UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN LEADERSHIP ROLES AND ACADEMIC

PERFORMANCE: VIEWS OF STUDENT LEADERS OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

ISSABELLA MAWUTOR KUMAKU

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UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

BY

ISSABELLA MAWUTOR KUMAKU

Thesis submitted to the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration of the School of Educational Development and Outreach, College of Education Studies, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Master of Philosophy degree in Administration in Higher Education

MAY 2021

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this University or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature …………………………   Date ……………………

Name: …………………………………………………………………………..
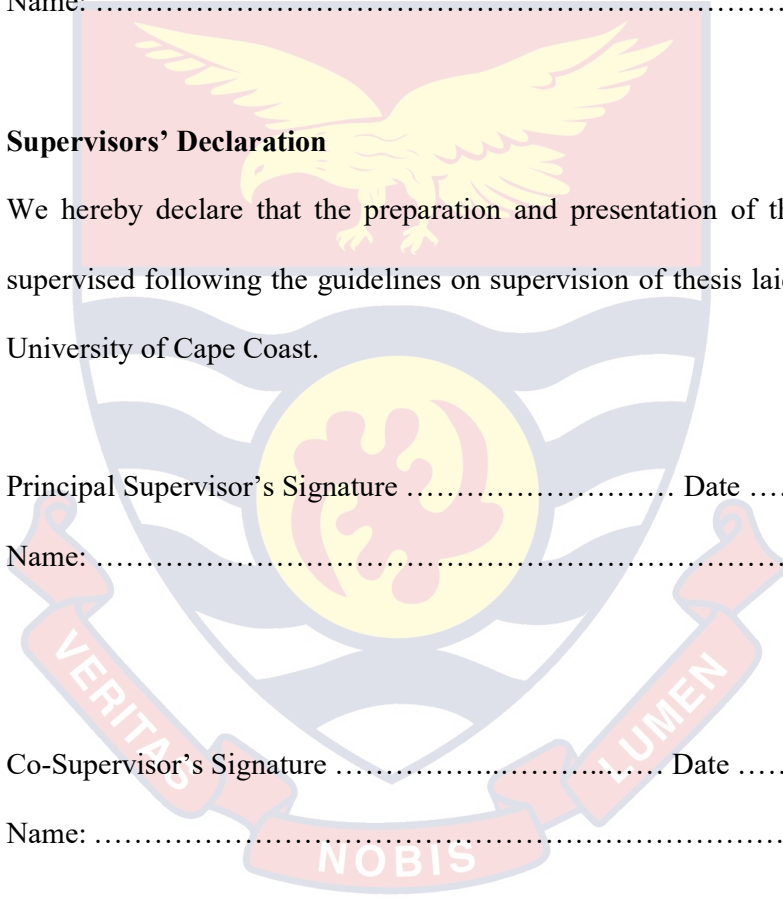
Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised following the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's Signature ……………………… Date ……..…………

Name: ………………………………………………………………………….

Co-Supervisor's Signature ……………..………..……. Date …….……………

Name: …………………………………………………………………..……….

ABSTRACT

The invaluable role student leaders play in the administration and management of educational institutions, especially at the university level, is well documented in the higher education literature. However, there appears to be a dearth of information regarding how the performance of student leaders' leadership roles influences their academic performance. It is against this backdrop that this study was carried out to explore the interplay between student leaders' leadership roles and their academic performance. The study adopted a case study design. Qualitative data were collected through interviews with thirteen participants from the Executive Council of the Student Representative Council of UCC. The interview responses were transcribed, coded and analysed thematically. It was revealed that student leaders' main leadership roles were for them to represent the entire student body; serve as a liaison between students and the university management and promote the interest and welfare of students. Again, the study reveals that whilst student leaders gain some positive experiences like leadership, communication and interpersonal skills through performing their leadership roles, their overall academic performances appear to take a nosedive. Given this, it was concluded that perhaps the student leaders were unable to adopt effective strategies to balance the performance of their leadership duties and academic work. It was therefore recommended that the guidance and counselling unit together with the office of the Dean of Student of UCC on a regular basis should organise training sessions for student leaders to equip them with effective strategies to use in discharging their leadership roles whilst improving their academic fortunes.

KEYWORDS

Academic engagement

Academic performance
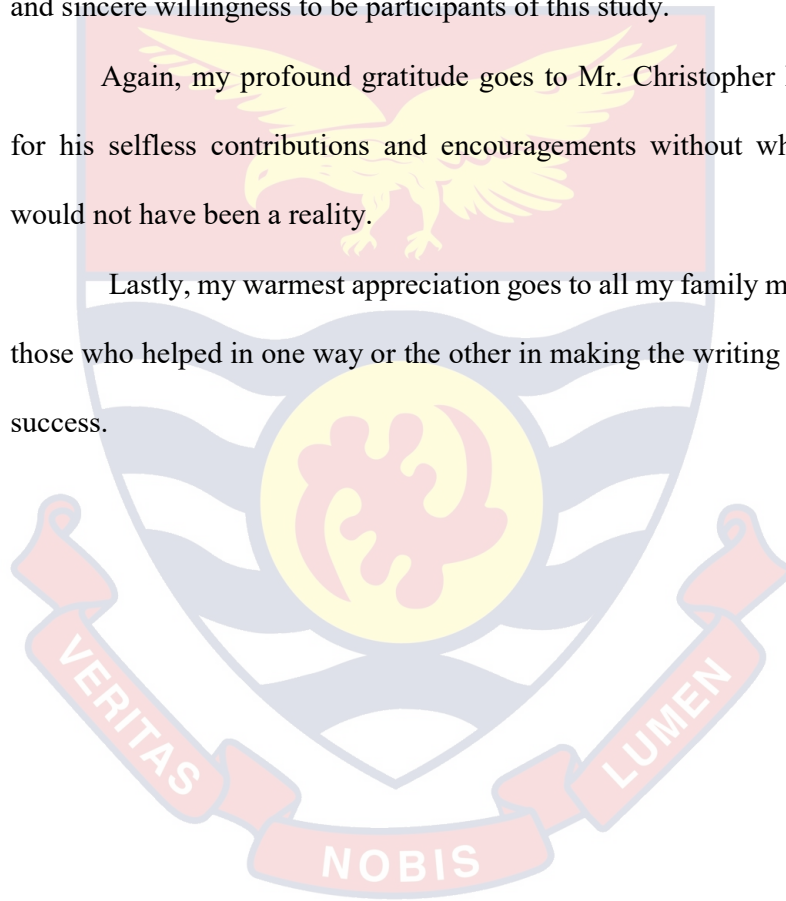
Leadership roles

Student leaders

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Lastly, my warmest appreciation goes to all my family members and all those who helped in one way or the other in making the writing of this thesis a success.
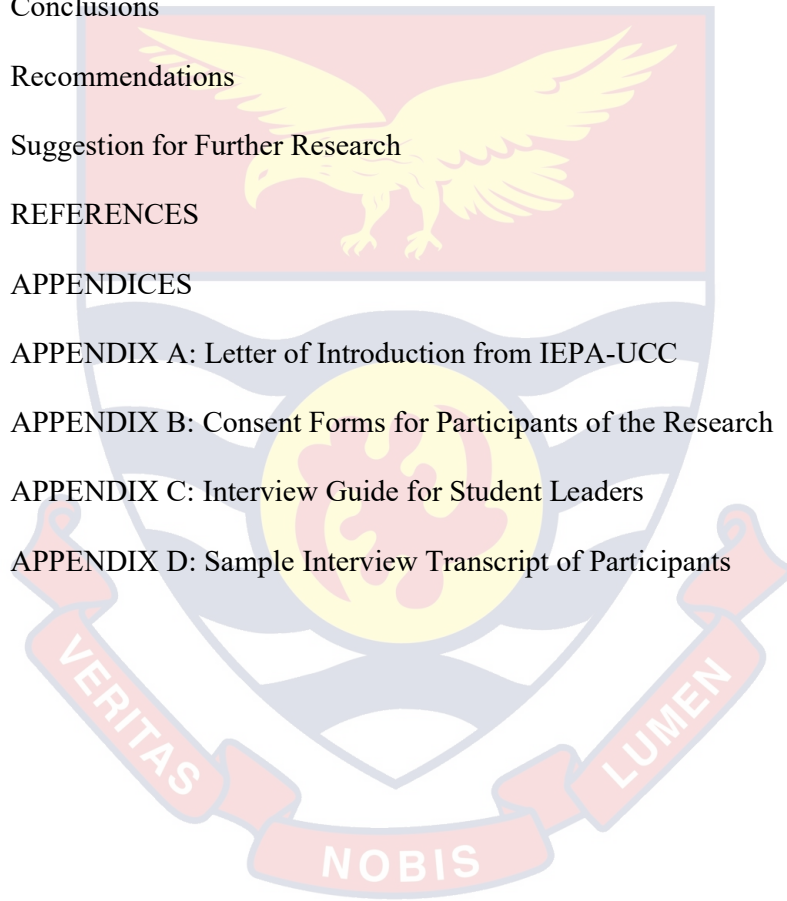
DEDICATION

To my dad and children

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UCC - University of Cape Coast

SRC – Students Representative Council

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Successful student leaders later become leaders in the workplace more often than people who do not have similar previous leadership experience (Astin, 1993; Lei & Yin 2007, Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Interestingly, evidence in the student development literature (Yin, 2007) appears to suggest that student leaders can only succeed if they are able to balance the performance of both their leadership duties and academic work. Nevertheless, there seems to be no research evidence about the interplay between student leaders' leadership roles and their academic performance, particularly in the Ghanaian higher educational context. This study, therefore, explores the views of student leaders of the University of Cape Coast regarding the interplay between their leadership roles and academic performance.

Background to the Study

In today's 21st century world, the importance of education in society's evolution cannot be overemphasised. Governments around the world spend huge funds in their quest to provide education for their citizens. Key among institutions through which governments deliver education to their people are universities. Thus, universities across the world, generally have a mandate to, among other things, provide their students with technical skills, subject knowledge for their chosen professions and opportunities to develop the competencies needed to succeed in life (Kuh & Lund, 1994).

According to Kwesi (2009), the complex nature of universities' mandate makes it impossible for their administration to achieve the mandate alone without relying on the collaboration, partnership and teamwork of all

stakeholders. One of the stakeholders whose involvement is critical in university administration is the students (Kwesi, 2009). Likewise, Kuh and Lund (1994), assert that the formulation and implementation of decisions by schools in their attempt to discharge their responsibilities require the active involvement of students. The assertion of Kuh and Lund (1994) is premised on the finding of their study that students' involvement in school governance system normally has positive effects on the overall school environment. They further asserted that student involvement in school administration could serve as a major strategy in curbing students' indiscipline and preventing protests.

Interestingly, the United Nations (UN) provides an overarching international policy context for the incorporation of student leadership into school governance through the Convention on the Rights of the Child. This Convention provides the foundational direction to engage students in decision making. Thus, Article 12 of the convention demands that children who are capable of forming their views should be allowed to express themselves freely in all matters affecting them (UN General Assembly, 1989). This notion engenders the provision of opportunities for students to participate in making decisions on issues that matter to them. It, therefore, stands to reason that all matters, in terms of education provision and delivery, are therefore matters that students should be empowered to participate in.

In line with this reasoning, universities across the world are becoming increasingly interested in engaging students in every facet of their educational process through their representatives (Mukiti, 2014). Student representatives are the officially recognised institutional organisations of the student body which goes by names such as Students Union, Students' Guild or Students'

Representative Council (SRC) (Luescher-Mamashela & Mugume, 2014). Generally, student representatives or leaders are made to play an active role in improving dialogue between staff and students in addition to highlighting students' needs, improving their welfare and promoting a peaceful school environment.

Captivatingly, in the context of Ghanaian universities, student leaders are engaged in the management of their universities. In other words, the structure of Ghanaian universities ensures relative opportunities for student representatives to participate in the Universities' administration. This is evidenced in the fact that the composition of most administrative committees within Ghanaian universities as well as University Councils consist of students' representatives which have a legal basis. For example, in the case of the University of Cape Coast (UCC), the legal basis for including students' representatives in the University's Council and other committees is captured in statute 50 clause 1(e) of the Statutes of UCC (2016). According to the Statutes, the SRC shall be responsible for "nominating student representatives to serve on appropriate University bodies and committees".

In line with the dictates of the Statutes of UCC year in year out, students are given a chance to democratically elect their representatives (SRC) who represent them on the various University bodies and committees. Procedurally, students who wish to hold positions in the SRC are allowed to file nominations. The nominees are then vetted by a Committee, and those eligible are presented to the entire student for election. The UCC SRC, statutorily, is made up of seven student leaders as its executives (i.e. President, Vice-President, Secretary, Coordinating Secretary, Treasurer, Public Relations Officer and Sports

Chairperson). The SRC plays a dual role in helping the university administration to maintain discipline among students and ensuring that students' concerns are addressed by the administration. Mostly, student leaders typically engage and spend a lot of time doing administrative work that their leadership position requires them to do. Thus, student leaders spend a lot of their time participating in institutional decision-making, coordinating and attending student meetings, writing reports, communicating important information about the University to students, delegating tasks, planning student events, and advising and supporting the delivery of effective and efficient student support services (Crawford 2012; Hilliard, 2010).

Like elsewhere, the SRC in UCC is also responsible for the following as outlined in the University's statute:

(a) promoting the general welfare and interest of students by coordinating the social, cultural, intellectual and recreational activities of students in the University;

(b) presenting the views of the students of the University to the appropriate body or bodies depending upon the nature of the matter;

(c) establishing links and maintaining cordial relationships with students of other universities, educational and voluntary institutions within and outside Ghana;

(d) nominating student representatives to serve on appropriate University bodies and committees;

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(e) promoting cordial relationships among all sections of the University community and maintaining a good relationship with past students of the University; and

(f) publishing records of students' activities (Statutes of UCC, 2016).

In order for student leaders to effectively and efficiently perform their responsibilities, Okumbe (2001) advises university authorities to thoroughly provide induction training for student leaders, after they have been elected, on the boundaries within which they should operate. According to Okumbe, often, student leaders find themselves in an awkward situation because most of them get elected without any initial training, especially, on how to effectively discharge their leadership roles and still succeed in their academic work. Accordingly, Okumbe proposed that constant leadership seminars should be organised for student leaders by focusing on arming them with skills and knowledge that can help them to balance their new roles with their academic performance.

Refreshingly, the practice of giving newly elected UCC SRC executives some form of training by the Office of the Dean of Students before they assume office occurs every year. However, in light of the enormous tasks performed by the SRC members by virtue of their office, it is not clear how their leadership roles impact their academic work. It is against this backdrop that this study was undertaken to understand how the leadership obligation of student leaders influence their academic performance.

Statement of the Problem

The leadership obligations of student leaders (especially the SRC) require them to engage in out of classroom activities (Kuh, 1995). For example, UCC

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SRC executives per their mandate as student leaders, attend several committee meetings, organise both internal and external programmes for students and actively engage in the day-to-day administrations of their office. These leadership obligations perform by student leaders in UCC clearly can be described as additional responsibilities for them apart from their academic engagements. In view of that, some researchers have suggested that student leaders need to find the right balance between performing their leadership roles and academic engagements (Kuh, 1995; Okumbe, 2001). Unfortunately, there appears to be dearth of information in the Ghanaian higher education literature regarding how student leaders manage the performance of their leadership roles and academic work. It is against this backdrop that this research sought to explore the interplay between UCC student leaders' leadership roles and their academic performance.

Purpose of the Study

This study sought to explore the view of student leaders in UCC regarding the interplay between their leadership roles and academic performance. This was proposed with the view to understanding and reporting, in a telling way, how student leaders in UCC balance the performance of their leadership duties with academic work.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to drive the study:

1. What leadership roles do student leaders of the University of Cape Coast (UCC) perform in congruence with the University's statute and constitution of the SRC?

2. What are the experiences of the student leaders in UCC regarding their leadership roles?

3. How do the leadership roles performed by student leaders in UCC affect their academic work?

4. How do student leaders in UCC balance the performance of their leadership roles with academic work?

Significance of the Study

As more and more students aspire to be in leadership positions in their institutions of study, it is quite appropriate that a study of this nature is conducted to bring to light the views of students' leaders of UCC on the impact of their leadership roles on their academic work. The findings and recommendations of this study will be disseminated to stakeholders through workshops and seminar presentations. This will help these stakeholders and other professionals working with students to gain fair knowledge concerning student leadership and their academic engagements. This knowledge, when acquired, will also help in providing the needed assistance to students who may be in need of counselling regarding how to combine leadership roles and academic engagements.

It is anticipated that the results of this study will help potential student leaders to appreciate how student leadership roles in UCC impact academic performance. Also, the findings to the research question which sought to find out how student leaders in UCC balance their leadership roles with academic work may expose potential leaders to those strategies that have worked for previous leaders and those that did not work for them. This may help potential

leaders to know the appropriate strategies to use when they find themselves in similar positions.

Again, the outcome of this study may help student affairs professionals to gain an understanding of how leadership roles performed by student leaders affect their academic performance. Thus, the study may help them to appreciate the challenges student leaders face in combining their leadership roles with academic work. The appreciation of the challenges may serve as a basis for Student Affairs Professionals to design remedial measures (i.e. training programmes) to help create a conducive environment for the student leaders to succeed both in their leadership roles and academic work. Also, the findings of this study will add to the existing literature on student leadership and may serve as a source of reference for other researchers who may be conducting studies related to leadership roles and academic engagements of student leaders.

