CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND THE PERFORMANCE OF OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMS IN DUO MODE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING IN UGANDA: STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Abstract

This paper highlights the role of corporate governance in enhancing the performance of open and distance learning (ODL) in duo mode institutions of higher learning in Uganda, taking a case of Makerere University. Duo mode institutions are those universities that offer both on campus internal/full time programs and Open and Distance Learning or external programs. On campus full time programs are those programs which are offered via students face to face with tutors continuously throughout a four months semester of study as opposed to ODL programs, also known as external programs, where students meet their tutors face to face twice a semester for four weeks each semester. The specific objectives of the paper were; to examine the nature of corporate governance for ODL programs, to assess the performance of ODL programs, and to determine the relationship between corporate governance and the performance of ODL programs. To attain these objectives, a cross sectional descriptive survey design was adopted to study a sample of 94 members of management, staff and students' leaders selected from five ODL programs. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches to the investigation were adopted. Data were collected using self-administered questionnaires, interviews and documents review and were analyzed using descriptive statistics and content analysis, while the relationship between corporate governance was computed using Pearson correlations. The study established a number of corporate governance issues in relation to running of the ODL programs. These include; failure by the council to approve and support policies for running ODL programs, limited knowledge of the council on how ODL programs are run, inadequate students and staff representation on the council and the finance committee, inadequate financing of ODL programs, and poor support systems and structures for ODL programs. The study further established ODL programs are performing poorly indicated by less attention given to students, poor attitude of the lecturers and students on internal programs towards students on ODL programs, students' dissatisfaction with ODL programs, and poor academic performance of students. The study established positive significant relationship between corporate governance and the performance of ODL programs at Makerere University (r=.781, p<0.01). The study concluded that poor performance of ODL programs is attributed to the corporate governance issues highlighted. Hence improving on corporate governance will improve the performance of ODL programs in duo mode institutions of learning. A number of recommendations were made to improve on corporate governance so as to improve the performance of ODL programs. These among others include; council to improve on policies approval and support for their implementation, improved board composition through increased students and staff representation on the council and finance committee, council's support for independent ODL programs to solicit external financing to support the running of ODL programs and improved support systems and structures for ODL programs.

Key Words: Corporate Governance, Open and Distance learning, Duo mode institutions, Performance.

1.   Introduction

Distance education is not a new phenomenon in Uganda. In the 1960s, Uganda realized the growth of a number of corresponding courses, despite many Ugandans who enrolled in the British correspondence colleges and obtained qualifications of general certificate of education (GCE) or Cambridge school certificate or advanced certificates and accountancy qualifications (Bbuye & Mango, 2005). Since then, the demand for distance education programs in duo mode institutions of learning has continued to grow and this has been prompted by a number of factors which include; firstly, high populations approximately 70% being youth graduates from secondary schools who wish to attain University Education. Secondly, there are many people who are already employed and would not want to leave their job to attend full time programs and regard ODL as the alternative (Aguti, 2009). Thirdly, the bigger proportion of the population lives in the rural areas, but would want to attain a qualification of Makerere University, yet it is costly to live in Kampala to attain this qualification. Fourthly most parents cannot raise the tuition fees required by full time programs and as such opt to go for relatively cheap ODL programs (Birevu, 2012).

Open and Distance Learning (PDL) programs were introduced in Makerere University in 1989 for Bachelor of Education External and in 1991 for Bachelor of Commerce External. The first admission on the Bachelor of Education was about 80 students, while that of Commerce was about 200 students. The admissions continued to grow every year for both programs and by the year 2000, Bachelor of Commerce External (B.COX) was admitting about 2000 students, while Bachelor of Education External (B.EDX) was admitting about 1500 students each year. In 2004, the Bachelor of Science External (B.SCX) was brought on board with an admission of about 40 students each year. There after the Bachelor of Agriculture and Rural Innovation (B.ARIX) was

brought on board with an admission of 80 students and Diploma in Youth and Development Work (DYDW) was brought on board with an admission of 10 students (Aguti, 2009).

The ODL Degree programs were started almost at the same time when the University had opened its gates to admit private students to study at the university. Previously, the University was admitting only government sponsored students who would study during the day. By the time the private students were admitted, there were no tested policies, nor enough lecture rooms, nor enough lecturers, or administrative and support staff and other infrastructure to handle these additional numbers and due to these challenges, the ODL programs were right from the beginning regarded as slackers and are often considered last in every aspect. For example, their admissions and registration were and are still considered students on internal programs (Aguti, 2009).

