepared and you could hardly make any sense of their arguments. Ativor and Quansah are a good example to demonstrate this point.

Overall, both groups undermine and erode the institutional trust that is to exist among institutions, and until the society finds ways to deal with this wanton disregard for our rules, we will continue to witness the trickledown effect of these lawlessness in the society in general.

5.2. Recommendations

- I. The NAB must be dissolved with immediate effect and be reconstituted. In reconstituting NAB, the issue of conflict of interest must be properly addressed to ensure that any future occurrence of the Paul Buatsi incident is dealt with decisively.
- II. The NAB must return to Parliament to seek prosecutory powers, so it can haul individuals and institutions that flout its legal instruments to court, if it does not already have prosecutory powers.
- III. As international education continues to expand, there will be all manners of qualifications emanating from all manner of places in the world into Ghana and most African countries. As a matter of policy, just as trade and military personnel are attached to Ghana's embassies and high commissions abroad, there is the urgent need for individuals who are assigned to these missions to have some understanding of the educational systems of the countries they are posted to, either through being educated in those countries or having a broad-based educational training that exposes them to issues of education and training in the country of their duty station. These individuals should be tasked to forge functional links between the NAB and the country, region, and institutions of their duty station on matters of accreditation. This way, they can quickly conduct due diligence on institutions and individuals on issues of accreditation and furnish the NAB with the needed information to act.
- IV. The NAB must also forge functional links with other national/international accrediting bodies for the purposes of verification. Ghana can take the lead in mooted the notion for an international body of accrediting organizations/institutions.

- V. A mentoring process must be initiated with the well-established universities in Ghana—University of Cape Coast, University of Ghana, and the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology—immediately for the purposes of mentoring and supervising genuine online educational programs for quality assurance.
- VI. A committee must be set up immediately to look into the SMC and other related issues and make recommendations to the Minister of Education. Based on this recommendation, there is the need for a national debate on the matter.
- VII. All tertiary institutions in Ghana, with immediate effect, must begin a wholesale background check on their faculty, from the Vice-Chancellors all the way down to the ordinary lecturer.

6. Discussion and Conclusion

Per the cases presented in this report, it is proven that with weak regulatory systems in place, individuals who are anxious to use any means, including the unscrupulous, to tap into certain rights and privileges that certain categories of qualifications confer on their holders would do so. Tertiary level qualification, especially a doctoral degree, is a long-term commitment fraught with disappointments, challenges, and the test of tenacity and resilience. For an individual to commit 5-6 years of their productive life to this process, it is incumbent upon such an individual to research the credibility of the institution that he/she is about to commit his/her time and resource to. If an aspiring doctoral student cannot perform this rudimentary task of filtering through the multitude of universities and colleges there are around the world to establish the credibility of a program and the institution offering that program, it leaves one

asking the simple question: are these really individuals with the capacity to endure the rigor of a properly constituted doctoral degree program in a well-established institution?

Leading from the above is the question of why an online doctoral degree from Nicaragua and Dominica Republic, not the Congo or Togo? The point is that if Nicaragua could organize a doctoral degree in business management online for Ghanaian students, what stops University of Ghana, University of Cape Coast, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology from doing same? Indeed, in the case of the local universities, one can be certain that there would be the integration of local content into these programs that would go a long way to help in the development of local industry. But for reasons best known to those who seek shortcuts to a doctoral degree and the inability of our local institutions to respond to the needs of the market, we are in this terrible situation where Ghanaian doctoral aspirants are being fleeced around the world with questionable qualifications that are not going to help the development discourse of Ghana in anyway.

What is even more befuddling is that if the inability of these individuals who seek these online doctoral degrees is due to their career engagements—preventing them from accessing a fulltime doctoral program in Ghana or elsewhere—then the question arises of how some of these individuals are able to amass two doctoral degrees in record time, while on their fulltime jobs (which require them to research and publish, do students advising, teach, grade, attend staff meetings, perform services to their disciplines, and also perform services to their communities). These very, very flamboyant claims should have drawn the attention of the administrative organ—the registrar’s office—of any reputable university or college to begin to raise some important questions.