Delimitation

The study was delimited to exploring the views of undergraduate regular student leaders of the University of Cape Coast regarding their leadership roles and academic performance. Specifically, the participants were delimited to the SRC executives and presidents of halls of residence of UCC. Also, the experiences of student leaders outside their leadership roles and academic engagements were not explored in this study.

Limitations

In view of the fact that this qualitative study engaged only few student leaders of UCC (i.e. SRC executives and presidents of halls of residence), the findings cannot be generalised over other student leaders (for example, religious student leaders, old student association leaders and other student group leaders).

Another limitation was the inability of two participants to validate their interview transcript (member checking). Thus, the two participants could not be reached after countless effort to get in touch with them through their contact numbers was unsuccessful. This occurrence, perhaps, may have played down the internal validity of the study.

Definition of Terms

The following terms used in the study have been defined to guide users.

1. *Student Leader* is someone elected to represent and lead a group of students. For example, SRC executives and presidents of halls of residence of UCC.

2. *Students Affairs Professional* is a university staff who promotes and supports student learning and is responsible for the quality of student life in a university.

3. *Student involvement* is means of engaging students in every facet of the educational process for the purpose of consolidating their commitment to education.

4. *Extracurricular activity* is any activity that is conducted under the auspices of the school but do not attract academic credit (grade). For example; students' leadership roles (attending and coordinating meetings of various student organisations and organising events).

5. *Academic engagement* is all the activities students partake in to achieve academic success. For example, attending lectures, doing presentation and writing exams

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Organisation of the Study

This thesis was organised under five chapters including this Chaper One. The Chapter Two presented the literature review which included the theoretical framework, conceptual framework together with related empirical studies. Chapter Three presented the overall research methods adopted for the study. It was organised under research design, study area, population, sampling procedure, data collection instruments, data collection procedure and data processing and analysis. Chapter Four presented the results and discussion of the study. Finally, Chapter Five was dedicated to capture the summary, conclusions and recommendations and suggestion for further research.
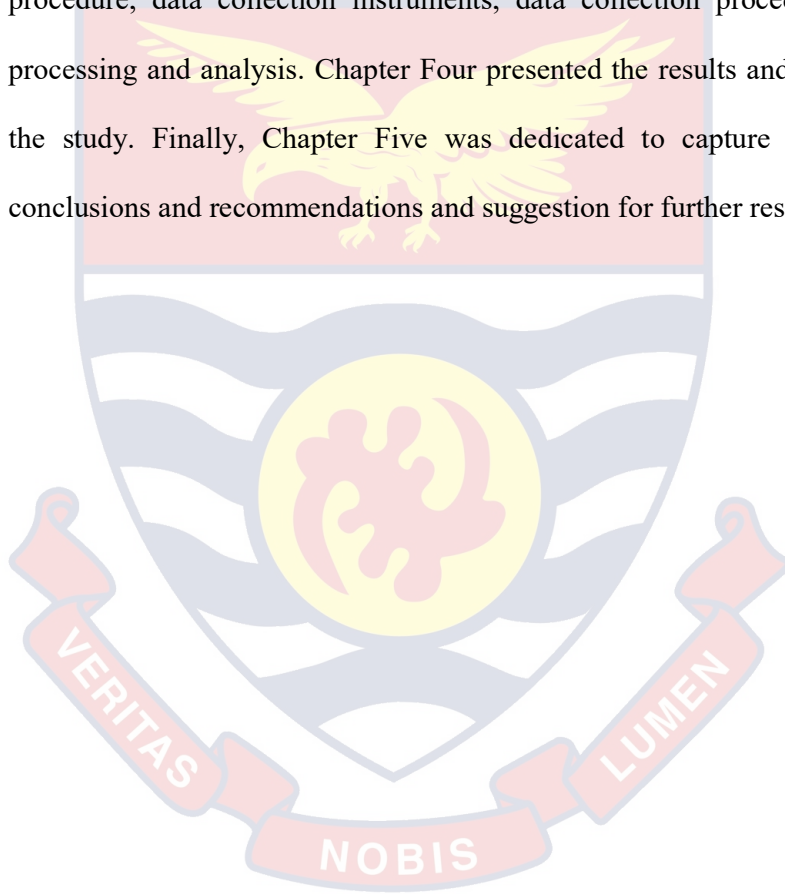
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This study explores the interplay between leadership roles and academic performance of student leaders in UCC. In line with this purpose, this chapter of the study was dedicated to a review of related literature. The chapter was organised under themes such as theoretical framework, conceptual framework, the concept of leadership, student leadership, benefits of student leadership, roles of student leaders, experiences of student leaders and student engagements. The remaining themes include academic performance, effects of student leadership roles on academic performance, academic burnout, time management as a resource, Statute of the University of Cape Coast and the Constitution of the UCC SRC.

Theoretical Framework

This study is underpinned by Astin's (1984) theory of student involvement. According to Astin (1984), student involvement is defined as the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student dedicates to the academic experience. In other words, this theory assumes that the degree of student learning is proportional to the amount of time and energy the student commits to the academic experiences. Astin delineates several forms of student involvement consisting of academic involvement, involvement with student peers and out of class activities such as participation in students' government or organization, sports and athletics among others. Thus, according to Astin, "a highly involved student is one who, for example, devotes considerable energy to studying, spends much time on campus, participates actively in student

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organizations, and interacts frequently with faculty members and other students" (Astin, 1984, p. 297).

Astin (1984, p. 297) outlined five assumptions of students' involvement that says that:

1. involvement refers to the investment of physical as well as psychological energy and can be as generalized as the student experience to very specific such as a chemistry exam;

2. involvement occurs along a continuum and students will experience various degrees of involvement at various times;

3. involvement can be both quantitative and qualitative in nature;

4. the amount of student learning and personal development is directly proportional to the quantity and quality of student involvement; and

5. the effectiveness of any educational policy is directly related to its capacity to increase student involvement.

Research (for example, DeNeui, 2003) has also revealed that students who are more involved in student organizations and campus activities develop a greater sense of community than their less-involved peers. Along with developing a sense of community within the school environment, literature has shown that participation in student organizations is a popular form of student involvement (Astin, 1993; Case, 2011). Thus, involvement in purposeful campus activities allow students to engage in high-quality university experiences, which in turn helps facilitate a smoother transition to life (Tieu, Pancer, Pratt, Wintre, Bimie-Lefcovitch, Polivy & Adams, 2010; Richmond, 1986).

Astin (1993) examined the impact of peer groups and other collegiate experiences on undergraduate students. One of Astin's findings was that "almost any form of student involvement in the college experience benefits learning and student development" (Astin, 1993, p. 3). One significant source of influence for college students was their peer group (Astin, 1993). According to Astin, student-to-student interaction has wide-reaching impacts on both the academic and leadership development of students. Engaging in student-to-student interaction produced positive effects on student cultural awareness, leadership development, and academic development with an increase in critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Astin also found that student-to-student interaction decreased feelings of depression among college students and the belief that the main purpose of attaining a college education was increasing an individual's earning power. The impact of peer groups on college students helped with understanding how peers contribute or detract from involvement in activities and academic coursework.

Using Astin's involvement theory, Huang and Chang (2004) conducted a study in Taiwan to examine the nature of the relationship between university student involvement in academic work and their involvement in student clubs and organizations (Foreman & Retallick, 2013). They also wanted to discover the optimal combination of levels of involvement in academics and student organizations that lead to student growth. In order to scrutinise the relationship between student involvement in academics and student organizations, Huang and Chang utilized data from the University Experiences Survey which was distributed to university students in Taiwan by Huang and Chang. Results from the University Experiences Survey showed a positive linear relationship

between a student's academic and extracurricular involvement (Huang & Chang, 2004). The researchers also found that involvement in extracurricular activities led to an increase in student's cognitive skills (Huang & Chang, 2004). While there appeared to be a positive linear relationship between the academic and extracurricular involvement of university students, the issue of over-involvement was raised.

Similarly, Fredricks (2012) examined the over-scheduling hypothesis among high school students. Results from this study found that moderate levels of student involvement in extracurricular activities yielded positive benefits however, there was a threshold where students saw diminishing returns and experienced negative implications. Fredricks also found that there was an increase in the well-being of students that were engaged in at least one extracurricular activity. While the involvement of students in extracurricular has positive benefits, Dugan and Komives (2007) believe that students' involvement in too many different types of associations may have negatively outcomes.

Clearly, the theory of student involvement has provided comprehensive insights into the forms of activities student engage in whiles on campus. The insights served as a basis for the conceptualisation of student leadership which is one of the variables explored in this study. Again, the theory also provided information on the potential relationship between student involvement in academics and student organizations. The theory also highlighted the negative and positive outcomes students generally derive from their involvement in extracurricular activities. Generally, insights from the theory served as a basis for exploring other related concepts.

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Conceptual Framework

Student leaders are constantly faced with the pressure to succeed academically and at the same time in their leadership roles. Pritchard and Wilson (2003) argued that students change throughout their college experience and according to them this means that every higher education professional has a responsibility to nurture the student's transformation process. Loch (2010) explained that, through involvement students develop their self-esteem, self-concept, interpersonal communication skills, and intellect. However, because students' involvement in volunteerism in the form of taking up leadership roles add up to their individual responsibilities (Lau, 2004), there is the need for such students to strike a balance between discharging their responsibilities (i.e. leadership roles and academic work).

Interestingly, Masters (2005) offers seven tips for students, especially student leaders who are confronted with the difficulty of balancing a heavy course load and a full extracurricular schedule. Masters' tips is adapted as a critical feature of this conceptual framework presented in Figure 1.
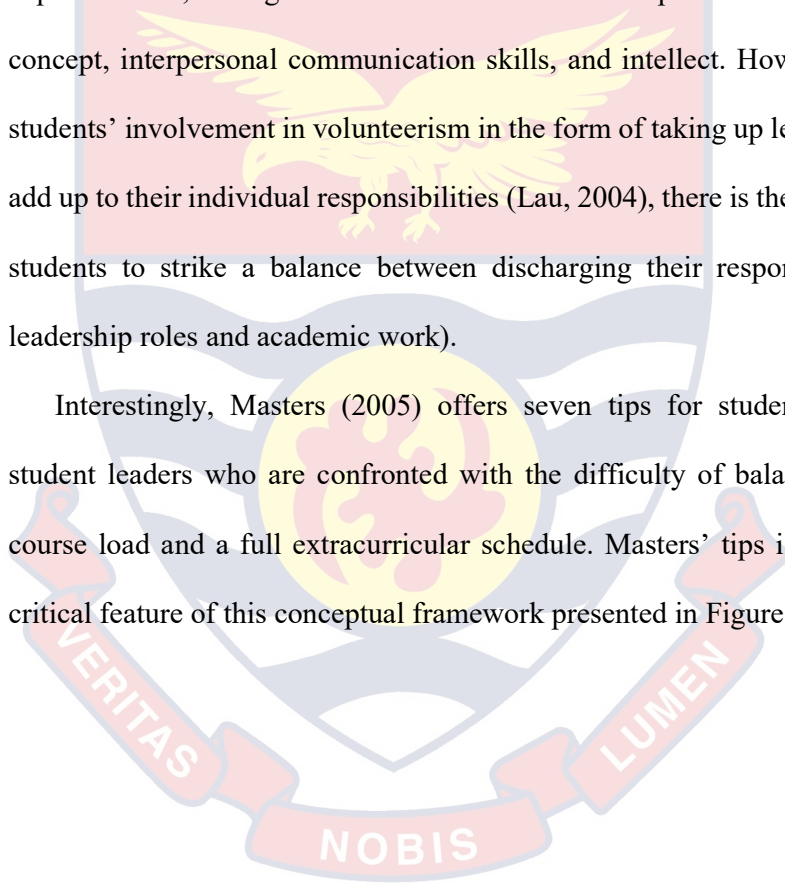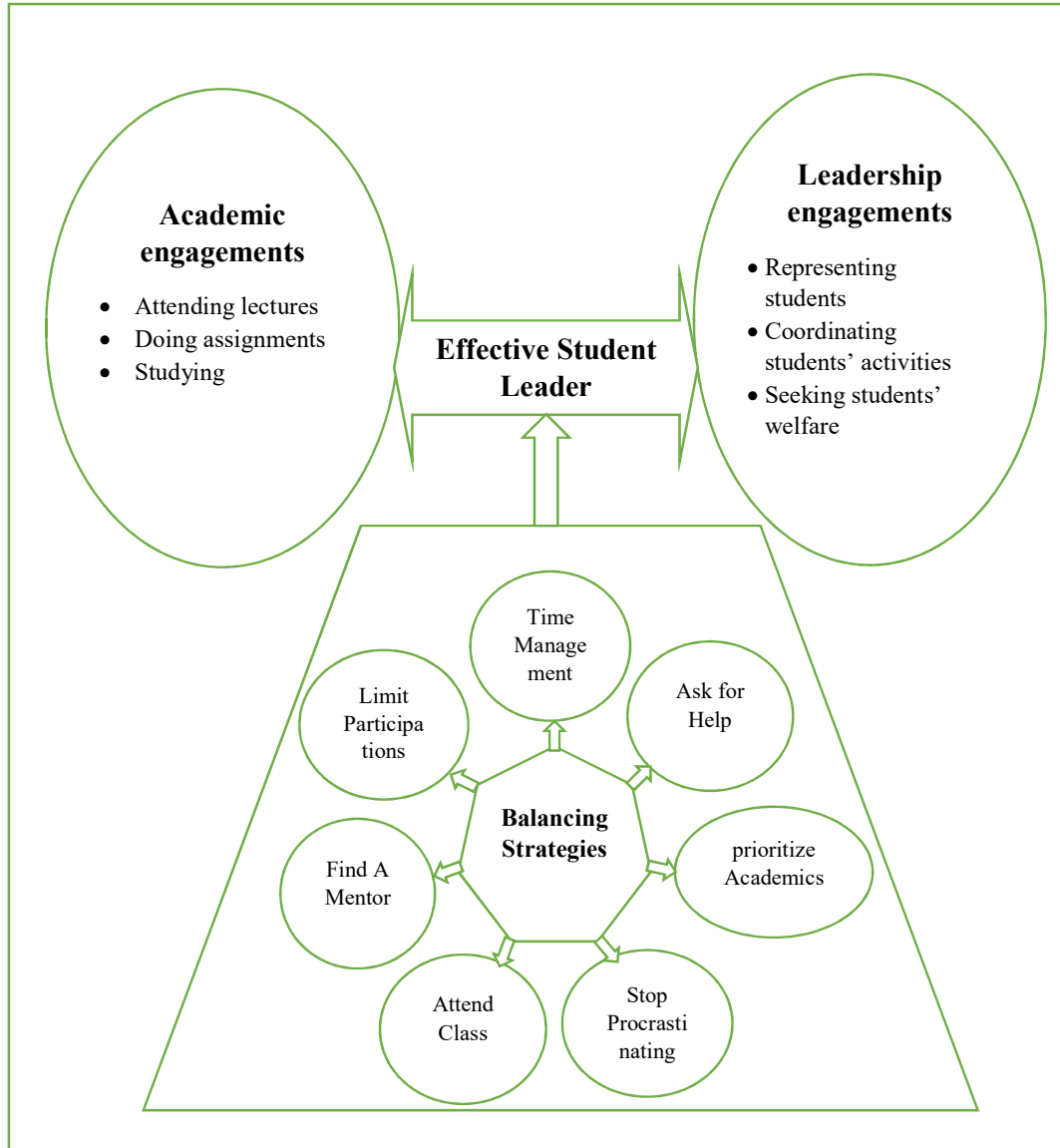
Figure 1: Balancing Academic Engagements with Leadership Engagements.
Source: Adapted from Master (2005)

According to Masters (2005), student leaders in their quest to strike a balance between their leadership roles and academic performance should ensure effective time management. Thus, student leaders should not let their schedules control them. In other words, student leaders should develop a habit of planning how they use their time and religiously follow such plans. The second strategy that should be adopted by student leaders is for them to ask for help. Thus,

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student leaders simply have to learn to ask their colleagues to help them, especially in their studies. Thus when student leaders are unable to attend lectures, they can request for lecture notes and materials from their colleagues and even ask for the explanation of those lecture notes when necessary.

The third strategy is for student leaders to prioritize their academic work. Thus, their academics work should be their main concern. This is because the core of every higher education is academic work hence course work must be given priority. The fourth strategy student leaders can use to balance their leadership roles with academic work is for them to stop procrastinating. Student leaders should start practising goal setting and creating to-do lists. Thus, they must stick to set deadlines and do what needs to be done before the last minute. The fifth strategy is for student leaders to attend class either physically or technologically. In today's 21st century, student leaders should make arrangement to attend lectures either remotely or get sessions recorded for them for later use. The truth is that, if you are not present at lectures, then you will not benefit from the in-class experience. The sixth strategy is for student leaders to find a mentor. That is, everyone needs someone else to look up to and to be able to call for advice. Others have been able to succeed in combing leadership roles with academic performance and can help provide some form of mentorship. The seventh and last tip Master offers is that student leaders must limit the number of organisations to participate in on a regular basis. Thus, belonging to so many organisations at the same time can lead to burnout.

In light of the insights from the literature about the roles of student leaders illuminated herein, it is argued that student leaders can effectively and efficiently discharge their dual-role (i.e. academic engagements and leadership

engagements) if they employ the strategies proposed as the conceptual framework for this study.