Almost all the faculties advertised for private students and because many students were yearning for a Makerere University qualification, the University was overwhelmed by the applications (Otto & Wrightson 2005). The University started to put in place policies to guide the running of the private programs which were offered during the day and evening programs on top of what existed before, the government sponsored day programs. These guiding polices however, paid less attention to ODL programs. This is because on top of being new, nobody seemed to understand this mode of delivery and therefore it was considered to be like any other private program. Right from the beginning, this mode of study was misunderstood and up to present day, the external programs are treated like any other private day and evening program, yet these programs have their own inherent challenges.

2.   Duo mode institutions

Duo mode institutions are institutions or universities that offer both on campus internal/full time programs and Open and Distance Learning (external programs) (Perraton & Creed, 1999). On campus/ internal programs are learning arrangements where students are on campus full time, attending lectures during the day. These students are continuously involved in face to face sessions with tutors; they have continuous assessment exams within fifteen weeks and sit for the final examinations in two weeks (Alsaaty, et al. 2016). ODL is a mode of study where students are not full time on campus, but have face to face sessions at the beginning of the semester where they interact with tutors and share their experiences they have gained from using the study materials (Aguti, 2009; Birevu, 2012). In this form of study, a student is far from the tutor most of the time. The distance between the student and the tutor is bridged by written study materials and assisted by online materials also known as blended learning (Birevu, 2012).

3.   Problem statement

Makerere University was a single mode university until 1989 when it introduced external ODL degree programs. Students who are admitted on the ODL programs drop out easily because of lack of guiding policies on student support. For instance, in the last five academic years to 2017/18, the dropout rate of students on ODL programs averaged to 21.8%, while more than 60% passed with low grades (Pass degrees and Second class lower) (College of Education and External Studies Annual Report, CEES, 2018). Students' high rate of attrition is attributed to high stress resulting from segregation by both fellow students and lecturers who regard these students on as of low grade. This has crippled the expansion and smooth running of external programs which continues to witness the dwindling admissions from thousands to hundreds of students (CEES, 2018). Available evidence also shows a revulsion of the program to the extent that whoever completes

the external degree does not want to be associated with it anymore and there is potentially lack of willingness to join the Alumni of the university. These issues are attributed to lack of proper corporate governance of the university (CEES, Annual Report, 2018). However, empirical evidence on the relationship between corporate governance and the performance of Open and Distance Learning Programs in Duo Mode Institutions in Uganda had not been substantiated.

4. Purpose and objectives

The purpose of this paper was to investigate the relationship between corporate governance and the performance of Open and Distance Learning Programs in Duo Mode Institutions in Uganda taking a case of Makerere University.

The paper set out to attain the following objectives:

i. To examine the nature of corporate governance for ODL programs at Makerere University

ii. To assess the performance of ODL programs at Makerere University.

iii. To determine the relationship between corporate governance and the performance of ODL programs at Makerere University.

5. Conceptualization and literature review

Corporate governance is the way in which the institution is directed and controlled (Hénard & Mitterle 1996). Corporate governance specifies the distribution of rights and responsibilities among different participants in the corporation, such as the board, managers, shareholders and other stakeholders, and spells out the rules and procedures for making decisions on corporate affairs. By doing this, it provides the structure through which organizational objectives are set, and sets the means of attaining those objectives while monitoring performance (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, (OECD), 2014).

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In higher education institutions, corporate governance is defined by the board structure composed of the separate positions and powers of chairpersons and vice chancellors, boards composed of the executive and non-executive members, and independent board committees. All this is geared towards ensuring that programs are run smoothly and attain their intended performance objectives such as high completion rates and high academic performance of students (Abdeldayem & Aldulaimi, 2018). In this study, corporate governance is operationalized as the roles of council and senate, board composition by executive and non-executive members and the roles of various board committees in relation to the running of ODL programs. The performance of ODL programs is operationalized using five dimensions; attention given to students on ODL programs, attitude towards students on ODL program, student's assessment, student's satisfaction with ODL programs and the academic performance of students on these programs.

Supporters of corporate governance model in extant literature insist that universities should be governed by professionals who are trained and experienced in corporate policy and planning, and able to direct management efficiently. Some would expect academics to engage in teaching, research and public service, but also participate in varying degrees in university governance (Dimond, 1991; Kissler, 1997; Zemsky, Wagner & Massy, 2005). A primary criticism of the corporate governance model is that it will lead to the 'commodification' of education, displacing academic distinctiveness in the pursuit of corporate efficiency (Bok, 2003; Geiger, 2004). The model further draws critical commentary for the low priority it gives to the educational and learning objectives of universities, as well as for the exclusion of internal stakeholders. The classic argument is that universities do not buy and sell 'widgets' (Washburn, 2005).