In a recent research report, the Vice-Chancellor of University of Education, Winneba, Professor Mawutor Avoke revealed that 61 percent of teachers in tertiary institutions in Ghana are unqualified to teach in such institutions (GNA, 2016, April 16). This only goes to underscore the fact that the problem of dubious academic qualifications is not limited to the tertiary institutions alone. The canker has eaten very deep into the fabric of the Ghanaian educational system. How can a teacher who does not understand simultaneous equation teach the concept? And how can a student who learned simultaneous equation on false assumptions performed its related task in the workforce? No wonder the products coming out of Ghanaian tertiary institutions these days cannot find their feet in the workforce.

As a country, Ghana can only be as good as the institutions it builds. Building excellent institutions implies that the laws of the land apply in a just and fair manner to all manner of people—the poor, the rich, the educated, the uneducated, the politician, the foot soldier, the religious leaders, the chiefs, and, indeed, every Tom, Dick, and Harry. If an IGP flouts the legal instruments of the NAB, he must be equally charged with the offense just as a presidential candidate and a chief. It is only by these actions that we can strengthen our institutions, by sending the right message to the citizenry that no individual is above the law. This is an example of President Barack Obama’s concern when he pointed out on his Ghana visit that “Africa doesn’t need strongmen, it needs strong institutions” (The White House, 2009, July 11).

In this report, we reviewed the accreditation regimes of three countries—the US, UK, and Ghana—countries where many Ghanaians acquire higher education. In the review we found that the UK and the US operate different accreditation regimes. But it is easy for anyone to ascertain the accreditation status of institutions operating in these countries. While Ghana also operates an accreditation regime, it is fraught with peculiar problems that need urgent attention.

As a result of the weak accreditation regime in Ghana, it is clear that individuals and institutions of dubious backgrounds take the NAB's accreditation regime for granted and flout its authority with impunity. Not even the medical profession is spared of this. We argue that there is the urgent need for a review of the NAB's instrument of authority to include prosecutory powers to its legal instrument, so it can hold people accountable when they flout its regulations.

Finally, it is our view that the society, the media, the academia, must all become watchdogs in surveilling our institutions. This way, the red flag can come from anywhere, not necessarily the media or the NAB itself.

References:

- ACBSP. (2016, June 10). The difference between program accreditation and institutional accreditation. Retrieved from http://www.acbsp.org/?page=membership_list
- BBC News. (2016, June 3). The curious case of the Turkish President's degree. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-trending-36436200>
- Buatsi, P. (2016, June 19). Partner for Ghana at Swiss Management Center University. LinkedIn. Retrieved from <https://www.linkedin.com/in/paul-buatsi->
- Dogbevia, E.K. (2016, April 10). The diploma mills fooling Ghanaians with fake honorary doctorate degrees. *Ghana Business News*. Retrieved from <https://www.ghanabusinessnews.com/2016/04/10/155569/>
- Duthiers, V., & Ellis, J. (2013, May 1). Millionaire who quit Microsoft to educate Africa's future leaders. CNN. Retrieved from <http://www.cnn.com/2013/05/01/world/africa/patrick-awuah-ashesi-ghana/>
- Dupuis, R. (2016, March 11). Are online degrees worth time, money to pursue? *Central Penn Business Journal*, 717-236-4300.
- Ellick, A.B. (2010, July 16). Pakistani legislators face accusations of faking their degrees. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/17/world/asia/17pstan.html?_r=0
- European-American University. (2013). Accreditation. Retrieved from <https://thegree.org/abouteau/accreditation/>
- Foreign Credits International Expert. (2013). Unaccredited institutions. Retrieved from <http://www.foreigncredits.com/resources/unaccredited-universities/>
- Gagne, M., & Shepherd, M. (2001). Distance learning in accounting. *T. H. E. Journal*, 28, 2–12.
- Get Educated. (N.D.). List of fake college degree accreditation agencies. Retrieved from