The Concept of Leadership

Historically, the term leadership was formally developed in folk psychology to explain social influence on groups (Calder, 1977). For several decades, the term 'leadership' has been tagged as a complex phenomenon and has been explained by various scholars in different ways. For instance, Omar (2005) claims that the definition of leadership is daunting. According to Omar, it is daunting because it is regarded as one of the most important and pervasive concepts argued across many disciplines including business, organisational, educational, political, legal and psychological ones. Against this backdrop, it is difficult to achieve only one definition for the term 'leadership' that is acceptable to all (Cheng, 2002). For the purpose of this study, some definitions of the term 'leadership' have been cited to provide a comprehensive understanding.

According to Tannenbaum, Weschler and Massarik (2013), leadership is an interpersonal influence exercised in a given situation, and directed, through a communication process, toward the accomplishment of a specified goal or goals. Cohen (1990) contends that leadership is the art of influencing others to their maximum performance to accomplish any task, objective or project. Similarly, in the opinion of Bass (2004), leadership is the process by which a person influences others to accomplish an objective by applying their leadership attributes, such as beliefs, values, ethics, character, knowledge and skills. Likewise, Northouse, Katapodi, Song, Zhang and Mood (2010); and Yukl and Lepsinger (2005) also defines leadership as a process of interaction between a

leader and followers where the leader attempts to influence followers to achieve a common goal.

These definitions cited so far (i.e. Tannenbaum, Weschler & Massarik, 2013; Cohen, 1990; Bass, 2004; Northouse et al., 2010; Yukl & Lepsinger, 2005) appear to place more emphasis on leaders' ability to influence others. It can, therefore, be argued that leadership is essentially a leader's ability to influence his team towards achieving a set goal. This influence perhaps can be achieved through duress and threats or through enthusiastic and zealous collaborations.

Student Leadership

Student leadership as a concept developed from basic rights idea of freedom of speech and association that reflects the importance of young people's capacity to play a role and be part in making the decisions that affect them (Black, Walsh, Magee, Hutchins, Berman & Groundwater-Smith, 2014). Intriguingly, there is no clear consensus on how the term 'student leadership' should be named and what it denotes (Black, 2012). As a result, terms such as 'student voice', 'student participation', 'active citizenship' and 'democratic schooling' are all used interchangeably within the literature to mean student leadership (Black et al., 2014).

Hilliard (2010) describes student leadership as a means of achieving democratization of the school as a precursor to the democratization of society. Kambuga and Omollo (2017) also in their attempt to explain the term also posited that student leadership encompasses education practices that give students the opportunities to find their voices so as to participate in decision-making and responsibilities as active citizens.

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The term student leadership has been used to mean students' voice or participation (Black et al., 2014). This, therefore, suggest that the term student leadership embraces the philosophy of involving students in the administration of educational institutions. The term, also recognises that students have legitimate opinions on issues in the classroom and the campus environment hence are given active roles in influencing decisions about issues as well as in the implementation of those decisions both in the classroom and on other things concerning them as students.

According to Giroux (2003), student leadership helps in educating students to be critical actors and social agents who are capable of envisioning a better society and acting to create the conditions for such society (Black et. al., 2014). Student leadership has been described as a platform for the enhancement of the status of young people by enabling and empowering them to build on their competencies and capabilities for life (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2013). Thus, the competencies and capabilities gained as a result of engaging in student leadership helps to contribute to the building of a politically stable, economically viable, and legally supportive environment. Clearly, it does appear from the discussion so far that, individuals who involve themselves in student leadership has the opportunity to be equipped with skills and abilities in leadership. Thus they are able to take up responsibilities and develop social skills (Wierenga & Wyn, 2011). Also, it can be argued that engaging in student leadership has the potential to enhance the ability of an students to contribute to society by taking up leadership roles.

Hilliard (2010) has noted that leadership is motivated by the increasing complexity of university reform efforts for organizational improvement. For

this reason, there is the need for more individuals to participate in the reform effort to ensure greater university success (Fielding, 2001). In view of this, literature (for example, Black et. al., 2014; Fielding, 2001; Mitra, 2003; Ruddock & Flutter, 2004) have argue that because students are members of the university community and the pivot around which education and all its related decisions evolves, they (i.e. students) need to be actively involved within their schools' governance and decision-making structure. It is clear from Black et. al.'s (2014) view on student leadership that, giving students a role in school governance (typically through the Student Representative Council or its equivalent) is the most visible way by which schools seek to engender student voice, participation and leadership. Through the SRC, students learn to manage others and acquire vital skills that will even help them be good leaders and citizens in the future. Learning to manage others and becoming a good leader in the future can be achieved through various means. For students, one of such means, as discussed in this section of the review, is their involvement in students' leadership. It is obvious from the discussion made so far that college and university students in particular benefit from early involvement in leadership opportunities by learning how to serve in organisations such as the SRC (Hilliard, 2010). Hilliard added that, by having knowledge and skills to influence others to follow them, student leaders can grow to greatness in serving their communities.

It is argued by Hilliard 2010) that, whether leadership is inherent or not, students can learn to become effective leaders by concentrating on improving their leadership skills and being mentored by experienced and effective leaders as they get involved in the management of their educational institutions.

Students Engagement

The term 'student engagement' has enjoyed considerable attention in the literature since the mid-1990s (Trowler, 2010). It has its historic roots in a body of work concerned with student involvement (Kuh, 2005). In defining the term 'student engagement', Trowler, (2010, p. 6) captures it as:

> *"... the investment of time, effort and other relevant resources by both students and their institutions intended to optimise the student experience and enhance the learning outcomes and development of students and the performance, and reputation of the institution".*

Similarly, Kuh, Kinzie, Buckley, Bridges and Hayek (2007 cited in Trowler, 2010, p. 9) defined 'student engagement' as "participation in educationally effective practices, both inside and outside the classroom, which leads to a range of measurable outcomes". Fredricks (2012) have defined 'student engagement' as the process whereby education institutions and its sector bodies make cautious efforts to involve and empower students in the process of shaping their learning experience. A careful analysis of the definitions elucidated so far appears to suggest that, the responsibility to carry out 'student engagement' lies with students themselves, their institutions and sector bodies. The definitions also emphasized students' participation and identification with their institution and institution-related activities.

It is worth noting that, 'student engagement' has become the latest focus of attention among stakeholders aiming to enhance teaching and learning in higher education (Trowler, 2010). It is therefore not surprising that, several research findings (for example, Fredricks, 2012; Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh & Whitt, 2005; Rubin et al., 2002; Dugan, 2006; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005) have established

strong correlations between student engagement in educationally purposive activities, and positive outcomes of student success and development.

Interestingly, in recent years, higher education students across the world are being encouraged by their institutions to engage themselves in both curricular and extracurricular activities of the institution (Elam, Stratton & Gibson, 2007; Howe & Strauss, 2000; Keeling, 2003). In line with this, universities across the globe appear to be creating more opportunities for students to engage themselves in the administration and management of the institutions (Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh & Whitt, 2005). For instance, institutional structures are being designed to foster student engagement (Kuh, 2005). A classic example is the common practice in Ghana where higher education institutions allow students to elect and or appoint their own colleague to represent them on committees within the institutions' administrative setup. This practise, seems to be premised on the general notion that student engagement is important for student's success (Kuh, 2005; Rubin et al., 2002; Dugan, 2006; Ewing et al., 2009).

The successes, according to the literature (Trowler, 2010) include satisfaction, persistence, academic achievement and social engagement. Others are: developing decision-making skills (Rubin et al., 2002) and leadership skills (Dugan, 2006; Ewing et al., 2009). Clearly, it does appear from the discussion so far that, student engagement can lead to a holistic development of the student if the student engages in educationally purposeful activities. It also appears that student engagement is broadly a positive and proactive term that captures students' quality of involvement, commitment, and identification with their institution and institution-related activities to enhance students' performance. To this end, one can be argued that student engagement as a concept resonates

with the constructivist philosophy which suggests that learning is influenced by how a person participates or engages in educationally purposeful activities.

Benefits of Participating in Student Leadership Activities

Studies on student leadership (Black et. al., 2014; Lizzio & Wilson, 2009) have helped in identifying a range of skills that student leaders may acquire through performing their leadership roles. Thus, student leaders by virtue of their leadership engagements are able to develop competencies in areas such as public speaking, decision-making, organisation abilities, time management, interpersonal communication, collaboration and conflict resolution strategies. Adding to this, Anderson and Lu (2014) argue that, leadership roles students perform make them more likely to take initiatives that ordinarily they may not take. Clearly, students' participation in their institutional governance appears to benefit the individual student (developmental), the institution (functional) and the larger society.

Interestingly, Bazirake (2016) have argued that society benefits from institutions that have active students' leadership. This is because, according to Bazirake, such institutions undoubtedly produce individuals with a less constrained conceptualisation of what citizenship is. Thus, students who are in leadership positions turn to gain more knowledge about how generally systems and structures actually work (Obiero, 2012). Against this backdrop, some researchers (for example, Laosebikan-Buggs, 2006; Zuo & Ratsoy, 1999; Dugan & Komives, 2010) have admonished universities to introduce their students to democratic ideals and practices. Boland (2005) makes that point that the surest way of teaching students' democratic ideas and practices is by allowing them to participate in their university administration/management.

Along the same line of thinking, McGrath (1970) asserts that because students are direct consumers of education, they are entitled and have the right to be part of the administration/management of their institutions.

It is refreshing to know that, when student serve as leaders in the running of their institution it enhances collaboration between the student body and their University's management (Hilliard, 2010; Astin, Astin & Kellogg Foundation, 2000). Hilliard (2010) maintains that, student leaders as they engage in leadership roles gain and harness qualities such as integrity, competence, self-awareness, long-term vision, determination, ability to work with others and emotional intelligence. The other benefits include: helping peers to learn how to solve problems in a humane manner, offering peers the opportunity to grow and participate in civic community, diversity awareness and respect. Adding to this, Black et. al. (2014) argued that, participating in student leadership also helps in providing students with the necessary skills to participate actively as citizens.

Harper (2005) also believes that student leaders serve as an agent of positive change at both the classroom level and university level. According to Harper, not only do student leaders serve as an agent of positive change but also they help change power dynamics and create new forums for learning. For example, Harper claims that student leaders learn how to speak out on their own. Adding to this, he indicated that, student leaders are able to have a better understanding of themselves and others and show a greater commitment to civic responsibility beyond the university experience. Specifically, Harper (2005) contends that, through engaging in leadership activities, student leaders: gain a sense of personal ethics and clarity of personal values, improve conflict resolution skills,

problem-solving abilities and decision-making skills. Other benefits derived from student leadership identified in the literature were: planning and implementing programs better, taking more risk willingly and using leadership theories and practices as they continue to develop (May, 2009; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

Likewise, Obiero (2012) also argues that student leaders are involved in leadership for various reasons. These reasons, according to Obiero range from career and academic aspirations to highly personal reasons to get access to the job market. Interestingly, a review of available literature (for example, Boland, 2005; Logue et al., 2005; May, 2009; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Obiero, 2012) also suggest that, when students get involved in their institution's decision making, they tend to gain more knowledge about decision making, have improved self-discipline, increased development of multicultural view, develop an acceptable attitude for diversity and divergent thinking, and gain better understanding of complex organizations and democratic ideas.

Thus, it appears from the discussion so far that, through student leadership, educational institutions are able to assist students in gaining a greater awareness of the world, their role in socially responsible leadership and explore the concepts of values-based change. Also, it can be inferred from the discussion that, through student leadership in higher education, students are exposed to the way of life of the world awaiting them after graduating. That is, student through their leadership roles are made aware of their environment, challenges and problems thereof.

Roles of Student Leaders

According to Keith (2010), the role of student leaders in the university leadership is a process of social influence in which one person enlists the support of others in the accomplishment of a common task. This, therefore, suggests that student leaders are to work for the attainment of a common purpose of the entire student body. According to Obiero (2012), student leaders play several roles in their universities as a way of discharging their leadership obligations. These roles include: assisting students to find solutions to academic and administrative problems, creating of opportunities for peer/professional counselling, providing general welfare services (i.e. soliciting for financial assistance for needy students) (Luescher, 2009 cited in Obiero, 2012).

Commenting on the roles student leaders play, Obiero (2012) elucidated that, student leadership is about representing and serving students. Thus, student leaders as part of their role represent the entire student body on committees and decision making bodies of their universities. This representation, according to Olsen (2007) is essential as it helps to maintain peaceful and orderly student academic life. Olsen explains that violent student protests occurred more frequently where formal channels of communication and consultation are absent. Likewise, Kambuga and Omollo (2017) revealed that student leaders as part of their roles help their institutional management to maintain peace, security and discipline campus. In addition, Kambuga and Omollo, believe that student leaders as part of their roles help management in planning health and academic programs. Against this backdrop, it can be argued that student leaders' role (i.e. representation) appears to be critical in ensuring a conducive teaching and learning environment.

Nevertheless, some studies (for example, Kirea, 2005; Kambuga & Omollo, 2017; Lau, 2004) have also revealed that student leaders encounter some challenges as they perform their duties. For example, Kirea (2005) reveals that student leaders sometimes are accused by their fellow students for working in the interest of the university management instead of the general student body. Apart from the accusations student leaders suffer sometimes, they also miss class/lectures because they have to attend to their leadership duties (Kirea, 2005). Thus, it is evident in the literature (for example, Kambuga & Omollo, 2017) that, student leaders spend more time on their leadership roles than their academic engagements.

Undoubtedly, it is clear from the literature reviewed so far that, the role student leaders play appears to be complementary in nature. That is, student leaders work to complement the effort of management in creating a conducive teaching and learning environment. However, it is also apparent that, when student leaders lack the needed knowledge and skills in how to perform their duties, they will definitely incur the wrath of those they represent. It is therefore expedient that, student leaders are provided with the opportunity to develop their leadership, communication and conflicting resolution skills so as to help them succeed.

Experiences of Student Leaders

Hine (2013) conducted a three-year longitudinal case study to generally understand student leadership development. The study revealed that generally, the positive experiences of student leaders by virtue of the leadership roles they play were opportunities for personal growth and development. That is, student leaders are able to learn and improve their leadership skills as they engage in

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leadership activities. This, therefore, puts them (i.e. student leaders) in a higher pedestal in getting future leadership positions than those who have no leadership experience.

Regarding the negative experiences of student leaders, Hine (2013) identified: too many meetings, not being appreciated, being too busy or occupied to do other things as the key once. Hine also found out that, the issue of balancing academic work and leadership roles was generally a challenging experience for student leaders. Other challenging experiences identified by Hine include: handling stressful responsibilities and situations, getting others involved in events, and meeting expectations of others. It is clear from Hine's findings that student leaders' experiences may be positive or negative or both.

Academic Performance of Student Leaders

In the context of educational research, the academic performance of a student can be regarded as their observable and measurable behaviour at any point in time during a course (Svanum & Bigatti, 2006). That is to say, students' academic performance consists of students' assessment scores at any particular time. Thus, one can measure students' academic performance with their grade point average (GPA) especially in the context of a higher education institution.

Research (for example, Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Svanum & Bigatti, 2006; Clark & Latshaw, 2012) have shown that one factor that predicts student's academic performance is students' course effort. According to Svanum and Bigatti (2006), course effort is defined by students' participation in activities such as attending lectures, doing an assigned reading, and studying. Based on this understanding, it thus appears that when students do not attend lectures or do assign readings their academic performance is likely to suffer. Again, some

other factors that can affect students' academic performance were time dedicated to studying and the study habits of students (Nonis & Hudson, 2010).

Effects of Student Leadership Roles on their Academic Performance

A number of studies (for example, Christensen, 1969; Ross-Power, 1980; Downey, Bosco & Silver, 1984; Astin, 1984; Dempster, Stevens & Keefe, 2011; Logue, Hutchens & Hector, 2005; Neumann, Dempster, & Skinner, 2009; Hine, 2012; Thompson, 2012; Mitra, 2006; Toshilis & Nakkula, 2012) have largely indicated a positive effects of student's leadership roles on their academic work. Thus, the literature suggests that when leadership skills from out-of-class activities practised by student leaders are applied in the classroom, real academic benefits are experienced. In other words, learning is enhanced when students are more actively engaged in educationally purposeful out-of-class activities. For example, Neumann, Dempster and Skinner (2009) reported in their studies that most student leaders believed that their experience (i.e. out-of-class activities practised) had helped them to improve their academic performance specifically their oral presentations. According to Neumann, Dempster and Skinner, other learning skills that student leaders developed as a result of their leadership roles include written communication, working in groups, verifying information, clarifying with instructors and peers, checking from source materials, problem-solving, working under pressure and listening. Similarly, Hine (2012) identify a range of skills that student leaders acquire through their leadership roles. They include public speaking, decision-making, organisation, time management, interpersonal communication, collaboration, and conflict resolution strategies.

Adding to the positive effect of student leadership roles on academic work, Anderson and Lu (2014) posit that, engaging in leadership service increases students' political popularity and their desire to take initiatives that could shape their beliefs about the determinants of success. That is to say, through student leadership opportunities, student leaders are able to develop and strengthen their capabilities, rather than just reflecting pre-existing skills. It is therefore obvious that student leadership within the school environment can increase student engagement and motivation which may lead to an increase in academic performance.