In summary, universities need to be 'corporatised' to some degree if they are to be governed responsibly. Their differences from profit-oriented corporations should not be used as barriers for

them to operate in an economically inefficient manner. The issue is to determine the governance model that best suits the context, knowing that a model suited to one context may be ill-fitting in others.

Being a duo mode institution, Makerere University is faced with challenges of differentiating between the two modes of delivery and in most cases the ODL programs are offered and run like full time on campus internal programs. The students on external programs are usually guided by policies that guide the running of full time student, yet these programs have diverse challenges. This has created operations gaps where management does not fully understand how ODL programs operate and as such policies approval and support, and financing of ODL programs remain forefront challenges and these adversely affect the performance of these programs.

6.   Methodology

In order to attain the study objectives, a cross sectional descriptive survey design was adopted. This enabled a survey of the observations and opinions of management, staff and students' leaders in four external programs. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches to investigation were adopted. The total sample size was 118 people and this was categorically determined using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) Tables for sample size determination as follows:

Table 1: Sample size determination

Category	Population	Sample Size	Sampling Techniques
Management	9	9	Purposive
Staff	90	73	Simple random
Students leaders	40	36	Simple random
Total	**139**	**118**	

Source: Colleges of Education and External Studies and Modified basing on Krejcie and Morgan Tables (1970).

Quantitative data were collected from the staff and students' leaders using self-administered structured questionnaires while qualitative data were solicited from management using face to face

interviews. Both were supplemented by documents review to obtain pertinent secondary data. Nominal scales were adopted in measuring items that related to the profile of the respondents, while a five-point Ordinal Likert scale such that mean values close to 1- strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3-neutral, 4 agree, 5 strongly agree was used to measure items regarding the conceptual variables. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while Pearson correlations were used to compute the relationship between the variables. Qualitative data were analysed using content analysis and thematically integrated with quantitative results.

7. Results

7.1 Response rate

Table 2: The response rate

Category	Population	Sample Size	Actual Sample size	Response rate
Management	9	9	7	77.8%
Staff	90	73	59	80.8%
Students leaders	40	36	28	77.8%
Total	**139**	**118**	**94**	**79.7%**

Source: Statistical Analysis of primary Data

All the categorical and overall response rates were above the ideal recommended rate of 60% for surveys (Fincham, 2008). Hence the representation was good enough to enhance the reliability of the results.

7.2   Demographic characteristics

Table 3: The demographic characteristics of the respondents

College of staff and students	Frequency	Valid Percent
Education and external studies	28	30.8
Business and Management Sciences	31	34.1
Natural sciences	11	12.1
Agricultural and extension services	21	23.1
Total	91	100.0
Staff category	**Frequency**	**Valid Percent**
Administrative Staff	18	30.5
Academic staff	41	69.5
Total	59	100.0
Time spent in position	Frequency	Valid Percent
Less than 5 years	13	22.0
6-10 years	14	23.7
More than 10 years	32	54.3
Total	59	100.0
Program of study of students leaders	**Frequency**	**Valid Percent**
B. COX	9	32.1
B.EDX	8	28.6
B.SCX	5	17.9
B.ARIX	4	14.3
DYDW	2	7.1
Total	28	100.0
Time spent on the program	Frequency	Valid Percent
1 year	4	14.3
2 years	7	25.0
3 years	7	25.0
4 years	9	32.1
More than 4 years	1	3.6
Total	28	100.0

Source: **Statistical Analysis of primary Data**

The results in Table 3 indicate that most participants (34.1%) and 30.8% came from the colleges of Business Management and Education respectively. This is attributed to larger number of students and staff in these colleges. The majority of the staff participants were academic (69.5%) compared to administrative (30.5%). This distribution is justified by the focus of research participants, the middle and top level administrative staff and all the academic staff who had rich information and knowledge of corporate governance issues and the performance of ODL programs. Majority of the staff (54.3%) had spent more than 10 years in their positions while most

students had spent at least 2 years on the program implying that participants had knowledge of governance issues and the performance of ODL programs. Most of the students' leaders were from Bachelors of commerce and Education external programs represented at 32.1% and 28.6% respectively and this is attributed to large numbers of students on these programs.

7.3 The nature of corporate governance for ODL at Makerere University

The nature of corporate governance was examined by assessing the role of the counsel and senate in running the programs, the composition of council and the role of board committees. The results pertaining to these variables are summarized in Tables, 5, 6 and 7 respectively. All the mean values in these tables are interpreted on a five point Likert scale of 1- strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3-neutral, 4 agree, 5 strongly agree.