<http://www.geteducated.com/college-degree-mills/204-fake-agencies-for-college-accreditation>

Ghana News Agency. (2013, June 20). CEO of Ghana News Agency receives honorary doctorate. Retrieved from <http://www.ghananewsagency.org/social/ceo-of-ghana-news-agency-conferred-with-doctoral-honour-61210>

Ghana News Agency. (2016, April 16). Sixty-one percent of teachers in tertiary institutions unqualified. Retrieved from <https://news.ayekoo.com/1.8987298>

Ghana News Agency. (2012, April 15). Six receive global leader awards. Retrieved from <http://www.ghananewsagency.org/social/six-receives-global-leadership-awards-42098>

Ghana Soccer. (2014, September 18). Ex-Ghana coach Kwesi Appiah's honorary doctorate degree discredited by accreditation board. Retrieved from <http://ghanasoccernet.com/ex-ghana-coach-kwesi-appiahs-honorary-doctorate-degree-discredited-accreditation-board>

Graphic Online. (2014, December 16). Profile: Kofi Portuphy; the man for the NDC? Retrieved from <http://www.graphic.com.gh/news/politics/profile-kofi-portuphy-the-man-for-ndc-chair.html>

Grossman, A.M., & Johnson, L.R. (2016). Employer perception of online accounting degrees. *Issues in Accounting Education*, 31(1), 91-109

Guendoo, L.M. (2008). Community colleges friendlier to online Ph.D.s. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, 11(3).

Karl, K., & Peluchette, J. (N.D.). Do online Ph.D. programs adequately prepare management faculty to help future managers meet their learning and development needs? Retrieved from http://www.iff.ac.at/oe/media/documents/Paper_37_Karl_Peluchette.pdf

Larnyoh, M.T. (2016, June 21). IGP: John Kudalor awarded a doctorate degree. *Pulse News*.

<http://pulse.com.gh/news/news-igp-john-kudalor-awarded-a-doctorate-degree-id5175856.html>

MaCfarlane, D. (2011, August 5). Molefe Shocked about fake degree. Retrieved from

<http://mg.co.za/article/2011-08-05-molefe-shocked-about-fake-degree>

Magome, M. (2015, April 12). Making it easier to spot fake degrees. Retrieved from

<http://www.iol.co.za/news/politics/making-it-easier-to-spot-fake-degrees-1843781>

Modern Ghana. (2010, September 20). Fake doctor jailed. Available at

<http://www.modernghana.com/newsthread1/296886/1/>

Mojeed, M. (2014, January 8). Aviation Minister, Stella Oduah in fresh fake doctorate scandal.

Retrieved from <http://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/152958-aviation-minister-stella-oduah-in-fresh-fake-doctorate-degree-scandal.html>

NAB. (N.D.). Unaccredited institutions. Retrieved from

<http://www.nab.gov.gh/unaccredited-institutions>

Ndenze, B. (2014, December 18). Why I resigned—Tshabalala. Retrieved from

<http://www.iol.co.za/news/politics/why-i-resigned---tshabalala-1796705>

Patti, G. (2007). The online doctorate: Flexible, but credible? *School Administrator*, 64(7).

SAC. (2015). Accredited Swiss higher education institutions. Retrieved from

<http://akkreditierungsrat.ch/en/accreditation-council/>

Saharan Reporters. (2013, August 1). ICPC: Fake professor hawked fake doctorate degree to a real professor. Retrieved from

<http://saharareporters.tumblr.com/post/57080889058/icpc-fake-professor-hawked-fake-doctorate-degree>