Academic Burnout among Student Leaders

The concept of burnout among university students is an area of concern, particularly among students leaders (Kao, 2009; Lenaghan & Sengupta, 2007; Hardy & Dodd, 1998). In general terms, burnout has been defined as a state of emotional exhaustion and a feeling of low personal accomplishment that usually occurs among people. There is increasing recognition that burnout is experienced by students and more so among student leaders (Hardy & Dodd, 1998; Chang, Rand & Strunk, 2000; Chang, 2004). Thus, according to Hardy and Dodd (1998), student leaders by virtue of their functions handle multiple responsibilities, therefore, are likely to experience a feeling of burnout.

Likewise, research on student burnout (for example, Jacobs & Dodd, 2003; Weckwerth & Flynn, 2006) has identified that the workload and personality of a student correlate with student burnout. It is instructive to also know that, the more academic burnout among students, the more they will have a weaker performance (Jacobs & Dodd, 2003). These revelations about academic burnout appear to suggest that, student leaders by virtue of their several engagements

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stand the risk of experiencing more burnout than students who are not in a leadership position. Clearly, burnout ultimately has a tendency to affect student leaders' academic performance if it is not handled well.

Understanding Students' Time as a Resource

Time is a priceless resource that continues to pass by, without coming back (Ngozi, Chiekezie & Ikon, n.d.). For this reason, it is essential for not only students but for all individuals to make use of time in an effective manner. This, therefore calls for effective time management practices. Time management skills should be mastered by all individuals particularly those in leadership positions (Morgenstern, 2004). This proposition appears to resonate with the opinion that, an individual's knowledge of time management strategies can be an invaluable resource in today's highly competitive world (Covey, 1989; Alexander & Dobson, 2009; Morgenstern, 2004; Alexander, 1992; Morgenstern, 2004; Alexander & Dobson, 2009). Interestingly, the literature has suggested several time management strategies that can be adopted by any individual. These strategies include: breaking down tasks into smaller manageable pieces, making and maintaining to-do lists, executing one job at a time and also making a conscious commitment to achieve specific goals (Alexander & Dobson, 2009).

Likewise, Morgenstern (2004) has developed a four-step formula (i.e. WADE Formula) for prioritising daily tasks. The four steps of the WADE Formula are as follows:

1. write it down (i.e. write down all of your 'to do's' in a single reliable location);

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2. add it up (i.e. estimate how long each task is going to take to complete);

3. decide (i.e. use the four D's- delete, delay, delegate and diminish to determine what task you will actually complete);

4. execute your plan (i.e. complete your decided plan without the hindrance of procrastination).

Using the WADE Formula is just one strategy to help prioritize tasks on one's to-do list.

Another effective method of organising priorities according to the literature is by using the Covey Time Management Grid (Covey, 1994; Kamphoff, Hutson, Amundsen & Atwood, 2007; Bering, 2006). Convey Time Management Grid differentiates between activities that are important and those that are urgent. Convey explains that, important activities have an outcome that leads to the achievement of set goals. For this reason, urgent activities demand immediate attention (Covey, 1994). Covey's approach to time management appears to promote the culture of focusing on doing important things before they become urgent. This, therefore, connotes the need to do things at the right time. Covey Time Management Grid is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Covey Time Management Grid

	Urgent	Not Urgent
Important	Quadrant 1 Activities • Crises • Pressing Problems • Deadline-Driven Projects	Quadrant 2 Activities • Prevention, Capability Improvement • Relationship Building • Recognising New Opportunities • Planning, Recreation
Not Important	Quadrant 3 Activities • Interruptions, Some Callers • Some Mail, Some Reports • Some Meetings • Proximate, pressing matters • Popular activities	Quadrant 4 Activities • Trivia, Busy Work • Some Mail • Some Phone Calls • Time Wasters • Pleasant Activities

Source: Adopted from Covey (1994)

According to Mueller, (2017) activities in quadrant, one can be segregated into items that could not have been foreseen, and those items that could. Quadrant one should only contain those activities and responsibilities that require immediate attention. It is important to reserve space for emergencies and extremely important deadlines. The items found in quadrant two do not have a high urgency but can play an important role in the future. Covey advise that close attention should be paid to quadrant two activities in order to avoid them to become quadrant one items. The quadrant three presents items that appear to have a high urgency, but are not at all important. There is no doubt that some of these activities might be entirely ego-driven, without contributing any value. According to Covey, these activities are obstacles that stand in-between people and their goals. The advice is that, if possible, people should delegate these items or consider rescheduling them. The quadrant four contains all those

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activities that do not contribute any value at all—the obvious time wasters. All the activities contained in quadrant four are nothing more than distractions. Covey admonish people to avoid those distractions as much as they can. Similarly, Mueller (2017) is also of the view that responsibilities need to be prioritized over those tasks that might demand our time but do not contribute to our goals.

In view of the fact that student leaders are expected to discharge their leadership duties effectively whilst succeeding academically (Gyamerah et al., 2014), I find the need for them to apply the principles of Covey's Time Management Grid in order to succeed. This is because, evidence in the literature suggests that, the extent to which students reach their goals is a direct function of the time they spend on activities designed to achieve those goals (Coleman, 1961; McDill & Rigsby, 1973 as cited in Astin 1984; Gyamerah et al., 2014). Thus, the more appropriate time students spend on relevant activities, the closer they get to achieve their goals.

Roles of UCC's SRC as Defined by the Statute of UCC

The University of Cape Coast in its widest context acknowledges the existence and participation of students in the institutional management and had, therefore, made provision for student involvement. For instance, the Statute of UCC (2016) demands the representation of students in the institutions' administrative setup. According to the Statute, there shall be Students' Representative Council (SRC) representing the junior members of the University. The SRC shall be the official organ of the junior members of the University and shall be responsible for:

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i.   promoting the general welfare and interest of students by coordinating the social, cultural, intellectual and recreational activities of students in the University;

ii. presenting the views of the students of the University to the appropriate body or bodies depending upon the nature of the matter;

iii. establishing links and maintaining cordial relationships with students of other universities, educational and voluntary institutions within and outside Ghana;

iv. nominating student representatives to serve on appropriate University bodies and committees;

v.   promoting cordial relationships among all sections of the University community and maintaining a good relationship with past students of the University; and

vi. publishing records of students' activities.

Functions of UCC's SRC as Defined by the SRC's Constitution

According to SRC's constitution, the SRC of the UCC shall generally be responsible for:

i.   seeking the interest and welfare of the student body Ghana in general and the University of Cape Coast in particular;

ii. serving as the mouthpiece of the entire student body of the University;

iii. providing the means of communication between students and the University authorities in all matters affecting the student body as a whole or part thereof;

iv. coordinating the activities of the students of UCC with other student organisations in Ghana and elsewhere in a matter of mutual interest;

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v.   fostering a good relationship between students of the University and the outside world;

vi.   presenting the views of the student body through appropriate channels to the Academic Board, University Council, Statutory bodies, Government and other bodies to help them assess correctly and deal with students' needs and problems;

vii.   maintaining unity and cohesion among the heterogeneous student groups in the University;

viii.   promoting cordial relationship between students and all sections with past students of the University of Cape Coast through the Alumni Association; and

ix.   taking charge in the management of assets belonging to the student body and ensuring probity, accountability and transparency.

For the purpose of achieving these objectives, the SRC's constitution enjoins the executives to organise lectures, symposia, fora, debates publications and any other activities necessary to fulfil these general aims and objectives. This, therefore, points to the enormous leadership responsibilities placed on the shoulders of student leaders aside their academic engagements.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study. Thus, the study was underpinned by the theory of student involvement by Astin (1984). The theory, provided a comprehensive insight into the activities student engage in whiles on campus. Astin's theory highlighted the negative and positive outcomes students generally derive from their involvement in extracurricular activities like student leadership. Available

literature in relation to the concept of leadership, student leadership, student engagement and benefit of participating in student leadership activities were reviewed. It was clear from the review that, student leaders by virtue of their leadership engagements are able to develop competencies in areas such as public speaking, decision-making, organisation abilities, time management, interpersonal communication, collaboration and conflict resolution strategies.

The review also focused on issues like roles of student leaders, experiences of student leaders, academic performance, effects of student leadership roles on academic and academic burnout. It was clear from the literature that, student leaders by virtue of their several engagements stand the risk of experiencing more burnout than students who are not in a leadership position. Unfortunately, the evidence adduced in this chapter suggests that academic burnout has the tendency to affect student leaders' academic performance if it is not managed well. Finally, the SRC's functions as defined by UCC's Statute (2016) and the SRC's constitution were equally highlighted in this chapter.
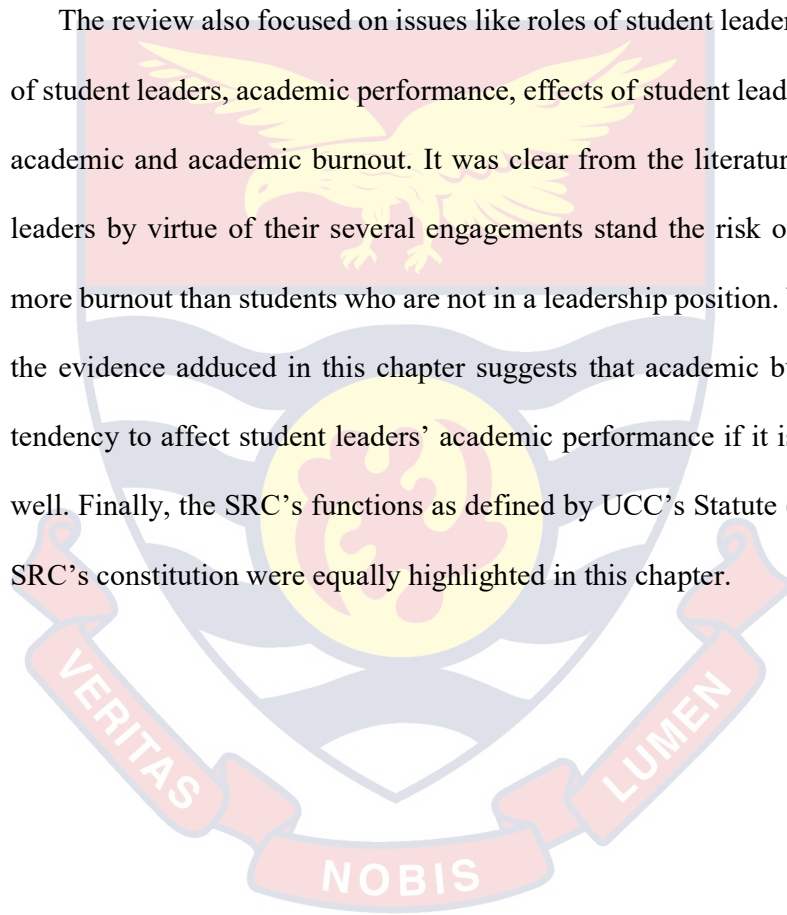
CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

This chapter presents the research methods used for the study. Specifically, the chapter includes the research design, study area, population, sampling procedure, data collection instrument, data collection procedure, and data processing and analysis.

Research Design

This study employs the case study design to explore the impact student leaders' roles have on their academic performance. A case study design enables the exploration of a phenomenon within its context (Baxter & Jack, 2008). The advantage of a case study research design is that it allows the researcher to collaborate with participant such that participants are able to tell their stories in their natural setting (Crabtree & Miller, 1999). Again, the design helps researchers to better understand the phenomenon under study. This is because participants are able to describe their views of reality as they tell their stories. (Lather, 1992; Robottom & Hart, 1993).

The study sought to explore the views of student leaders on how the performance of their leadership roles affect their academic performance. For this phenomenon to be well explored and understood by the researcher, there was a need for participants to tell their story. Through their story, participants were able to describe their views of reality regarding their experiences of their leadership role, how the performance of their leadership roles impacts their academic performance and how they balance their leadership roles with their academic work. Thus, the case study design adopted for this study afforded me

the opportunity to interact with participants through interview sessions with the aim of gaining an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon.

The case study approach used in this study was based on the constructivist paradigm. Constructivists claim that truth is relative and that it is dependent on one's perspective (Yin, 2003). In line with this paradigm, student leaders as participants of this study were allowed to individually share (through interviews) their own experiences about their leadership roles and how it impacted their academic work. Even though the paradigm recognizes the importance of the subjective human creation of meaning, it does not reject outright the notion of objectivity (Crabtree & Miller, 1999).

Study Area

The study area for this study is the University of Cape Coast (UCC). UCC is located in Cape Coast, the Central Region of Ghana and one of the most intellectually active and culturally diverse areas of the country. This institution was established in October 1962 as a University College out of a dire need for highly qualified and skilled manpower for education. On October 1, 1971, the then University College attained the status of a full and independent University, with the powers to confer its own degrees, diplomas and certificates through an Act of Parliament which is The University of Cape Coast Act, 1971 [Act 390] and later the University of Cape Coast Law in 1992 [PNDC Law 278].

UCC operates from two campuses. Thus the Southern Campus (Old Site) and Northern Campus (New Site). The University is expected to provide higher education to persons suitably qualified and capable of benefiting from such education. UCC is expected to also train students to be critical and independent in thought; while making students aware of the need to use their education for

the good of the Ghanaian society. Again, the university also seeks to engage in and provide facilities for teaching and cutting-edge research for the purpose of promoting the advancement and dissemination of learning and knowledge with particular reference to the needs and aspirations of the people of Ghana. (Statutes of UCC, 2016).

In UCC, the highest decision-making body is the University Council. Thus, according to the Statutes of UCC (2016, p. 5), "the Governing Council of the University shall be the Council of the University of Cape Coast consisting of: the Chairperson; the Vice-Chancellor; two Convocation Representatives, one teaching; one non-teaching; one representative of the University of Cape Coast Branch of the University Teachers Association of Ghana; two staff representatives, one representing junior staff, and one representing senior staff. The others are a representative from: undergraduate students of the University; postgraduate students of the University; the Principals of Colleges of Education; the Conference of Heads of Assisted Senior High Schools; the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE); the Alumni Association of the University of Cape Coast. The rest are: three government appointees, taking into account, the need for gender balance, expertise in management and finance; two other person(s), appointed by the University Council, from outside the University in consultation with the Vice-chancellor; Registrar (Secretary) (Status of UCC, p. 25)

As a result of expansion in UCC's infrastructure over the years, the initial student enrolment of 155 in 1963 has increased to 73,265 (i.e. Undergraduates: 67,938 and Postgraduates: 5,327) (UCC Basic Statistic, 2017). Areas of academic programmes range from humanities to social sciences to engineering

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and the sciences. UCC is organised into five (5) Colleges (College of Humanities and Legal Studies, College of Education, College of Agriculture and Natural Sciences, College of Health and Allied Sciences, College of Distance Education) with six (6) Faculties and eight (8) Schools headed by Provosts and Deans respectively. Presently, UCC has restructured its degree programmes by de-coupling the study of professional education courses from the main degree courses.

UCC is well recognized worldwide due to the selfless contributions of staff and students who keep raising the image of the University very high both locally and internationally (VC's Report, 2017). This feat appears to have been attained through the leadership roles played by various individuals including Vice-Chancellors, Registrars, Council Members, lecturers and students.

Interestingly, the VC's Report (2017), acknowledges and accepts the existence and contribution of the SRC in the University's continual growth. It is therefore not surprising that the UCC's statute makes provision for students' participation in the administration/management of the institution.

Population

The target population for this study is all student leaders of UCC. A target population is otherwise known as the theoretical population is the entire group of individuals who are the focus of the study (Knight, 2014). Although there are a lot of student organisations (for example old student associations, departmental associations, and religious associations) in UCC, most of these organisations appear not to be well organised in terms of leadership like the Students' Representative Council (SRC).

Interestingly, UCC's status has made provision for the Students' Representative Council (SRC) to be part of the University's administrative or management setup. These, therefore, place the SRC in a higher and more formal leadership position than the other form of student organisation leaders in UCC. It is therefore not surprising that the SRC is the official representatives and mouthpiece of the entire student body of the University. Characteristically, the SRC leaders are elected to their position to serve as student leaders for an academic year. In total there are thirty-four (34) SRC Executive Council who officially represent the Students' Representative Council of the University of Cape Coast.

Sampling Procedure

Sampling is a method employed by a researcher to systematically select a relatively smaller number of representatives or individuals (a subset) from a population to serve as subjects (i.e. data source) of a study (Sharma, 2017). With this understanding and in line with the choice of case study design, the study engaged thirteen (13) student leaders for the purpose of the study. This number comprises the seven SRC Executive Committee Members and the Presidents of all the various Junior Common Room Committee (JCRC). There are six traditional halls of residence here in the University of Cape Coast and hence six JCRC Presidents. These group of student leaders were selected purposively for semi-structured interview. Purposive sampling which is also known as judgment, selective or subjective sampling is a sampling method in which a researcher relies on his or her own judgment when choosing members of a population to participate in the study (Dudovskiy, 2016). In purposive sampling,

the researcher intentionally selects individuals believed to be information-rich by virtue of their roles or experiences (Creswell, 2007).

Accordingly, the SRC executives and residential hall presidents were selected because they were deemed to have the needed information by virtue of their positions and experiences. Thus, they represent all UCC regular undergraduate students. It is worth knowing that, in practice, every regular undergraduate student in UCC is affiliated to one of the halls of residence, therefore, are represented by their JCRC executives led by the presidents. For the purpose of finding out the leadership roles of student leaders and how their roles impact their academic work, the SRC Executives and the Hall Presidents were the most suitable participants for the study. The decision to select thirteen (13) student leaders as the sample size was premised on the fact that, the researcher intended to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon being studied hence a number between ten (10) and twenty (20) is deemed appropriate for a qualitative case study (Ball, 1990).