Table 4: The role of the council and senate

Measuring items	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Policies suggested by individual ODL programmes are duly passed on by the school/college to the senate for debate and approval	59	2.2034	.80472
Policies suggested by individual ODL programmes are duly passed on by the senate to the council for approval	59	2.2712	1.08008
Policies suggested by individual ODL programmes are duly approved by the council	59	2.4746	1.35641
The University council fully understands how the ODL programs operate in this University	59	2.2780	.95485
The University senate fully understands how the ODL programs operate in this University	59	4.3898	.91004
The university policy on ODL programs is fully implemented and working.	59	1.9492	.68036
All council and senate members know how ODL programs are administered and taught.	59	2.2373	1.10390
Council Finance committee allocates enough resources to the ODL programs.	59	1.7119	.67084
Overall Frequency, Mean and Std. Deviation	**59**	**2.48943**	**0.94515**

Source: Results of Statistical Analysis of primary data

The results in Table 4 show that the respondents disagreed with the role of the council and senate which suggest that these roles do not support the running of ODL programs. This is attributed to council and senate issues regarding the running of ODL programs which emanate from limited knowledge by the University council on how the ODL programs are run, failure to timely pass on policies suggested by ODL colleges/schools to the senate for debate and approval, failure to fully implemented policies for running ODL programs, limited knowledge by all council and senate members on how ODL programs are administered and taught. The corporate governance issues also relate to failure by the council finance committee to allocate enough resources to run ODL programs.

Table 5: Council and senate (Board) composition

Measuring items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
All the ODL programs have representatives staff on the University council	59	1.9322	.58323
All the ODL programs have representative academic staff in senate	59	3.9831	.99119
All the ODL programs have representative students on the council	59	1.9831	.77663
All ODL programs have representatives on the finance committee.	59	1.8475	.84718
Overall Frequency, Mean and Std. Deviation	**59**	**2.43648**	**0.79956**

Source: Results of Statistical Analysis of primary data

The results in Table 5, indicate that the respondents disagreed with council and senate composition which suggests that it does not favour the running of ODL programs. The results are attributed to board composition that does not favour the running of ODL programs at Makerere University in the perspective of representation of the staff and students on the council and staff on senate. This implies that ODL programs largely implement the decisions of the council with less input to such decisions.

Table 6: The role of board committees

Measuring items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
The appointments boards duly appoints staff to ODL programs in this University	59	2.2203	.96611
The finance committee duly allocates appropriate funds to the ODL programs in this University	59	1.8644	.68122
The quality assurance committee regularly reviews the quality of ODL programs in this University	59	2.3729	.48772
The estates and works committee ensures that ODL programs have adequate infrastructure	59	1.7627	.65229
The staff development and welfare committee ensures that the welfare of ODL program staff is always catered for.	59	2.0169	.73088
The student's affairs and disciplinary committee always ensures the discipline of students on ODL programs in this University.	59	4.5932	.49545
The audit committee always ensures that funds for ODL programs are properly accounted for the activities of the program.	59	4.5424	.50248
The risk management committee always ensures mitigation of risks that are likely to face ODL programs in this University	59	2.0678	.98023
Overall Frequency, Mean and Std. Deviation	**59**	**2.68008**	**0.68705**

**Source: Results of Statistical Analysis of primary data**

The results in Table 6 indicate that the respondents were neutral in their rating of the role of the board committees as indicated by the mean value of 2.68008 which means that the board committees fairly support the running of ODL programs. The results are attributed to the role of board committees and particularly failure by the appointments boards to duly appoint staff to ODL programs, failure by the finance committee to duly allocate appropriate funds to the ODL programs, and failure by the quality assurance committee to regularly review the quality of ODL programs. Furthermore, these issues include failure by the estates and works committee to ensure that ODL programs have adequate infrastructure, and the staff development and welfare committee to ensure that the welfare of staff running ODL program is provided, and failure by risk

management committee to always ensure mitigation of risks that are likely to face ODL programs in this University.

Qualitative findings through key informants interview established that policies and other regulations are first proposed by the user units, they then move to the school board, College Board, senate then council for approval and implementation. However, at upper levels including the senate and council, support for these policies is either delayed or not accorded. Lack of operational ODL policy has further caused the following performance shortfalls:

i.   Ineffective teaching of ODL students

ii.   Assessing ODL students lastly.

iii.   Results of external students are released late.

iv.   External students are abused by lecturers and fellow students.

v.   Most university administrators do not know how these students study.

vi.   High attrition rates of students on ODL programs.

vii.   Low completion rates as highlighted in the table below.

viii. Poor classes of degrees by students on ODL programs.