- Sapp, D. A., & Simon, J. (2005). Comparing grades in online and face-to-face writing courses: Interpersonal accountability and institutional commitment. *Computers and Composition*, 22, 471–489.
- Schrock, J.R. (2009). US: No job if you only have an online degree. *University World News*, Issue 75. Retrieved from <http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20090508115810625>
- SMC. (N.D.). Department of Economics. Retrieved from <http://www.smcuniversity.com/about/our-faculty/departments-of-economics/>
- SPJ. (2014, September 6). SPJ code of ethics. Retrieved from <http://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp>
- Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (Eds.). (2003a). *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Teddlie, C., & Yu, F. (2007). Mixed method sampling: A typology with examples. *Journal of Mixed Methods*, 1(77).
- Texas Higher Education Coordination Board. (2016). Academic Quality and Workforce Division. Retrieved from <http://www.theccb.state.tx.us/?objectid=EF4C3C3B-EB44-4381-6673F760B3946FBB>
- The White House. (2009, July 11). Remarks by the president to the Ghanaian parliament. *Office of the Press Secretary*. Retrieved from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-ghanaian-parliament>
- Times Live. (2015, February 27). South Africa's ambassador to Japan Mohau Pheko admits lying about Ph.D. Retrieved from <http://www.timeslive.co.za/politics/2015/02/27/south-africa-s-ambassador-to-japan-mohau-pheko-admits-lying-about-phd>
- US Department of Education. (N.D.). The database of accredited postsecondary institutions and

programs. Retrieved from <http://ope.ed.gov/accreditation/>

Appendix

1.1. Communication between Dr. A. Kobla Dotse and the NAB

THE FINAL NAIL IN GHANA'S COFFIN: THE GHANA ACCREDITATION BOARD AND ABYSMAL ACADEMIC STANDARDS/OPEN LETTER TO THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION

Dear Dr. Dotse,

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your e-mail.

I have forwarded it for the attention of the Executive Secretary.

Thank you Sir.

On Mon, May 16, 2016 at 8:10 PM, Anthony Dotse:

Dear Mr. Akutetsu for the Executive Secretary of NAB:

Why is it taking the NAB, Executive Secretary and its management team such pain to respond to my request for the position statement in a written form?

Let me point out that my letter was addressed to you, the Executive Secretary of NAB, and the management of NAB, not the Honorable Minister of Education. Let us not confuse the line of communication. You would be right to indicate that my action was based on the open letter to the Minister of Education titled "THE FINAL NAIL IN GHANA'S COFFIN: THE GHANA ACCREDITATION BOARD AND ABYSMAL ACADEMIC STANDARDS/OPEN LETTER TO THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION" and the prompting of my nephew who is a student at the University of Professional Studies. This in no way means that my letter to you requires a response from the Minister of Education. Let me once again remind you that by constitutional provisions (Act 744, Section 2), the NAB has the sole responsibility of clarifying issues of accreditation concerning individuals and institutions whose academic credentials are in doubt.

You wrote, and I quote: "Secondly, it may interest you to note that the said institution - Swiss Management Centre (SMC) University - has been deleted automatically from NAB's website because its accreditation has lapsed. The institution is undergoing review for re-accreditation and depending on the outcome of the review exercise, the name of the institution would be restored on the website."

The impression we got from your response (NAB) is that SMC was accredited in the past and that its removal from the NAB website was due to the fact that their accreditation had elapsed. By this admission, I wish to understand the following:

- a. Where in the world has doctoral degrees been conferred on any candidates in nine (9) months?
- b. What is the basis for accrediting an institution that is unaccredited in its own country of origin and has not gone through the mentoring process of ten (10) years within Ghana?
- c. If the accreditation of the SMC has elapsed, under what authority is it currently operating in Ghana and issuing certificates?
- d. Why is it so difficult for the NAB to state its position emphatically and publicly, so every concerned Ghana can access this information? This way, we can all encourage our sons and daughters (even including some of us who are still interested in acquiring further knowledge) so

that they (we) can also enroll on the SMC's doctoral program in the conviction that it is accredited.

The following is from a document entitled "Roadmap to Accreditation" on NAB website:

Part II: REQUIREMENTS FOR INSTITUTIONAL REGISTRATION

An agent of a recognized foreign tertiary educational institution that facilitates access to tertiary education qualifications from the parent institution shall be Registered (and not accredited) when the scope and mode of its operations have been satisfactorily ascertained by the NAB. An institution shall qualify for registration if the source of instruction for the programme of study is outside the shores of Ghana or outside the confines of the premises of the institution.