Data Collection Instrument

In line with the purpose of finding out from student leaders, how the performance of their leadership roles impacts their academic performance, a semi-structured interview guide was chosen as the main instrument for data collection. An interview guide according to Edlund (2011) is a list of questions planned to be explored during an interview session. An interview has been defined to be a conversation to gather descriptions of the life-world of an interviewee with respect to interpretation of the meanings of the described phenomena (Kvale, 1996; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Creswell, 2007; Krauss et. al., 2009). In a similar vein, Schostak (2005) describes an interview

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as an extendable conversation between individuals with the goal of having in-depth information about a certain subject.   Thus, an interview enables participants to discuss their interpretation of the world in which they live and to express how they regard or see situations from their own point of view.

In line with this thinking, a semi-structured interview guide was developed by the researcher for data collection. The use of a semi-structured interview guide was to ensure that, each interviewee was asked the same questions which helped to ensure and assure dependability. The interview guide was made up of nine (9) interview items with probing questions (see Appendix C). Interview item one was developed to elicit the demographic information of participant (i.e. Age, Level, gender). Interview item two was designed to elicit information to answer research question one (i.e. what leadership roles do students of the University of Cape Coast (UCC) perform as per the University Statute and Constitution of the SRC?). Interview items three was developed towards eliciting answers to research question two (i.e. what are the experiences of the student leaders in UCC regarding their leadership roles?).

To get responses for the research question three, (i.e. how do the leadership roles performed by student leaders in UCC affect their academic engagements?) interview items four to seven were developed for that purpose. Interview item eight was developed to get answer for research question four (i.e. how do student leaders in UCC balance their leadership roles and their academic engagements).

To ensure the dependability of the research instrument, I relied on the expert judgment from my supervisors and fellow researchers to ensure that the

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questions on the interview guide were adequate and comprehensive to cover all aspects the study purported to explore.

Data Collection Procedure

First, an introductory letter from the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration was given to participants introducing the researcher to the participants for the purpose of data collection. The participants were individually contacted to seek their consent for an individual interview session after the purpose of the research was explained to them. They all agreed to participate in the study through the signing of a consent form (see Appendix B). Later, the date, time and place for the interview with each of the participants was decided and agreed upon. The interview venues were participants' flat (room) and their conference rooms. These places were chosen and agreed upon by both the participants and the researcher. At the interview session, all the participants were again briefed about the aims, purpose and objectives of the research and were assured of anonymity and confidentially. Likewise, they were also assured that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any point without any obligations. Participants were also allowed to decide any pseudonyms for themselves which was used as their names in the study. I followed the questions on the interview guide to elicit responses from the participants in each case. The interview was audio-recorded and each interview session lasted between forty-five minutes to one hour twenty minutes. The data collection period lasted for almost three weeks.

According to Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell and Walter (2016), trustworthiness of results is the bedrock of high-quality qualitative research. To ensure the trustworthiness of the results, I tried as much as possible to avoid

asking leading questions. I also gave participants the opportunity to clarify and summarize their responses. Another technique used was member checking otherwise known as respondent validation (Birt et. al., 2016). Thus, the transcribed data was sent back to the research participants to check for the accuracy of their responses given during the interview. This was also to ensure that the personal biases of the researcher did not affect the findings and eventually the trustworthiness of the study.

Data Processing and Analysis

The procedures used for the analysis of the data collected for the study mainly followed the approach adopted by Braun and Clarke (2006). Braun and Clarke (2006) point out that, in qualitative data analysis, patterns are identified through a rigorous process of data familiarisation, data coding, and theme development and revision. First, familiarisation with data was internalised through transcription and translation of the interviews. The audio recordings of the interviews of the participants were listened to a number of times for accurate translation and transcription. Thus, the transcription was done by listening to the audio recordings and typing the words using Microsoft Word Office 2016.

The next important consideration was identifying themes from the transcribed data. That is, the transcribed data was read and re-read to identify common ideas running through each interview questions asked. Later, these common ideas were put together to identify significant broader patterns of meaning which were later reduced to themes based on the research questions. The themes captured the key idea about the data in relation to the research question (Judger, 2016). The emerging themes were discussed in line with each

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research question. Finally, key quotes from participants were selected and included in the discussion in order to convey understanding.

Chapter Summary

The case study research design was used in this study. The study area was the University of Cape Coast. The population for the study was all student leaders in UCC. For the purposes of the study, thirteen (13) participants were purposively selected for the study. The number includes seven (7) SRC executive and six (6) residential hall presidents. A semi-structured interview guide was chosen as the main instrument for data collection. Qualitative data was collected from participants through interview. The data was then analysed thematically.
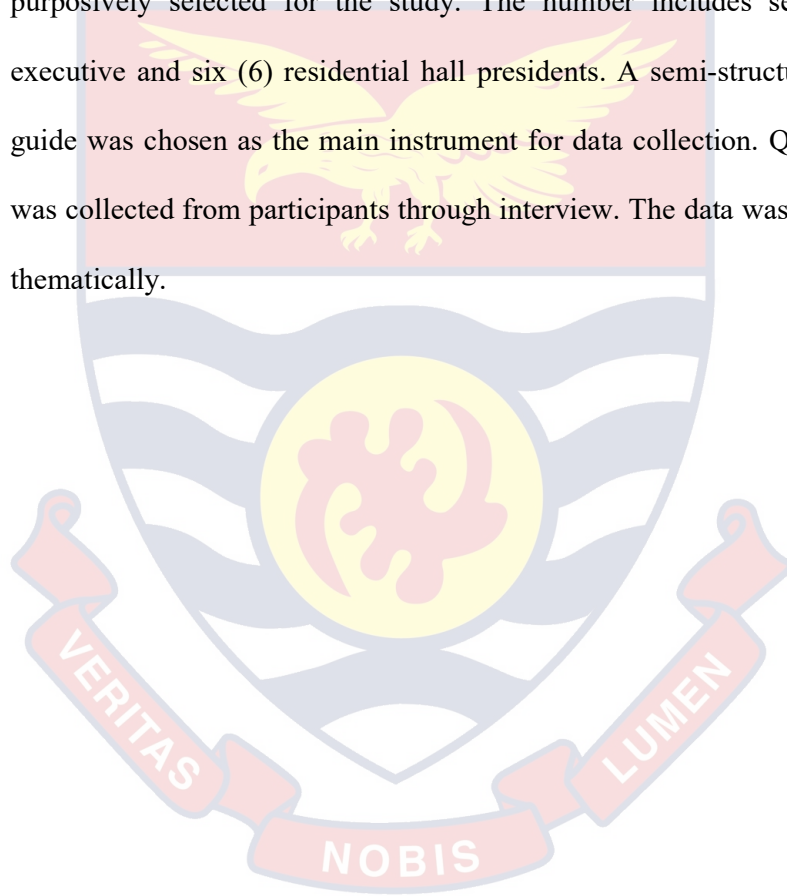
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of the study. The presentation is organised under each of the research questions posed. In order to set the actual findings of the research in context, brief demographic characteristics of participants are presented first.

Demographic Characteristics of Participants

The first interview item was developed to elicit demographic characteristics of the participants. Table 2 presents the age, sex and academic level of participants as at the time of data collection.

Table 2*:* **Respondents Age, Sex and Academic Level**

Pseudonym	Age	Sex	Academic Level
Jake	25	Male	400
Australia	29	Male	400
Michel	24	Female	400
Nana Yaw	22	Male	400
Nana Kay	25	Male	400
Mike	26	Male	300
Caesar	25	Female	400
Philip	28	Male	400
Faustina	25	Female	400
Michael	24	Male	400
Canada	23	Female	400
Millicent	22	Female	400
Millimetre	24	Male	400

Source: Field Data, Kumaku (2019)

Age can be one characteristic to suggest the maturity level of participants in examining their responses. The data presented in Table 2 indicates 25 years as the average age of participants. This, therefore, appears to give the impression that those selected for the study were matured. This is not surprising owing to the fact that most of them were in their final years of study (i.e. level 400). It is the researcher's beliefs that, because the respondents appeared to be matured, it was easy establishing rapport with them during the data collection process. Thus, they were very receptive and willing to share their experiences.

Results and Discussion of the Research Questions

This section focuses on the presentation and the discussion of the findings of the study.

Research Question 1: What leadership roles do student leaders of the University of Cape Coast (UCC) perform as per the University's Statute and Constitution of the SRC?

The Research Question sought to find out from the student leaders what their leadership roles were. An analysis of the data gathered from the interviews with participants revealed that the leadership roles performed by student leaders of UCC centred on four themes, namely: student leaders represent their student body; student leaders serve as a liaison between students and management; student leaders promote the interest and welfare of students, and student leaders organise and coordinate students' programs and activities. For the purposes of presentation, the findings of this research question, together with its discussions, are presented under the four themes.

Theme one: Student leaders represent the entire student body at the university management level

Representation function featured prominently in the responses of participants as one of their leadership roles. The interviewees were clear in their responses that their primary role was to represent the entire student body, principally at the university management level. This is evidenced in the excerpts of some of the interviewees:

> *My role is to represent students in all official meetings. Anywhere the representation of students is needed for critical decision making I have to represent and also, I speak for the student and then I also bring to the attention of management the things that students will wish to see on campus. I represent students at the university's council meetings- thus the highest decision-making body of the university (Australia).*
>
> *I also send students views and their grievances to management where they try to deliberate upon at the council level so their interest would also be taken into consideration by management… (Nana Yaw).*

Noticeably, it does appear from the responses of the student leaders interviewed that their representative function implies acting on the expressed wishes of students. While this may be so, I think that sometimes student leaders may act according to what they believe is in the best interests of students. In describing student leaders in light of their representative role, one can posit that they are persons authorized to act on behalf of all their constituents, or may also be seen as persons held to account by those they represent.

Moreover, the representation role of student leaders signals some form of collaboration between student leaders and the management of UCC in decision making. This seemingly collaborative or joint approach to decision making is

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commendable, in that, collective decisions can be of far better quality, with a considerably higher commitment from both parties (i.e. both the student leaders and university management). It is therefore apt that the university statute provides that, the SRC shall be the official organ of the junior members of the University and that the president shall represent the student body at the University Council (Statute of UCC, 2016). Certainly, giving students representation in university governance is an obvious way to build shared vision, accountability and buy-in. Creating a room for student representation at management level as enshrined in the university's status clearly suggests that the university acknowledges and values student participation in the university governance. It is therefore not surprising that this particular finding (i.e. representation role) is consistent with views in the literature (for example, Obiero 2012), that the role of student leaders is to a large extent represent students.

Theme two: Student leaders serve as liaisons between students and the university management

Another leadership role that emerged from the analysis of the interview responses was that the student leaders served as a liaison between students and the university management. A liaison is a person who establishes and maintains relationships among groups (Fassin, 2000). The ensuing excerpts, for example, present the voices of two interviewees on what appears to be their views on their role as a liaison:

> *... I liaise between management and the student body so we ensure that anything that is discussed at the top level is communicated to students ... (Jake).*

> *... as a president, you become the chief servant of your people so anything concerning them you channel or take it to the higher management. ... basically, I serve as a liaison between the top management and the students so anything concerning the students, you channel it and anything too from the top management to the students, you are the centre of it ... (Michel).*

Clearly, the foregoing excerpts show that student leaders served as a link between the student body and university management. Thus, student leaders send information from students to management and also from management to students. This leadership role places student leaders in the position to serve as a bridge between students and management. This role, according to the literature (for example, Thierry, 2013; Hall & Symes, 2000; Little et al., 2009) is imperative in enhancing the free flow of information. Against this backdrop, I argued that when student leaders discharge their liaison role well, violent student protests as a result of lack of effective communication between students and management can be a thing of the past.

Theme three: Student leaders promote the interest and welfare of students

Promoting the interest and welfare of students emerged as one of the roles student leaders play. Thus, student leaders indicated that they sought for the wellbeing of their colleagues. In the ensuing excerpts, for example, the voices of three student leaders can be heard articulating this view forcefully:

> *There are so many issues at times bed bugs will be worrying them, some of their beds were not functioning properly, bathhouse issues and a whole lot that we have to solve. ... some rooms did not have fans, so my administration had to procure 150 fans. Before we did that, a lot of the level hundreds were complaining, our fans, we are sleeping in the heat, and all these things become a burden to us (Jake).*

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... I make sure that the welfare of the people is taken into consideration because that was what I was elected to do (Michel).

We introduced the free night shuttle, thus the free shuttle at night during the examination period because we realized that during examination periods students are attacked. Most often, some of them do not have money to charter taxis back to their hostels so they walk and they are robbed on the way. We also introduced the hassle-free project. Thus, we transported the first- years from their regional capitals back to campus. This was to avoid taxi drivers taking advantage of them when they arrive at town in the commercial cars. Also, we have fully paid for the metro mass shuttle on campus and this project was introduced because the vehicles used on campus for shuttle were in bad conditions. Moreover, some of the drivers of those bad vehicles didn't even have a license. That was not good for students so we had to step in and provide an alternative (Australia).

Interestingly, this theme appears to resonate with the dictates of the University's statutes. According to the statute, student leaders (i.e. SRC executives) are to promote the general welfare and interest of students by coordinating the social, cultural, intellectual and recreational activities of students in the University (Statute of UCC, 2016).

Theme four: Student leaders are responsible for organising and coordinating students' programs and activities

Another theme that emerged strongly from the data analysis was the fact that student leaders in UCC organise and coordinate students' activities and programs. This theme is captured succinctly in the words of Philip, Jake and Michel as follows.

I organize programs for the hall- the fresher's welcome ceremony, the tour, games and the hall week celebrations (Philip).

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We are in charge of the activities that go on in the hall. For example,
the hall week. Because we know that the hall needs to be fun and
educative, the entertainment chairman and my entire executive body
sit down in a meeting and draw a very educative and entertaining
program that will keep the hall going (Jake).
We organize programs like entrepreneur programs to equip our
ladies and a whole lot of stuff (Michel).

The responses of Philip, Jake and Michel clearly shows that student leaders, as part of their roles, organize and coordinate students' events and activities. These roles performed by student leaders are in line with the demands of the UCC-SRC constitution. Thus, the UCC-SRC constitution requires SRC executives to coordinate the activities of students (UCC, SRC Constitution). Likewise, the University statutes also require student leaders to organise lectures, symposia, fora, debates publications and any other activities necessary to improve the academic fortunes of students. This, therefore, points to the enormous leadership responsibilities placed on the shoulders of student leaders apart from their academic engagements.

Taken together, the responses presented concerning research question one revealed four main leadership roles performed by UCC student leaders. The roles are: representing the entire student body; serving as a liaison between students and university management; promoting the welfare and interest of students and organising and coordinating students' programs and activities.

Research Question 2. What are the experiences of student leaders in UCC regarding their leadership roles?

This question sought to find out the experiences of student leaders regarding the performance of their roles. The results from the data analysis suggested two broad themes, namely: positive and negative experiences. For the purposes of

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presentation, the positive experiences of student leaders are presented and discussed first after which the negative experiences are presented and discussed.

Theme one: UCC student leaders' positive experiences

The student leaders engaged in the study believed that there were some positive experiences that came with their involvement in student leadership. The findings revealed that, as student leaders execute their leadership roles, they had some positive encounters/experiences. Among the positive experiences revealed were that they gain exposure, develop their interpersonal relations skills and communication skills. For the purpose of discussion, these positive experiences are each discussed as sub-themes.

Sub-theme one: Student leaders gain exposure through performing their leadership roles

Exposure to persons of higher status in society was one of the positive experiences student leaders had as a result of their leadership roles. For instance, Faustina, Philip and Millimetre in their responses to the question of what their experiences were in relation to their leadership roles, said:

> *I have had the opportunity to sit in a meeting with the Vice-Chancellor, Provost, the Dean of Students, and many more of the university and I think it is the best part of it. Meeting and interacting with people occupying big seats; they get to impact and inspire you. I don't get contact with only those in the university alone but even outside because I am a student leader I get the opportunity to meet people who have influence in the country (Faustina).*
>
> *Because of my position, I meet with those that are above me. I can go pay a visit to the Dean at his office and even the Pro-Vice-Chancellor. They see me as a colleague and we talk. If I was not a student leader, I do not think I would have such opportunities (Philip).*

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I am lucky enough to meet people. For example, the regional manager, the VC himself. People would have to struggle before even seeing the VC but some of us dine with him, meet and talk with him any time, HODs and even to the extent of a Minister of States himself (Millimetre).

It is clear from the extracts that the student leaders believed that being exposed to people they considered to be of high status afforded them (student leaders) the opportunity to learn from such people. Obviously, it is human nature to want to learn from or associate with people of high status or influence. It is, therefore, not surprising to know that student leaders were motivated as they encounter productive people with traits and experiences they revere. Specifically, UCC student leaders, according to the findings, got an opportunity to meet with the management of the University and even went beyond that to establish a personal relationship with them. Not only did the student leaders got an opportunity to be meeting with the management of the university, but they also travelled and attended meetings with prominent people in Government. Obviously, their leadership position provided them with more advantage to be exposed than their colleagues who were not student leaders. It can, therefore, be argued that the exposure student leaders get as a result of their leadership positions could help shape how they think and live their lives (Bazirake, 2016).