The study further established that because of lack of guiding policies and frame works on how external programs can be run, the university treats them as on campus programs. That is why the percentages used to transfer money to the units that run external programs are the same percentages used to transfer money to internal programs. This has led to accumulation of arrears in teaching, marking, supervision for as far as academic year 2014/2015 as indicated in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1 : Arrears for ODL programs teaching staff for academic years 2014/15-2018/19
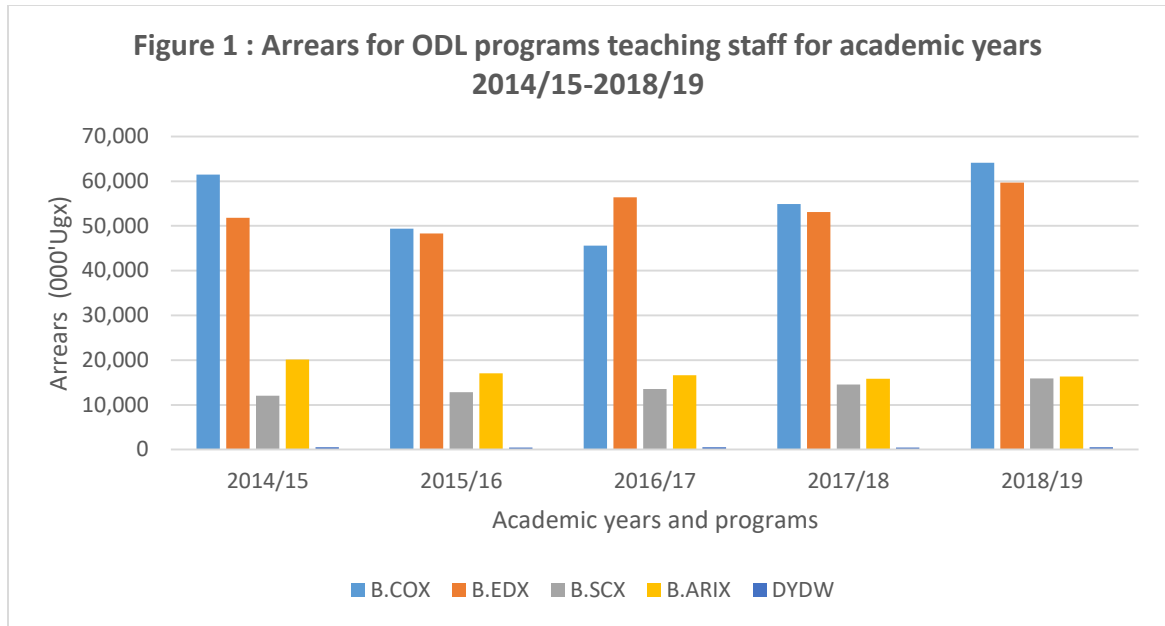
Source. Statistical analysis of secondary data from Finance Department CEES (2018)

Figure 1 indicates that B.COX and B.EDX lecturers are the most defaulted. This explains why lecturers dodge the lectures during face to face and hence the poor academic performance on both programs. Qualitative findings further showed that ODL programs are tuition paying programs. They pay an average of 600,000 Shs per semester. However, the money that the university transfers back to run these programs is very little. This has crippled the smooth running of the programs. This has affected the teaching and other support services.

Qualitative findings further indicated ODL programs heavily rely on strong student support for their survival. This is because there are diverse students with different student needs. This ranges from working students, fathers and mothers therefore holding responsibility to look after their families, while some are young people fresh from high school and used to studying by being taught all the time and as such they find a challenge studying on their own with little guidance from the university. This diversity of students presents a challenge of student support structures and their

accessibility. While there has been efforts to decentralize some of these activities to improve support for ODL programs, these have been fruitless. For example, the Department of Open and Distance Learning had proposed decentralization of activities like registration of students, fees collections, conducting of face to face sessions and final examinations. However, the University management refused because they did not know how these external programs operate especially in duo mode institutions where other programs are handled following laid down procedures and taking all programs to be uniform.