But we know that SMC is not 'recognized' in Switzerland. It is not among the accredited institutions in Switzerland. So how come it was registered by NAB? If NAB claims it was 'accredited' according to the reply to our email, does it mean NAB considered it as an institute originating from Ghana. If so, what was the mentoring institution? According to the same document:

"The applicant institution shall have operated under the supervision of a mentoring institution for a minimum period of ten (10) years."

The Swiss Management Center (SMC) gained notoriety in recent years for 'successfully' granting fake doctorate certificates to dozens of unsuspecting lectures at the University of Professional Studies (UPS) and University of Cape Coast (UCC), among others. This is nothing to be proud about as overseers of public trust and accountability! The NAB, must therefore not be absolved from the harm caused by the SMC, among others. The reasons why are not far-fetched. Other reasons why these things are happening are being addressed to the Minister of Education as requested by your own office.

We are once again giving NAB, its Executive Secretary and Board, the final opportunity to respond to our request with a written position statement of the issues under discussion. Our new dateline is Friday May 20, 2016. Failure would compel us to go ahead and make everything public, including publishing the names of Professors, NAB Board Members, Ministers of State, politicians and others who are parading themselves as doctorate degree holders from SMC and other unaccredited universities.

Copy of body of this e-mail is attached as "NAB Correspondence Final Edit".

Warmest regards.

A. Kobla Dotse, Ph.D.

-----Original Message-----

From: Albert Akutetsu

Sent: May 11, 2016 8:07 AM

To: Anthony Dotse

Subject: Re: THE FINAL NAIL IN GHANA'S COFFIN: THE GHANA ACCREDITATION BOARD AND ABYSMAL ACADEMIC STANDARDS/OPEN LETTER TO THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION

Dear Dr. Dotse,

I am directed by the Executive Secretary of the National Accreditation Board to inform you that since the petition was to the Honourable Minister of Education, you should expect a response from her and not the

Board.

Secondly, it may interest you to note that the said institution - Swiss Management Centre (SMC) University - has been deleted automatically from NAB's website because its accreditation has lapsed. The institution is undergoing review for re-accreditation and depending on the outcome of the review exercise, the name of the institution would be restored on the website.

Thank you Sir.

On Wed, May 11, 2016 at 6:31 AM, Anthony Dotse:

Dear Mr. Akutetsu,

I hope that you are fine and doing well. This is just a quick follow up to get a status update on our previous numerous requests. You indicated on April 28, 2016 that you will forward the information to the Executive Secretary and we have been waiting ever since.

We are glad to note that since our last communication, NAB has removed the SMC from its web site. Congratulations!

In our last communication, we requested that NAB and its administrators furnish us with their "position statement" on the subject matter under discussion/investigation. In that communication, we requested for a "written response" and gave you up to April 31, 2016 to respond. It is now May 11, 2016 and our patience is running out.

Please let us hear from you by the middle of this month, May 15, 2016. This is an extension to the previous dateline.

Please let us know how we can assist you resolve this issue amicably among ourselves so as not to get it publicized.

Warmest regards.

A. Kobla Dotse

-----Original Message-----

From: Albert Akutetsu

Sent: Apr 28, 2016 11:49 AM

To: Anthony Dotse

Subject: Re: THE FINAL NAIL IN GHANA'S COFFIN: THE GHANA ACCREDITATION BOARD AND ABYSMAL ACADEMIC STANDARDS/OPEN LETTER TO THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION

Dear Dr. Dotse,

I acknowledge receipt of your e-mail. It will forwarded it for the attention of the Executive Secretary.

Thank you.

On Thu, Apr 28, 2016 at 3:38 PM, Anthony Dotse :

Dear Mr. Albert Akutetsu,

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your e-mail dated April 27, 2016 on the above subject matter. Very much appreciated.