Sub-theme two: Student leaders develop their interpersonal relation skills through performing their leadership roles

Apart from participants revealing that they gained exposure as a result of their leadership roles, they also added that their leadership roles have helped to improve their interpersonal skills. For example, Faustina and Caesar had these to say:

Leadership has also taught me how to work in a group. We meet different people with different characters but because we have a common goal which is to serve students' interest, we come together, put away our differences and work. This experience has been helpful to me. Dealing with diverse individuals even in my academic life has been very easy for me these days (Faustina).

Working with a lot of people with different backgrounds has also given me a very nice experience in relation to how I relate with people. I can say that right now; I am very good when it comes to an interpersonal relationship with others. Back then, I was a very shy person, it was very difficult for me to relate with others, but right now, I am able to have a good interpersonal relationship with others (Caesar).

It is clear from the excerpts of Faustina and Caesar that, student leaders in the course of their leadership engagements interact with people of all kinds and in the process, learn different types of human behaviours and how to live with them. Thus, as student leaders interact with the people they work with, they acquire some virtues like tolerance, acceptance, patience, respect for other people's views, among others. These virtues acquired by student leaders help them to relate with others. According to Hilliard (2010), such virtues are valuable in preparing students to work effectively in today's competitive world. For Black et al. (2014), the experiences student leaders gain by interacting with others help to equip them with the necessary skills to participate actively as citizens.

Sub-theme three: Student leaders improve their communication skills by performing their leadership roles

Communication is key in every human institution, and one needs to learn how to communicate well. The data gathered revealed that student leaders improve

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significantly on their communication skills as they go about discharging their leadership duties. Mike captures this clearly in his words as follows:

> *It has given me confidence because people here are very matured, and then you tend to learn. You meet a lot of people when you are able to speak and exhibit skills that you have learnt from these same people. Gone were the days when a class presentation was difficult for some of us. We take the microphone, and we begin to shiver, but I tell you that, now I can be anywhere, if you call on me I will give you anything that you want to hear. I am able to speak to facts now than before (Mike).*

There is no doubt that people with good communication skills are highly sought after by industries (Black et al., 2014; Lizzio & Wilson, 2009). According to the literature reviewed, as student leaders get involved in performing their leadership roles, they progressively develop various personal skills (Cress, Astin, Zimmerman-Oster & Burkhardt, 2001). Interestingly, the finding of the study appears to be in line with the assertion by Cress, Astin, Zimmerman-Oster and Burkhardt (2001). For example, some student leaders claimed that, previously, they were shy and could not communicate well with people, but now they are able to communicate better. Some student leaders suggested that now they could boldly do presentations without panicking. Thus, they gradually improved their communication skills as a result of delivering speeches mostly at student gatherings. This, therefore, means that involving oneself in student leadership consciously or unconsciously provides an opportunity for them to improve on their communication skill.

Theme two: Student leaders encounter some negative experiences

Unfortunately, the study found out that some experiences were not pleasant to students' leaders. Such unpleasant experiences are described as negative

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experiences (Hine, 2013). Among the negative experiences encountered by UCC student leaders are: erroneous perceptions about them and spending long hours at meetings, therefore unable to meet their academic demands. These negative experiences are discussed as sub-themes.

Sub-theme one: Students have erroneous perceptions about UCC student leaders

One of the negative experiences that student leaders had according to the findings was the erroneous perceptions some of their fellow students have about them. Student leaders believed that they were generally perceived as people whose main desire was to amass wealth for themselves. The findings also revealed that some university officials perceived student leaders as unfaithful beings; therefore, they should not be trusted. Participants in their responses regarding their experiences as student leaders revealed that they sometimes get abused verbally by their own colleagues. This is clearly captured in the words of Jake, Nana Yaw and Caesar as follows:

> *...at times people piss you off. People throw a lot of chaffs on you as if you are doing nothing. They have this perception that student leaders came into office just to squander money. At times it's like you are putting in your maximum effort to ensure that the people and their grievances are resolved, but they see you not to be doing anything (Jake).*
>
> *Your own colleagues always try to lambast you. They always make sure that they find their way. So far as they know you have occupied the position, the first thing that comes to their mind is that you are smuggling and amassing money for yourself. It's a major bad experience and it always makes us feel bad because we are thinking that we are there and willing to serve their interest but they are not seeing what you are trying to do (Nana Yaw).*

... because you are a leader which I embrace, students say a whole lot of things. They don't really know what is going on but the mere fact that you are a leader, they say whatever they want to say. Everybody thinks that you are spending their money. People meet you and they will make funny comments. Comments like "this is the one who has been spending our money". They make comments that are very bad but then it's part of the work so sometimes we embrace it. Sometimes you will go somewhere and you know you don't have money on you and for example, you are buying common water, because of my position, I have to buy water for all the people around. Maybe I don't have money I have to borrow and come and pay later. It happens a lot (Caesar).

This generalised perception about student leaders, according to the findings, got some of the student leaders into the bad books of some university officials. Student leaders claimed they were mostly not treated fairly by both their fellow students and some university officials because of the negative perceptions they had about them (i.e. the student leaders). For example, Australia and Faustina captured it as follows.

I got into the bad books of a senior member as a result of the stance I chose, which is more of an advocacy type. ... I was seen as a litigant, stubborn (laughs) so it made things difficult for me. Anytime I also needed something from the top to do something so even as we speak now, I have an unhealthy relationship with one of the people at the top all because of my roles (Australia). Even though you are working hard to satisfy everybody but there is a group of people that are not satisfied. When you become a student leader, you are like margarine in two slices of bread; Management wants you to be for them and students also want you to be for them and you have to trend well not to hurt one group in trying to please the other. This is a training and platform for leadership at the national level so you can't be for only one side and if you are able to handle this one properly,

> *then it means if you are given the national front door you will be able to serve very well. ... Definitely, we are humans and these things affect us academically but we have to move on (Faustina).*

Interestingly, almost all the student leaders described the perceptions about them as unfounded. They, however, revealed that such unfounded perceptions about them to some extent, affected their relationship with some student groups. Thus, the student leaders felt uncomfortable dealing with some student groups and university officials because of the negative perceptions those people had about them.

Sub-theme two: Student leaders spend long hours at meetings so find it difficult to meet their academic demands

The data analysis suggested that holding meetings was one of the core activities the student leaders undertook. Thus, meetings were held now and then to deliberate on issues that were of interest to the student body. Unfortunately, the student leaders engaged in the study revealed that most of their meetings lasted more than the time allotted for it. Thus, they were unable to go by the time allotted for their meetings in most cases. They also indicated that most of their meetings were held at odd times (i.e. outside regular working hours) with little or no notices. This made it difficult for them to plan towards those meetings. This negative experience is succinctly captured in the words of Michel and Canada as follows:

> *Hhmm, my roles had affected my academic work. Sometimes we leaders don't go for lectures, we don't even go for tutorials, we don't even know we have a quiz until a friend prompts us because we are busy with stuff. I remember during our hall week I never attended lectures for the whole week so you could tell how I wrote my quizzes (Michel).*

My roles go a long way to affect my studies. There is little I can do about it. Most times, you are supposed to sacrifice a lecture for a meeting and that affect your academic work in the long run (Canada).

As a follow-up question, the student leaders were asked about the average number of hours spent on leadership roles and academic engagements. Table 3 shows the average number of hours they spent on leadership obligations and academic engagements.

Table 3: Participants number of hours spent in a week on leadership roles and academic engagements

Name	The average number of hours spent on leadership roles per week	The average number of hours spent on academics per week
Jake	35	28
Nana Kay	70	28
Michel	21	14
Nana Yaw	24	28
Mike	15	10
Michael	Almost all my time	9
Faustina	77	35
Caesar	60	24
Philip	21	14
Australia	96	21
Canada	42	28
Millicent	28	21
Millimetre	56	7

Source: Field Data (2020)

From Table 3, it is clear that the student leaders were spending less time on their academic work as compared to their leadership roles. This finding confirmed the finding of Kambugu and Omollo (2017) when they measured and compared students' time spent on academic work and leadership roles. Kambugu and Omollo (2017) found out that student leaders spend most of their time on leadership obligations as compared to their academic engagements even though 47.1 % of the student leaders rated their academic performance as good.

Evidence in the literature (for example, Hine, 2013) suggests that one of the negative experiences student leaders go through is their inability to meeting academic demands. This assertion by Hine (2013) resonates with the experiences of the student leader in UCC. This is because the student leaders had a difficult time meeting the demands of their academic work, mainly due to their leadership roles. Thus, they were always saddled with a lot of unplanned activities which made it very difficult for them to honour all their academic obligations.

Research Question 3. How do the leadership roles performed by student leaders in UCC affect their academic work?

This research question sought to find out how the leadership roles performed by student leaders affect their academic work. To do this, preliminarily, I attempted establishing what constitutes the academic work/engagement of student leaders. For this purpose, a direct question was posed to the student leaders requesting them to outline what their academic work/engagements were. Interestingly, Michel, Mike, Caesar and Australia captured what constitutes the academic work/engagement of student leaders in the following extracts.

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... I go for lectures, I write my quizzes, I do everything like those who do not hold positions. We are not given exemptions from any academic work even though I think we need it (Michel).

My academic work includes going for group studies, doing personal assignment and research, preparation for quizzes and presentations and I also go for entrepreneurship skills training because I am a business student …(Mike).

… I go for lectures, tutorials, group and personal studies, quizzes, assignments, presentations and examinations (Caesar).

I write quizzes, I do presentations, write exams. We also do attachments and internship (Australia).

It was clear from the data gathered that the student leaders knew what constitute their academic work/engagement. Specifically, the academic work/engagement of student leaders includes attending lectures, writing of quizzes and exams, doing assignments and presentations, and engaging in personal and group studies. This finding suggests that student leaders' academic work/engagement was not different from that of an ordinary student.

The student leaders were then explicitly asked how their leadership roles imparted their academic work/engagement. The answer to this question is summarised in the words of Australia, Mike and Michael as follows:

... my leadership roles affected my academic engagements. Its effect on me was 70% negative and 30% positive. ... you have to divide your time between your leadership role and your academics so definitely you are not going to pay 100% attention to your books. ... I travelled outside Ghana in line with my leadership duties, and they were having lectures and doing so many things during my absence. I remember I did not even write some quizzes, so I had to be given another one to write which was more difficult than the one they first wrote. Last time we had a council meeting with only one agenda so I thought that we were going to spend like three hours after which I will go to class. Can you imagine that we started at 10 am, we closed

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at 8:00pm? The truth is that, as a student leader, if you are not careful you will not attend lectures because of your work (Australia).

... personally, it has affected me badly. At times we go for a meeting during the day and we close at times midnight so I am not able to learn because I get tired (Mike).

If you should go round to do a survey, you will realize that about 90% of student leaders' academics are affected negatively by the roles they play. It is only a few who will tell you that they can cope. Even that one unless the person does not want to tell you what is on the ground. I tell you; we are affected (Michael).

These findings appeared to suggest that, generally, student leaders' academic works/engagements are negatively affected by their leadership roles. Australia and Caesar aptly provided some explanation to why their leadership roles were negatively impacting their performances. They said:

... the VC can just call you at any time to meet him even if you are in the lecture room studying. I remember one day I was in a lecture when they called me that there was a meeting, they needed me. They needed information, so I just told the lecturer that I had to leave and I left the class. When I came back, the class had ended. ... when I travelled, they were studying, when I go for meetings they are studying and when they give you assignments you are not able to give maximum attention to the assignment, and you score poor grades and then quizzes you will not do well. During examinations, you put in your best, but then when the results come, you get grade C, D ... (Australia).

... one has to divide his time between leadership roles and academic work. It's only 20% of student leaders whose academics are impacted positively by their leadership roles. It's not our fault. (Caesar).

As a way of confirmation, the student leaders were asked to share information about their academic performance (i.e. their CGPA) before and after their term in office. The findings to this follow-up question are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Participants CGPA Before and After their Leadership Position

Name	CGPA Before	CGPA After	Overall Impact
Jake	3.6	3.0	-0.6
Nana Kay	3.1	3.1	0
Michel	3.1	3.0	-0.1
Nana Yaw	3.6	3.6	0
Mike	3.9	3.8	-0.1
Michael	3.3	3.1	-0.2
Faustina	3.3	3.0	-0.3
Caesar	3.4	3.0	-0.3
Philip	3.6	3.0	-0.6
Australia	3.6	3.0	-0.6
Canada	3.4	3.1	-0.3
Millicent	3.0	3.1	+0.2
Millimetre	3.0	2.9	-0.1

Source: Field Data (2020)

The findings presented in Table 4 shows that most of the student leaders' academic performance (i.e. CGPA) was negatively impacted during their term in office. Thus, ten (10) out of the thirteen (13) student leaders' academic performance dropped during the period they were in office.

These findings appeared to be consistent with the earlier finding that, generally, student leaders' academic works/engagements were negatively affected as a result of their leadership roles. On the contrary, Anderson and Lu (2014) have suggested in the literature that when students take up leadership roles, it enhances their academic performance. This particular finding appears

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to contradict the assertion by Anderson and Lu (2014). Perhaps this contradiction in the findings can somehow be attributed to the differences in the study context. For instance, in this study, the student leaders created the impression that UCC demands more from her students than some other universities. For example, Michel and Philip had these to say:

> *My dear, it's very tedious. You know how it is difficult to meet the academic demands of UCC. ... some schools will give you 'A' when you score 70% in exams, but you need 80% to get 'A' in UCC. There is no consideration for us who have additional responsibilities, we are all treated the same. It is not easy ... (Michel).*
>
> *Academic work on this particular campus is very difficult. We have friends and families in other institutions and the time we have here is so packed that you hardly get time to do other things. Here, Saturdays and Sundays we go for lectures, we write quizzes. Even on public holidays here in UCC, we attend lectures like a normal day. There is nothing like a holiday here in UCC. ... the issue of dawn quizzes especially if you are leaving far away- I have written quizzes at 5:30 before not once not twice but severally. You need to wake up at 4:00 am and get prepared to set off. Academic work here is not the same as other universities (Philip).*

These insights from the student leaders appear to give the impression that their leadership obligations interfere with their academic work. This is evident in the fact that in most cases, they attend meetings when their colleague students are in class learning. This explains why most of them had their CGPA scores declining. Also, the practice of students writing quizzes on weekends and public holidays shows how UCC places more importance on academic work at the expense of co-curricular activities. In such an academic environment described by the student leaders, it is not surprising that most of them had their CGPA declining.

Research Question 4. How do student leaders in UCC balance the performance of their leadership roles with academic work?

This research question was geared towards uncovering the strategies used by student leaders to balance the performance of their leadership roles with academic work. The student leaders were asked to specify the strategies they used in balancing their leadership roles with academic performance. An analysis of the various responses revealed five main themes, namely: delegation, change in personal behaviour, proper time management, depending on faculty members and friends/colleagues. These themes indicate the strategies used by UCC student leaders to balance the performance of their leadership roles with academic work. The themes are discussed as follows.

Theme one: Student leaders use delegation as a means of balancing the performance of their leadership duties and academic work

The analysis of the interview data revealed that one major strategy that student leaders use to ensure a balance between performing their leadership duties and academic work is delegation. This was evident in the words of the student leaders. For example, Millimetre and Australia had these to say:

> *I delegate the things I know I can delegate. That's why I have a deputy so I ask him to do some of the things so that I can also get time off my duties to learn (Millimetre).*
>
> *I don't do everything on my own. Yes, I am the president but I have to delegate. I can't do it all alone. Also, I used to stay around my colleagues a lot but now I have stopped all that. I don't allow them to come here so I can get some time to study (Australia).*
>
> *It changed my behaviour. I used to learn only at dawn but now to make up for all the lost time, I have to shift to learning in the afternoon too (Mike).*

It is clear from the extract presented that student leaders were delegating some of their leadership roles to people they think can help them do it. This strategy created opportunities for the student leaders to make time to attend to academic engagements. The use of this strategy has been highly recommended in the management and leadership literature (Jokisaari & Vuori, 2018). Thus, according to Jokisaari and Vuori, delegation is vital for effective leadership. Through delegation, a leader can divide his/her work and allocate it to others. Delegation helps in reducing leaders' workload so that they can concentrate their energies on other important and critical issues of concern.

Theme two: student leaders adopted a strategy that can best be described as 'change in previous behaviour' in their quest to balance the performance of their leadership duties and academic work

Participants were of the view that they could not perfectly combine discharging their leadership and academic obligations if they kept their previous behaviours. For example, Mike and Australia had these to say:

> *It is a change in behaviour. I used to learn only at dawn but now to make up for all these, I have to shift to learning in the afternoon too because if I had focused on the dawn alone, it would have affected me greatly. I would have kept on sleeping and sleeping and failing too. So now after lectures, I do my leaning at the library or one of the free lecture theatres … (Mike).*

> *I used to stay around my colleagues a lot, but now I have stopped all that. When I am studying, I put all leadership things aside-even my executives, I don't allow them to come in here. I put my phones somewhere because when they need me It is my phone they will call (Australia).*

It thus appears that the student leaders saw the need to change certain things they enjoyed doing in order for them to balance the performance of their leadership duties with academic work. As a result, they avoided being with their colleagues as they used to be. Also, the use of their mobile phones during their private studies was curtailed. These change in behaviours appeared to have worked for them.