7.4 The Performance of ODL (External Programs) at Makerere University

The performance of ODL programs at Makerere University was measured using five dimensions including attention given to students by both administrative and academic staff, students' assessment, attitude towards students on ODL programs, students' satisfaction with the programs and academic performance. The results pertaining to these variables are summarized in Table 7:

Table 7: The performance of ODL programs at Makerere University

Attention given to students	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Students on ODL programs are given adequate attention by administrators during their course	91	4.0220	.57693
Students on ODL programs are given due attention by the lecturers during face to face sessions	91	2.2637	1.11390
All university administrators fully understand how ODL programs are run	91	1.9231	.52134
Students on ODL programs have enough and comfortable lecture rooms during their face to face sessions	91	1.7033	.54761
Students on ODL get timely support when they have problems concerning their academics	91	1.7033	.56754
Overall Frequency, Mean and Std. Deviation	**91**	**2.32308**	**0.66546**

Students' assessment	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Students on ODL programs sit the same examinations with the internal students who are fully taught for the whole semester	91	4.9890	.10483
The marks of students on ODL programs are released on time	91	1.7253	.93174

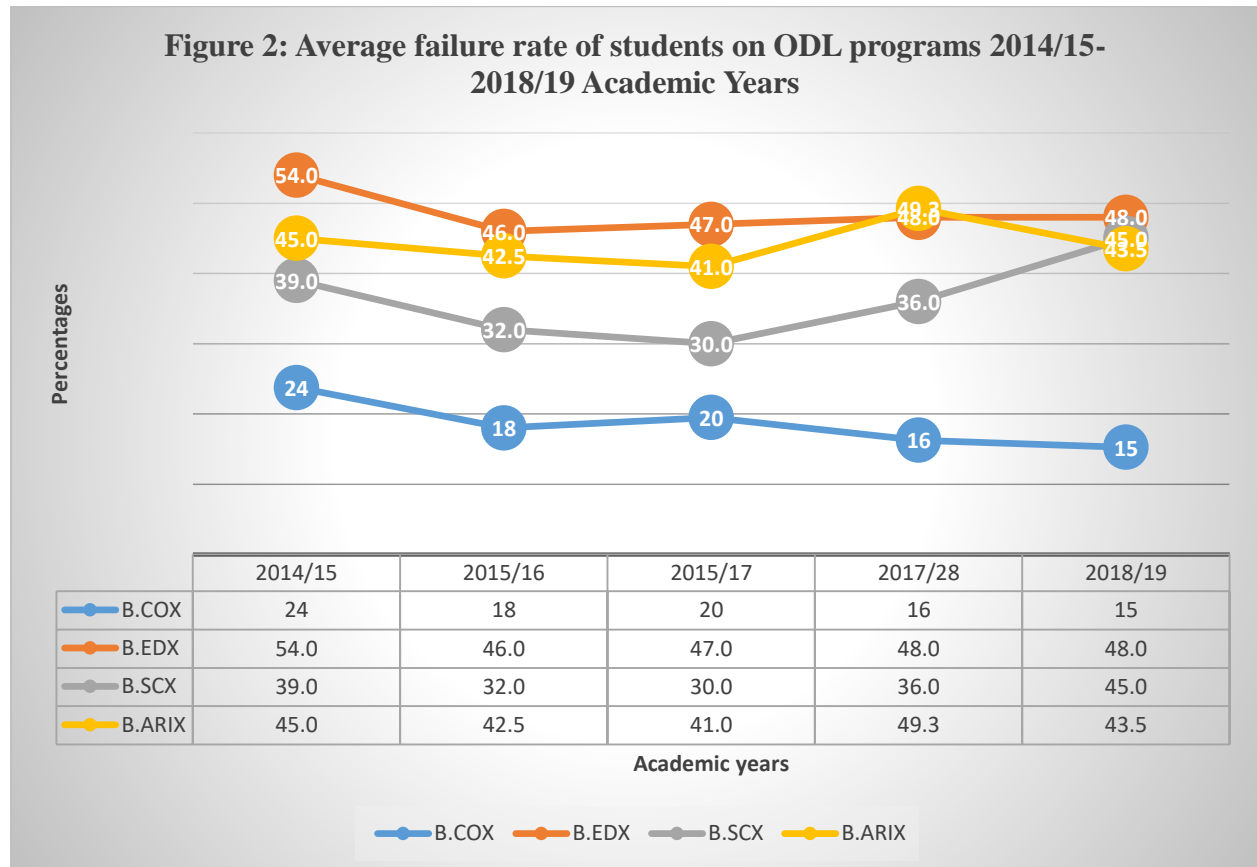|			
Students on ODL programs have always sat for their final examinations on the main campus with internals	91	1.8791	.62955
Students on ODL programs usually do not have problems of missing marks when results are released	91	1.5604	.68652
Overall Frequency, Mean and Std. Deviation	**91**	**2.53845**	**0.58816**
Attitudes towards students on ODL programs			
Students on ODL programs are perceived by lecturers equally as internal students	91	1.7143	.82038
Students on ODL programs are perceived by their fellow internal students as equal	91	1.7582	.97000
All lecturers on the external program treat very well external students	91	2.1758	.56947
Students on ODL programs are treated well by administrative staff	91	4.1367	.15724
Overall Frequency, Mean and Std. Deviation	**91**	**2.44625**	**0.62927**
Academic performance			
All students who enrol on the External program finish their degree programs	91	2.0000	.00000
Most students on ODL programs attain higher classes of degrees	91	1.8681	.65335
Overall Frequency, Mean and Std. Deviation	**91**	**1.93405**	**0.32668**
Students satisfaction with ODL programs			
An External program student who finishes the degree program is happy to join the alumni association of the University	91	2.3516	1.07882
As an alumni I am interested in participating in activities to raise money for the University	91	1.7363	.74289
As an alumni I can even mobilize other colleagues who are not alumni to fund University activities.	91	2.0000	.80277
I am proud for having been enrolled on the external program	91	1.5495	.50031
Overall Frequency, Mean and Std. Deviation	**91**	**1.90935**	**0.78120**
General rating of the performance of ODL programs			
Overall Frequency, Mean and Std. Deviation	**91**	**1.90935**	**0.78120**