I am encouraged that the Executive Secretary of the National Accreditation Board (NAB), Mr. Dattey is reaching out to me/us and requesting for a meeting to discuss the concerns raised in my e-mail and the said article.

Unfortunately, I am not currently in the country, Ghana and therefore cannot meet with him and the Board face to face (F2F).

My preference however is for the Executive Secretary of the National Accreditation Board (NAB), Mr. Dattey to write and explain things as per our request. In legal terms, this is called position statement.

Please let Mr. Dattey send me/us a written response to the queries/clarifications as presented - NAB's position statement. In this way, all of us can work on salvaging the current educational situation using SWOT/5W&H analysis and SMART principles. The positive outcome from this very troubling issue will definitely benefit a number of students who may be contemplating joining the SMC program for their doctorate degree and subsequent employment as professors in our educational institutions.

I wish you all the best whilst I/we await the official NAB's written response to the queries/clarifications.

Warmest regards.

A. Kobla Dotse, Ph.D.

-----Original Message-----

From: Albert Akutetsu

Sent: Apr 27, 2016 5:59 AM

To

Subject: RE: THE FINAL NAIL IN GHANA'S COFFIN: THE GHANA ACCREDITATION BOARD AND ABYSMAL ACADEMIC STANDARDS/OPEN LETTER TO THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION

Dear Dr. Dotse,

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your e-mail to the Executive Secretary, NAB dated April 7, 2016 on the above subject matter.

I am directed to find out whether you are in the country (Ghana). The Executive Secretary of the National Accreditation Board (NAB) wishes to meet with you to discuss the concerns raised in your e-mail and the said article.

I would therefore be most grateful if I could get your contact number to enable me arrange the meeting if you are available.

--

Albert Akutetsu

Assistant Secretary

National Accreditation Board

1.2. NAB's Answers to the Questions of Accreditation

1. Is Swiss Management Centre (SMC) which is “registered” under National Accreditation Board (NAB) accredited in Switzerland?

Our information is that the Swiss Government's policy does not permit the accreditation of strictly distance learning universities such as the SMC.

2. If it is not accredited in Switzerland, is it accredited in Ghana?

The SMC is registered as a Distance Learning University by the National Accreditation Board (NAB).

3. What does the term “Registered” mean according to the definition of NAB?

Registered institutions, by the definition of NAB refer to institutions without physical presence in Ghana but either provides distance learning through electronic means to its students based in Ghana or are external examination bodies such as the ACCA or ABMA. NAB attempts to bring such institutions under its regulations, at least, to monitor the integrity of provision and of their examinations.

4. According to the NAB website, the programmes of the SMC are under review. If this means the SMC is not accredited, can it admit students and issue certificates?

Further to my answer in 3. above, please note that although SMC is not accredited by Switzerland, its programmes have been accredited by the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programmes (ACBSP), one of the accrediting bodies under the American Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), a major collaborator of NAB in such matters.

Registration of institutions and for that matter SMC is not valid for an indefinite period, thus NAB periodically reviews such institutions and their programmes as circumstances may change anytime.

For the validity period of SMC's registration, SMC can admit students and issue certificates.

I hope I have been able to address your concerns adequately, if not, kindly revert to me for any clarifications you may require.

I thank you for your concern

Best Regards

SIGNED

KWAME DATTEY
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Addendum

There are others who came to our notice at the tail end of this exercise. They have also started using the title Dr. without any institutional affiliation or any work with any academic institution.

The general public should help get more information on where these individuals pursued their doctoral degrees, what they have contributed any specific area of human endeavor, for which they are awarded a doctoral degree by which institution. The individuals are:

Hon. (Dr.) Rashid Pelpuo (Follow the link here: <http://www.cwcghana.com/speakers/hon-dr-rashid-pelpuo/>)

(Dr.) Alfred Oko Vanderpuije (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2K_2RLYiam4)

(Dr.) Sylvester E. Tornyeva

(<https://www.facebook.com/sylvestertornyevah/photos/a.534894366661940.1073741827.534687826682594/561898163961560/?type=3&theater>)