Theme three: student leaders practice proper time management as a strategy to balance performing their leadership duties and academic work

The analysis of the data revealed that time management was a major strategy the student leaders used to balance the performance of their dual roles of being a student and a leader. They noted that they apportioned time for each of the two roles. Thus, they resorted to using a time plan and a to-do list. For example, Nana Yaw, Faustina, Philip and Australia had these to say:

> *Balancing academic work with leadership roles is about time management. If you are able to manage your time very well, you will be able to achieve everything. So, when people are fooling or doing unnecessary things, that is where you find it more convenient to do certain things necessary. It's all about time management (Nana Yaw).*
>
> *I draw a time plan like a to-do list for the day. I try to achieve if not all most of the things on it. I put my meeting schedules and everything on it (Faustina).*
>
> *Proper time management was what really helped me. For me, I don't accept a responsibility that is not within my duties. I make a to-do list, and when I perform the task, I make sure I tick them, and I will not allow you to waste my time. If it is time for me to complete a task or this action, nothing will come between myself and what I want to do at that point in time. Sometimes too I choose to stay away from my room because I know very well that if I should be in my*

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room at this time of the day, I know people will come looking for me

with one problem or the other, so I stay away from my room. I can

be away at the main library for the whole day (Philip).

I apportion time to the two obligations ... when I am studying, I put

other things aside (Australia).

It appeared that almost all the participants attempted to manage their time well as a means of getting their two obligations discharged.   Interestingly, participants revealed that they resorted to using a to-do list. Thus, they planned and prioritised their activities for each day and tried to go according to it. Also, when they got little time to do their private learning, they stayed away from their rooms, phones, friends. Again, they were not accepting responsibilities that ware not part of their duties as this causes them to be overburdened.

Theme four: Student leaders depended on faculty members as a strategy to balance the performance of their leadership duties and academic work

Another balancing strategy used by participants was depending on faculty members for academic help. Some of the student leaders interviewed had this to say:

I have a good relationship with my lectures. Almost all of them are

my friends, and so when we talk and I bring in my academic

challenges, they try to help me during their private time (Millicent).

I had to see some teaching assistants to also teach me the things I

lost. I also relate well to my lectures. Most of them knew my roles,

so all the time, my lecturers were there 24/7 to advise me on how to

combine my roles. I also consult my hall tutor who also gave me

advice on how to balance my roles (Michel).

It is evident from these two extracts that some faculty members were of great help to the student leaders. Thus, because of the good relationship they had with

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these faculty members, it made it easier for them to ask for explanations of topics they missed as a result of their inability to attend lectures all the time. Also, some faculty members were available to advise the student leaders on how to balance their leadership duties with their academic work anytime they talked to them. According to Astin (1984), student-faculty interaction is an essential element of students' success.

Theme five: Student leaders depended on their friends/colleagues as a strategy to balance the performance of their leadership duties and academic work

Another strategy used by student leaders to balance the performance of their leadership obligations and academic work was them depending on their friends/colleagues for help. The following excerpt from Mike, Jake and Canada revealed how the dependence on friends was a workable strategy to use.

I use my friends and colleagues. At times I don't go for lectures or group studies and I tell them to help me. Some of them will come and explain things to me at the hostel. Some will even go to the extent of doing it for me. Even group work they do it, I don't do anything but they add my name to it (Mike).

Mostly, you have to make use of your group studies. You need to connect since you wouldn't get much time to sit down and say I am leaning. You will not get the time (Jake).

I also tell my friends to give me a hint on anything that happens in my absence. … It's all because I don't always go for group meetings, but I do make use of group meetings during the examination times (Canada).

It is evident from the interviews with participants that friends were inevitable in their success story. The revelation by participants concerning how their peers helped them to balance the performance of their leadership duties and academic work affirms the assertions of Astin (1993). According to Astin, peers have a significant influence on college students and that student-to-student interaction produces positive effects on student academic development.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the study, conclusion and the recommendations for policy-making and professional practice. A suggestion for further studies has also been put forward in this chapter.

Summary

This study adopted a qualitative approach to provide insight into student leadership and academic performance. The purpose of the study was to explore the impact of student leadership roles on academic performance. Specifically, the study considered the case of student leaders of the University of Cape Coast. In order to achieve this purpose, four research questions were drawn to guide the study:

1. What leadership roles do student leaders of the University of Cape Coast (UCC) perform as per the University's statute and constitution of the SRC?

2. What are the experiences of the student leaders in UCC regarding their leadership roles?

3. How do the leadership roles performed by student leaders in UCC affect their academic work?

4. How do student leaders in UCC balance the performance of their leadership roles with academic work?

In answering these research questions, data were collected from thirteen participants who were purposively sampled from the Student Representative Council (SRC) Executive Council. The data was collected using an interview

guide with open-ended questions. The interviews held with participants were later transcribed manually, coded and analysed thematically.

Key Findings

The key findings that have emerged from the analysis of the data gathered are organised according to the main research questions.

1. **What leadership roles do student leaders of the University of Cape Coast (UCC) perform as per the University's statute and the Constitution of the SRC?**

   a. The study revealed that the leadership roles performed by student leaders in UCC include:

      i. representing their student body;

      ii. serving as a liaison between students and management;

      iii. promoting the welfare and interest of students; and

      iv. organising and coordinating students' programs and activities.

   b. The study also revealed that the leadership roles performed by the student leaders converged with the roles enshrined in both the University's statute and the constitution of the SRC.

2. **What are the experiences of the student leaders in UCC regarding their leadership roles?**

The findings were that student leaders generally have positive and negative experiences.

   a) The positive experiences of student leaders were that they:

      i. gain exposure;

      ii. develop their interpersonal relation skills; and

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iii. improve their communication skills through performing their leadership roles.

b) The negative experiences of student leaders were that:

i. students had erroneous perceptions about student leaders;

ii. student leaders spend long hours at meetings, so found it difficult to meet their academic demands.

3. **How do the leadership roles performed by student leaders in UCC affect their academic work?**

a) The study revealed that, generally, engaging in student leadership harms the academic performance of student leaders. Thus, most student leaders' academic achievements in terms of their CGPA declined during the period they were in office.

b) Student leaders spend more time attending to leadership obligations than academic work.

4. **How do student leaders in UCC balance the performance of their leadership roles with academic work?**

a. The strategies used by student leaders to combine their leadership roles with academic work were:

i. delegation of duties;

ii. change in previous behaviour;

iii. proper time management (planning of their activities in the form of a to-do list, avoiding and moving away from distractors like phones and friends);

iv. depending on faculty members for academic assistance; and

v. depending on friends/colleagues for academic help

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Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions are drawn.

1. With regards to the roles performed by student leaders, it can be concluded that the University of Cape Coast practically engages its students in the governance and administration of the institution hence well-defined roles for student leaders. Again, the fact that the functions performed by student leaders were in line with what was enshrined in the university's statutes and the constitution of the Student Representative Council (SRC) leads to the conclusion that the student leaders had knowledge and understanding of their leadership roles.

2. Relative to the experiences of student leaders, it can be concluded that engaging in student leadership promotes some form of learning where student leaders acquire skills that cannot be obtained through classroom learning. However, the leadership experiences of student leaders in the long run when not managed well could affect their academic performance (i.e. CGPA).

3. In light of the finding that engaging in student leadership harms the academic performance of student leaders, it can be concluded that perhaps the strategies adapted by student leaders to balance their leadership roles and academic engagements were not effective.

4. Based on the finding that student leaders spend averagely less than half of the time spent on leadership roles on their academic engagements, it can be concluded that perhaps the leadership workload of student leaders was excessive hence their inability to get more time for their academic work.

5. In line with the fact that student leaders adapted strategies proven in the literature to be effective ways of balancing leadership roles with academic work yet they recorded a decline in their CGPA, it can be concluded that perhaps those strategies were not applied by the student leaders in the right context.

Recommendations

Based on the research findings and conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are made:

1. The conclusion that the University of Cape Coast practically involves its students in the governance of the institution and that student leaders' achievements complements managements' effort is a good practice for the mandate and growth of the university. It is recommended that the University of Cape Coast should continue to encourage students' involvement in the governance and management of the university.

2. Based on the conclusions that the experiences of student leaders in the long run when not managed well could affect their academic performance (i.e. CGPA) because of the excessive leadership workload is recommended that student leaders should be given the opportunity to defer their academic engagements during their time of office. Also, the SRC general assembly should allow the SRC executives to appoint personal assistants to help them discharge their duties.

3. Based on the conclusion that perhaps the strategies adopted by the student leaders to balance their leadership roles and academic work were not effective hence the decline in their CGPA, it is recommended that the University of Cape Coast through its guidance and counselling unit

and the Office of the Dean of student affairs should organise training for student leaders to equip them with the needed skills and knowledge to balance leadership roles with their academic work.

Suggestion for Further Research

The study explored the effect of leadership roles on academic performance from the standpoint of only the SRC student leaders. A similar study can be conducted widening the scope to include other student leaders outside the SRC, administrators and other faculty members.

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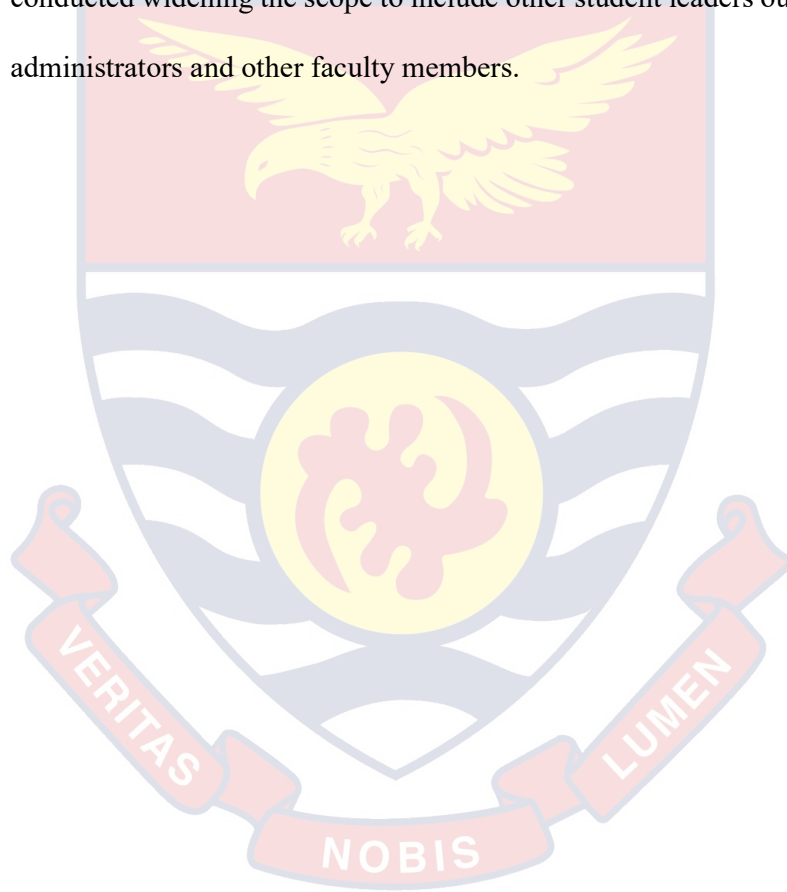
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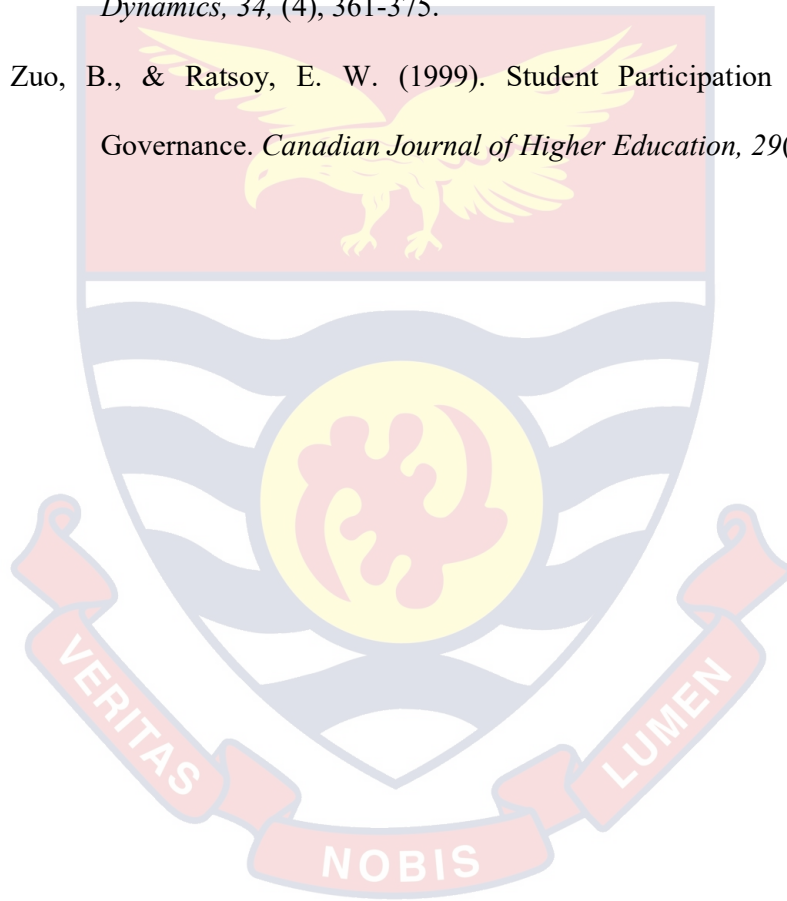
APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Letter of Introduction from IEPA-UCC

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES
SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT & OUTREACH
INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION

Tel. No.: 03320-91478
Tel. No. : 03321-30571
Fax No. : 03321-30588
E-mail   : iepa@ucc.edu.gh

University Post Office
Cape Coast
Ghana

6th April, 2018

Our Ref: IEPA/144/Vol./165

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……………………………..
……………………………..

Dear Sir/Madam,

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

The bearer of this letter **Ms. Issabella Mawutor Kumaku** is a student pursuing M.Phil. Educational Administration at the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA), University of Cape Coast. She requires some data/information from you/your outfit for her thesis titled, **"Views of Students Leaders of the University Of Cape Coast Regarding How The Performance Of Their Leadership Roles Impact Their Academic Performance"** as a requirement to complete her programme

Kindly give the necessary assistance that **Ms. Kumaku** requires to enable her gather the information she needs.

While anticipating your co-operation, we thank you for any help that you may be able to give her.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Ebenezer Kingsley Donkoh
PRINCIPAL ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
FOR: DIRECTOR

APPENDIX B

CONSENT FORMS FOR PARTICIPANTS OF THE RESEARCH

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND

ADMINISTRATION

CONSENT FORM

Research Topic

The interplay between leadership roles and academic performance: views of

'student leaders' of the University of Cape Coast

Introduction

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted to explore the

above-stated research topic by Issabella Mawutor Kumaku, from the Institute

for Educational Planning and Administration at the University of Cape Coast.

You have been selected to participate in this study by virtue of you being a

student leader of the Executive Council of the student representative council of

the University of Cape Coast (UCC).

Procedures

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in an

interview conducted by the primary researcher about your student leadership

involvement and academic work.

Confidentiality

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be

identified with you will remain confidential. Confidentiality will be maintained

by means of assigning pseudonyms to you as a participant. The recorded

interview will only be accessed by the primary researcher and it will be erased afterwards.

Participation and Withdrawal

If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind or loss of benefits or services to which you are otherwise entitled. There is no penalty if you withdraw from the study and you will not lose any benefits.

Identification of Investigator

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact Issabella Mawutor Kumaku via email izybe90@gmail.com or mobile phone number 0542331035.

Consent

I have read and understood this information provided in this consent form and voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue my participation at any time.

Name of Participant   ……………………………………………

Date…………………………………

Signature of Investigator ………………………………..

Date …………………………………..

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APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARTICIPANT

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR STUDENT LEADERS

1. Kindly tell me about yourself. Depending on the response, probe for age and academic level of respondent.

2. Please describe your role as a student leader in UCC?

3. Kindly share with me your experiences as a student leader.

4. Tell me what you do for academic engagements (academic work).

5. Please share with me your CGPA before and after your leadership position

6. Please share with me the impact your leadership roles had on your academic engagements and performance.

7. On the average, how many hours per week do you spend on the following;
   a. leadership responsibilities?
   b. academic engagements?

8. Please share with me how you balanced your leadership roles with your academic engagements.

9. Is there anything about this topic we didn't talk about that you want us to talk about?

APPENDIX D

Sample Interview Transcript of Participants

The following are excerpts extracted from two of the research participants; Jake and Australia.

Excerpts from Jake: The following are extracted from Jake's interview transcript.

10. Kindly tell me about yourself. Depending on the response, probe for age and academic level of respondent.

My name is Jake and I am a young guy in my twenties, precisely I am 25 years and I love leadership so anything about leadership inspires me a lot and I'm somebody who believe that no matter the circumstances if you persist and put in your maximum efforts everything you dream to achieve is possible in life. I am in level 400 too.