Source: Results of Statistical Analysis of primary data

The results in Table 7 indicate that the respondents disagreed regarding the performance as indicated by the mean value of 1.90935. The results suggest that the performance of ODL programs is not good. This is attributed to little attention given to students by the lecturers (Mean value=2.32308), and poor attitude of the lecturers and students on internal programs towards

students on ODL programs (mean value=2.44625). These factors have affected the satisfaction of the students on the programs (Mean value=1.90935) and ultimately their academic performance (Mean value= 1.93405). See Figure1:

Figure 2: Average failure rate of students on ODL programs 2014/15-2018/19 Academic Years

	2014/15	2015/16	2015/17	2017/28	2018/19
B.COX	24	18	20	16	15
B.EDX	54.0	46.0	47.0	48.0	48.0
B.SCX	39.0	32.0	30.0	36.0	45.0
B.ARIX	45.0	42.5	41.0	49.3	43.5

Academic years

B.COX   B.EDX   B.SCX   B.ARIX

Source: Analysis of secondary data from Academic Registrar's office

It is observed from Figure 2 that B.EDX is the worst performing ODL program academically and the reason behind this performance is that most of the students on this course are full time teachers and do not have time to arrange private lectures, nor do they receive on line content. B.COX registered lowest ranks in poor performance because students on this program arrange private coaching and also have spare time to read especially direct entrants from high school.

7.5   Relationship between Corporate governance and the performance of ODL programs

The relationship between corporate governance and the performance of ODL programs was measured using Pearson correlation coefficients. The results are summarized in Table 8.

Table 8: Relationship between corporate governance and the performance of ODL programs

		Council and Senate	Board composition	Board committees	Corporate governance	Performance of ODL programs
Council & Senate	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N	59				
Board composition	Pearson Correlation	.580**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000				
	N	59	59			
Board committees	Pearson Correlation	-.211	.113	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.109	.393			
	N	59	59	59		
Corporate Governance	Pearson Correlation	.759*	.813**	.278*	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.047		
	N	59	59	59	59	
Performance ODL programs	Pearson Correlation	.159	.113	.278*	.038	1
		.711**	.830**	.259*	.781**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.008	.005	.003	.000	
	N	59	59	59	59	91

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
Source: Results of Statistical Analysis of primary data

The results in Table 8 show that there is a strong positive significant relationship between corporate governance and the performance of ODL programs at Makerere University (r=.781, p<0.01). The results suggest that improving on corporate governance will improve the performance of ODL programs. This relationship is attributed to board composition (r=.830, p<0.01) and the role of council and senate (r=.711, p<0.01). While the relationship between board committees and the performance of ODL programs is significant (r= .259*, p<0.05), it is weak, suggesting improving on board committees will slightly improve the performance of ODL programs. Therefore, the

performance of ODL programs, more focus should be put on improving board composition and improvement on the roles of the council and senate in relation to these programs.

8.0   Summary of findings

The study established a number of issues with corporate governance in relation to running of the ODL programs. These include; failure by the council to approve and support policies for running ODL programs, limited knowledge of the council on how ODL programs are run, inadequate representation of ODL programs on the council and the finance committee from both staff and students' perspectives. This implies that the decisions of the board do not include adequate input from ODL programs. In addition, there is failure by the finance committee to allocate enough resources to run ODL programs, failure by the staff development and welfare committee to ensure the welfare of staff running ODL program and poor support systems and structures for ODL programs. Nevertheless, there were some strong aspects such as some few representatives from the school of Distance and Lifelong learning to senate who have tried to ensures that challenges affecting ODL programs are integrated into the decision making process. Further, the student's affairs and disciplinary committee always ensures the discipline of students on ODL programs while the audit committee always ensures that funds for ODL programs are properly accounted for the activities of the program.