11. Please describe your role as a student leader in UCC?

Ok, being a student leader, there are a lot of roles that I play in a sense that as a JCRC president, I liaise between management and the student body so we ensure that anything that is discussed at the top level, we also let our students to be aware of them. Thus what hall council together with management intends to also do and also, we organize. We are in charge of activities that go on in the hall. Something like hall week something like program outline for the semester because we know that the hall needs to be fun and educative so with the help of the entertainment chairman and my entire executive body we sit down in a meeting and draw a very educative as well as entertaining programs that will keep the hall going. Also, we embark on projects. Yeah, we also embark on projects because we believe that as a leader, when you come into power, we need to also add up to what has been done. So we don't leave everything on management that they have to do. We also contribute our small quota as possible as is within the confines of our budget and also embark on some

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projects to help add up to the hall and make the hall, you know, progressively move forward as we all want it to be. There are so many issues at times bud bugs will be worrying them, some of their beds were not functioning properly, bathhouse issues and a whole lot that we have to solve. Previously before my administration, some rooms did not have fans, so my administration had to procure 150 fans. Before we did that, a lot of the level hundreds were complaining, our fans, we are sleeping in the heat, and all these things become a burden to us (Jake).

12. Kindly share with me your experiences as a student leader.

OK. I must say with the positive experience that I have gathered, erhh it has made me matured. How I treat people, how I relate, my communication skills have really improved and it has made me develop a big heart because at times people piss you off. People will throw lots of chaffs on you as if you are doing nothing as if you came in to, you know, they have this perception that student leaders came in to squander money and at times it's like you are putting in your maximum effort to ensure that the people, their grievances are being resolved and it's like they see you not to be doing anything so it makes me to be tolerant and to develop a big heart to stomach a whole lot of things. And also, the exposure that comes with it we cannot overlook it. It's nice, walking around and people see you and say 'presdo presdo' and that you know, it gives you that kind of exposure that makes you to meet a whole lot of top, top notch people to build links for yourself and it makes you a quick thinker. It has made me to reason fast, come out with something to resolve a situation. Because at times certain problems spring up and you need to be creative and come out with something to resolve it before maybe you can go to the hall master or try to explain it to the person for maybe a permanent solution. Also, it has made me get a certain kind of personality because the leadership makes you present a kind of

personality to the people because they see you as their first gentleman and whatever you are, you are representing them and so you cannot disgrace them. If you disgrace yourself, you disgrace the entire hall. It makes you also responsible. Whatever you are you need to take responsibility so it has made me a better man than I was before.

As a leader I must say some of my challenges mostly stems from how you will be able to lobby to convince hall management or let me say hall council to accept the things, the projects that you want to bring on board. Mostly, those are it because you have to defend, defend and prove to them that what you want to bring to board to do so most of those are the challenges because the student body wants you to do a lot and at times what you plan to do, management also have a better way to offer that we can use those resources. Those challenge too is from the student body so like they are not satisfied. Taking my hall for instance, their hall weeks and activities, they feel like you have to make the hall livelier, more entertaining so it's that. Mostly, they don't appreciate the things you are doing for them and it makes it so challenging at times you think you are giving your best but still the people are criticizing. Those are the challenges that you will meet. I know you will come to the academic side so I will reserve that. However, for me I don't see things as negative like that. Right from day one, I psychic myself to understand that there is good in everything so most often I am focusing on the good aspect of everything that transpired with my administration. So talking about negative or bad experiences, it will be very difficult for me to pinpoint that these were my bad experiences because I saw everything to be as something that has shaped me to make me better. Yeah, because I always focus on the good. I always focus on the good even the

criticism, the insult from the people I saw it to be something that shaped me and made me better so I always laugh with them. I know, I understand. It's not everything that I will do and it will make you happy and at times you need to step on the minority to satisfy the majority so that you will come back and cement certain grounds to make amends so, talking about my bad experience it will be very difficult because everything that transpired shaped me and made me better more and I enjoyed whatever that had happened.

13. Tell me what you do for academic engagements (academic work).

I do both individual and group assignments, write my quizzes, end of semester exams, engage in group assignments among others. I basically do what all students are expected to do for their academic engagements.

14. Please share with me your CGPA before and after your leadership position.

Before was 3.6 and now is 3.0

15. Please share with me the impact your leadership roles had on your academic engagements and performance.

Some people are good, excellent before they entered into politics. Those are the people who are able to manage it. They are able to manage the negative effect on their academics. Maybe 3.8 and at times he is still at maybe 3.6 or at times 3.7 so he has been affected but because that person is academically good. You know, some people are very, very good but some people are not all that good so those people at times it really, really affects them. It greatly affects. Using myself as an example, the campaigning played a major role because looking at going for this hall president, going for all these rooms; 336 rooms excluding the flat-lets and the flats and the other things. You enter every room, four in the

room and you know some of the ladies; when you enter one room you can take about 30 minutes so look at these time that you are going to take A- Block. Even taking A-block the whole of these. Even finishing A block alone, it's a work and mostly too because it is a competition, your opponents are working. At times you will hear something and they will say your opponent is doing this, your opponent is sharing this and that, and your heart beats. You feel you are losing; you need to do something. At times, you are learning but campaign strategies are running through your mind. You close the book and you have to go and campaign. The campaign places a lot on you so mostly at times your mind is divided on how you are going to win the election. Yeah, when you win then now is the real work you need to perform. Freshers are coming, freshers' store, organizing, executives have to stay in and wait. Now as your colleagues will be doing attachments you will be doing may be a week or two stay-in here. You have to come in early here to countless meetings that you will be having. We need to do this; we need to do that. We ought to make this year's freshers' store something classic. It needs to be something above what happened the previous year. So now people are starting to rate your administration to the previous administration and so, that one also becomes something that you have to think about. I have to perform so that people will also know that I didn't just come to just occupy the position but I came to work and working too, that is where the problem is; the mind too become divided again because you think about the work of the hall and also your academics. Even your spiritual life, your social live are all embedded in all these. Yeah, because you have a social life too, you have a social life. You need to also have time too. That's why some friends will say 'he says he is so busy he is not having time for us now that he

got the position (in Twi). People are complaining people are always criticizing. Yes, so for the quantum of the negative effect on your academic, it depends on your academic strength. You personally. How good you are will determine how you will be affected by the position academically.

For me I will say ninety-five percent of us are impacted negatively academic-wise, I will say ninety-five because we have a whole lot. Even my roommate who was contesting for the TESCON president position. Last, I was talking with him. We were talking and my other colleagues who are current presidents some are sharing the same story. They are affected because you can't be going through all these and you say you are not affected academically, then you are a genus (laughs).

16. On the average how many hours a week do you spend on the following;

   a) leadership role

   b) academic engagements?

For me, I will be frank I can't say I am devoting this number of hours for leadership roles because leadership becomes a habit, becomes your life style once you assume office. Whatever you are, you are there as a student and as a leader so the roles follow you everywhere you go so you can't say I can cage the leadership roles and I am going out for academic or say now I am no more a leader; no your people will beat you. This term, our t- roll delayed and people meet you at lectures and say 'presido' where is our t-roll? When at all is the t-roll coming? You see, so you can't tell them that I came for lectures I didn't come for t-roll matter. They will say this guy you are not serious. (laughs) so the leadership roles ever hour every minute is for the leadership role so you spend on leadership. Every minute you are seen as a leader. When the leadership

task has come or something about leadership pops up you need to attend to it. For the academics, that one I will say it is individual. Depending on how you can contain. Frankly speaking my learning ability erhmmm, if I have the capacity to study or if I want to study, because I love studying, I love to read a lot because I know you need to widen your scope of thinking so because at times we channel some of those things so I must say I can study base on academic aside some of the things that I read. Maybe books on Christian literature, books on leadership that I read. Those things are not part. When it comes to my field as a finance student there I can study four hours. Three four hours a day averagely. That of leadership roles let me say averagely 35 hours per week but you know, every day is leadership roles ooo.

17. Please share with me how you balanced your leadership roles with your academic engagements.

Mostly, you have to make use of your group studies you need to connect since you wouldn't get much time to consume, to sit down and say I am learning, you will not get the time. If previously you use to learn maybe two three hours now even one hour two hours you won't get or you will get a call and you have to look at other things. Yerh, so you need to by far by trying to connect to those who are not into position; who are fully devoted to the academic work and tap from them so that it will place you back. You will be able to bridge the gap even if you are not able to get the hundred percent at least you will be eighty percent, ninety percent there so that at least you will cement the potholes so that it will keep you going. You need to also as now that you know you are a student leader you need to sharpen your thinking ability. You need to be fast. You need to be quick to assimilate whatever any little information that are given in class. You

need to make use of every little opportunity. Every little opportunity, you need to read something. Like myself, because I know the work, every little opportunity I try to read something I try to read something, I try to read something little and I try to be as quick as possible to try to grasp, pay attention and gather what I can so that I will consult others on that I am not able to or I couldn't understand but the most strategy; I read any little given opportunity I try to read something because I know that I don't have the time. I can get a call any moment to stop and come over for a meeting or so any little opportunity I have to seize it and read something. I don't fall on my faculty for help. I don't interact with them. Some of us we read a lot and some of these things they tell us they are all there. If you want to research them, they are all on the internet. Most of them are the things others have already talked about but we don't apply them so mostly it seems like it is new but they are not new knowledge or new information that they are giving. Some has been talked about for thousands of years ago but just that we don't apply them. I am not saying it is not good for people to go to them. Know yourself. I have a lot of books about, I lot of books-digital and hard copy that I read so I assimilate a lot. But not withstanding if there is a need to see them why not? You can't be a master of your own. You don't have time but you have to manage it. It's like the 24 hours is not enough and errhh you can get impromptu call at any time to even distract your schedule yeah, so you need to be strategic as possible so you look at your time table you know that at times you have one lecture there or two so you have to say oh this day the lecture schedule is very liberal so let me make use of it and study more and cover so that when those days come that I am busy I know that I have covered. I have read or cover a lot that will keep me going. My friends also help

me a lot. They help me a lot at times you skip lectures. Frankly speaking at times you skip lectures so I remember during the campaign season we were having company law- not company law I think law of contract I think three credits early in the morning; I think 6:30- 9:30 early in the morning. At times you go campaigning you are tired. You can't go so you need to consult people, your study mates should also open up something for you and you also have to do some reading so that they also explain certain things to you.

18. Is there anything about this topic we didn't talk about that you want us to talk about?

My final word to we the young leaders; the student politicians is that the world expects a lot from us. Ghana needs a lot from us and we need to have the people, the nation and the world at heart. Leadership is about the people and until we positively impact the people we are just leading ourselves and nobody else. We need to lead the people. We need to serve them that is the most important thing. We need to impact our world and God will richly bless us. Serving and leading the people makes you a selfless leader. That makes you a leader that is our modern times are lacking because it's like most people are entering into leadership and it's all about themselves and their families. It's about what they can gain from the leadership and not what they are in to offer to better people's lives. Selfless leadership; let us impact out generation and the world will be a better place for us.

Excerpts from Australia. The following excerpt were extracted from the interview transcript of Australia.

1. Kindly tell me about yourself. Depending on the response, probe for age and academic level of respondent.

I am someone who has passed through this university and has held a lot of leadership positions and a final year student who just handed over as a leader as well. I am 29 years of age.

2. Please describe your role as a student leader in UCC?

My role is to represent students in all official meetings, anywhere the representation of students is needed for critical decision making I have to represent and also I speak for the student and then I also bring to the attention of management the things that students will wish to see on campus. So basically I kind of mediate between students and management. I represent students at the university's council meetings- thus the highest decision making body of the university. I also led delegations to management of the university. We do proposals for consideration by management and many other things.

Also, we provide for students' welfare; we introduced the free night shuttle, thus the free shuttle at night during the examination period because we realized that during examination periods students are attacked. Most often, some of them do not have money to charter taxis back to their hostels so they walk and they are robbed on the way. We also introduced the hassle-free project. Thus, we transported the first- years from their regional capitals back to campus. This was to avoid taxi drivers taking advantage of them when they arrive at town in the commercial cars. Also, we have fully paid for the metro mass shuttle on campus and this project was introduced because the vehicles used on campus for shuttle

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were in bad conditions. Moreover, some of the drivers of those bad vehicles didn't even have a license. That was not good for students so we had to step in and provide an alternative.

3. Kindly share with me your experiences as a student leader.

Well I have learnt how to work with people. I have worked with different people with different motives and from different background one-year intensive. I learnt how to negotiate as well because the days of demonstrations are over. Yes, so now you need to manoeuvre your way through to get what the students want from the management and so if you will be able to do that then you need to negotiate and I learnt different forms of negotiations. Sometimes before the formal one comes you need to go back door and discuss informally with the person so that if the letter comes, the person will be already aware that yes you discussed this with me so the person will facilitate things. I also had some (laughs) international experience. I represented the students in South Africa, Australia, Singapore, Tanzania, and I will be speaking in Rwanda too. Yes, also, how to interact with management because it's very difficult to sometimes to get what you want for the students because sometimes what the students want is not what management is ready to do but students want them anyway so as a leader you have to know how to manage that situation because sometimes the students understand only one language, we want this and it should be done. They don't know the processes, they don't care about the processes and how you get it done. All they want is that this thing should be done and so a situation where the university management is not ready to do that thing at that instant or that moment you have to present it nicely to the students so that they can understand. So, I also learnt how to interact with high profile people and also manage

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situations, manage people and manage rumours. My bad experiences hmmm. I got into the bad books of a senior member as a result of the stance I chose, which is more of an advocacy type and because of my background too I was seen as a litigant, stubborn (laughs) so it made things difficult for me. Anytime I also needed something from the top to do something so even as we speak now I have disjoint relationship with one of the people at the top all because of my roles.

4. Tell me what you do for academic engagements (academic work).

I write quizzes, I do presentations, write exams. We also do attachments and internship.

5. Please share with me your CGPA before and after your leadership position.

3.6 - 3.0

6. Please share with me the impact your leadership roles had on your academic engagements and performance.

Yes, hmm, my leadership roles affected my academic engagements. Its effect on me was 70% negative and 30% positive. Hmm you have to divide your time between your leadership role and your academics so definitely you are not going to pay 100% attention to your books because when I travelled; those times that I travelled outside Ghana in line with my leadership duties, and they were having lectures and doing so many things during my absence. I remember I did not even write some quizzes, so I had to be given another one to write which was difficult than the one they first wrote. Last time, we had a council meeting with only one agenda so I taught that we were going to spend like three hours after which I will go to class. Can you imagine that we started at 10 am, we closed at 8:00 pm? The truth is that, as a student leader, if you are not careful

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you will not attend lectures because of your work. The demanding nature of the role is such that when your mates are in the classroom you are just somewhere because the VC can just call you at any time even if you are in the lecture room studying. I remember one day I was in class they just called me that there was a meeting they need me-they needed an information so I just told the lecturer that I had to leave and I left the class. I left when I came they had ended. So the nature of the work as well. When I travelled they were studying, when I go for meetings they are studying and when they give you assignment you are not able to give maximum attention to the assignment and you score poor grades and then quizzes you will not do well. Examination you put in your best but then when the results come, you get grade C, D and the other stuff because the nature of UCC assessment, if you don't perform well in the course of the semester then you are likely to heading towards doomed.

7. On the average how many hours a week do you spend on the following

   a) leadership role

   b) academic engagements?

I will say averagely, I spend ninety- six hours on leadership stuff and twenty-one hours on academic roles.

8. Please share with me how you balanced your leadership roles with your academic engagements.

I don't do everything on my own. Yes, I am the president but I have to delegate. I can't do it all alone. Also, I used to stay around my colleagues a lot but now I have stopped all that. I don't allow them to come here so I can get some time to study. I apportioned time to the two obligations. I had time that I was supposed to do this; I was not supposed to do that. And then also, when I am studying, I will have to put all leadership things aside; even my executives I don't allow them to come in here. I put my

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phones somewhere because when they need me it is my phone they will call. Aside the ones I was talking about, I was planning my day on paper as you can see (Pointing to show pieces of papers, diaries and writing pads with some to-do-list on them) I have a lot of diaries. If I have a lot of things to do for instance tomorrow, I have to put all of them in a diary. So once I do one, I cancel, I do number two I chancel, I do number three I cancel ahaahh. I also have forgetfulness so when I put them on paper it helps me manage ahahh so I know that I have had three out of five so I am left with two so when I go somewhere and come I can do this one then I am done. So that was how I was planning my time. Because if I don't do that, I will go anywhere, anytime because I was not following any routine. It's very good.

9. Is there anything about this topic we didn't talk about that you want us to talk about?

I think that management shouldn't see leaders who are resolute and not compromising as stubborn and litigants because the position we occupy is highly political. Political in the sense that you manage students and manage managements as well because sometimes, the information that management wants you to put across if you put it across students will consume you so you have to package it well. Sometimes too, the things that students want is legitimate anyway and you want to see it happen but management thinks otherwise so when you insist then hmmm. Especially school fees, they fix a figure and you are fighting on it, you are likely to attract enemies and you are seen some way. Also it is not always the case that the elderly is right. Erhmm we need to listen to the small ones too because the university exist because the students are here so I think that the most important information that management will ever need is that which is coming from the students. Because after all, the university exist for them and all the things you are doing you are

doing because of them so if information is coming from them and they say they

need this or they want this to be done for them or if things are done this way it

will help, I think it's good for leadership and management but unfortunately, if

one person is seen to have conducted him or herself differently from those who

have come and gone, you are seen as a litigant and when you do something

wrong they say they are seeking justice. They may be doing the right thing but

with mischief.