The findings generally indicated poor performance of ODL programs. This performance status is indicated by inadequate attention given to students on ODL programs, and poor attitudes by some lecturers and students on internal programs towards students on ODL programs. These issues coupled with corporate governance issues highlighted have led to students' dissatisfaction with ODL programs and ultimately poor academic performance of students.

The study established that there is a strong positive significant relationship between corporate governance and the performance of ODL programs at Makerere University (r=.781, p<0.01). The results suggest that improving on corporate governance will improve the performance of ODL programs. This relationship is attributed to board composition (r=.830, p<0.01) and the role of council and senate (r=.711, p<0.01). While the relationship between board committees and the performance of ODL programs is significant (r= .259[*], p<0.05), it is weak suggesting improving on board committees will slightly improve the performance of ODL programs.

9.0. Conclusion

The study established that there is a strong positive significant relationship between corporate governance and the performance of ODL programs at Makerere University. Hence, the poor performance of ODL programs is attributed to corporate governance issues which include; failure by the council to approve and support policies for running ODL programs, limited knowledge of the council on how ODL programs are run, and inadequate students and staff representation on the council and the finance committee. The other corporate governance issues are inadequate financing of ODL programs and poor support systems for ODL programs. Basing on the results, it is concluded that improving on corporate governance will improve the performance of ODL programs. And such improvement should focus on; the role of the council regarding policies approval and implementation support, sensitization of all council members on how ODL programs are run, increasing staff and students on the council and finance committee, improving on the financing of the programs, and support systems and structures for ODL programs.

10.   Recommendations

Basing on the study findings and conclusions, the following recommendations to improve corporate governance so as to improve the performance of the ODL programs are made.

Firstly, there is need to streamline the roles of the council and senate in regard to the running of ODL programs. Specific areas of focus should include the following:

- All the members of council should be well sensitized on how ODL programs are run so that it specifically designs and implements policies for effective running of ODL programs.

- The senate should ensure that relevant polices regarding quality control are duly and timely passed on to council for approval. However, regular follow ups by colleges and schools running ODL programs is essential.

- The council should endeavor to duly and timely make decisions regarding the running of ODL programs. Delayed decision making regarding the approval of such policies delays their implementation by the colleges and schools at the detriment of the programs and students.

Secondly, board composition needs serious improvement since it affects decisions made about the running of programs in duo model institutions of learning. Specific areas of focus include the following:

- The council finance committee should always rationally budget for and allocate enough resources to run ODL programs. These programs are tuition paying programmes and hence a fair share of the financial resources should be allocated to these programs for their effective running.

- There should be adequate representation of ODL programs on the council and the finance committee from both staff and students' perspectives. The study established inadequate representation in this regard and this implies that the decisions of the board do not include adequate input from ODL programs. Hence enabling their representation on the board will enhance the quality, acceptance and applicability of the policies jointly developed.

Thirdly, the financial issue can be overcome by council supporting independent ODL programs to develop revenue generating activities or recommending them to seek donor funding. This has proved to work with the College of Education and External Studies, when the Institute of Open, Distance and e-Learning was supported to seek donor support from NORAD by writing a DELP project which was funded from Norway and saw the refurbishment and renovations of infrastructure and purchase of modern equipment to support e-learning.

Fourthly the support systems and structures need to be addressed by the colleges and schools, but with the support of the council and senate. The support systems to students should include but not limited to:

- Well written and understood study materials, online materials, counselling and guidance as many times students on these programs face challenges and they cannot share such challenges with any one.
- While on face to face, breasting feeding mothers should be given rooms where they breast feed their babies and go back to class.
- There should be a central office for handling specifically external students in regard to course works submitted, students' registrations, fees payments and those who have unique questions about external programs.

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MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

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Title of the Paper: Corporate Governance and the performance of open and distance learning programs in duo mode institutions of higher learning in Uganda: Strategies for improvement.

Biography

Turyakira Nazarius is a lecturer of business for the last 20 years in the Institute of Open Distance and e-Learning and School of Business Makerere University. He holds an MBA, CPA, B. Com, HDM and is completing a PhD in Business Management from University of Nairobi in Kenya. He has a wealth of experience in teaching Corporate governance and Finance. He has acquired training in e-teaching one and two from the University of Agda in Norway.

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