

Quality, management and governance in higher education institutions in Europe

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INTRODUCTION

Relationship between the themes of quality and management/ governance of higher education institutions in Europe

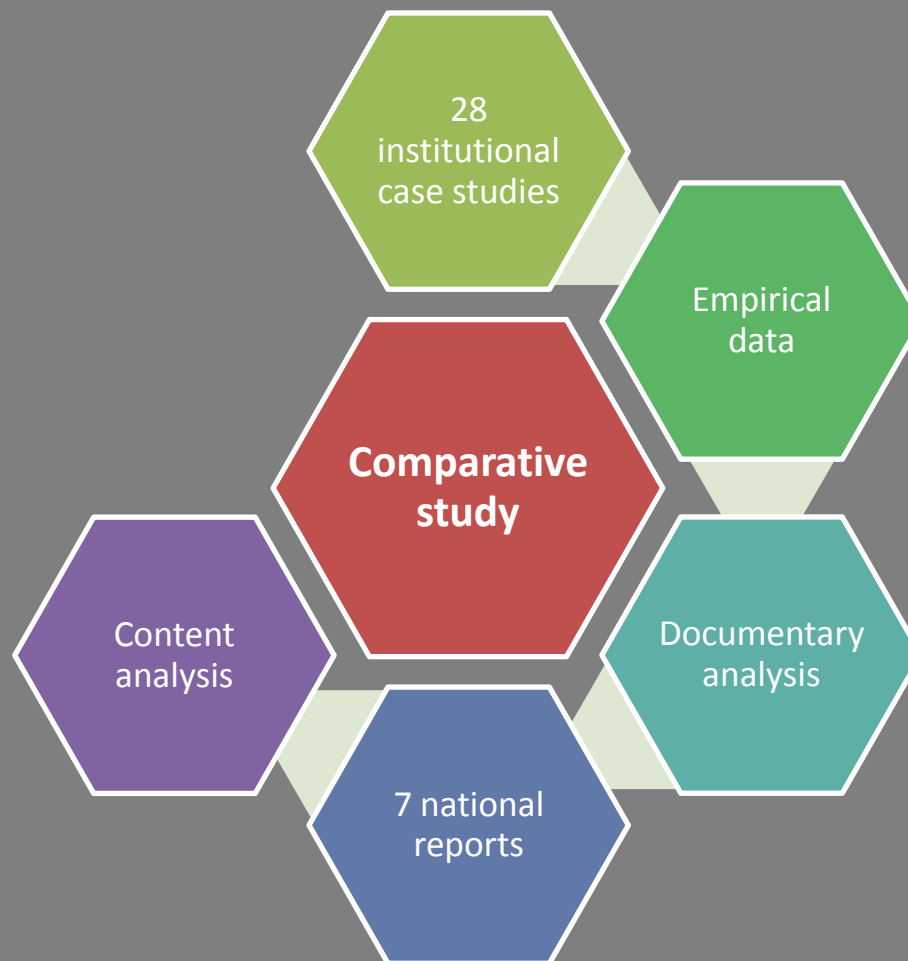
Quality and management/ governance in higher education institutions into context

European dimension – the ESG

- Standard 1.1: Policy and procedures for quality assurance
- Standard 1.2: Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards
- Standard 1.5: Learning resources and student support

Identification of barriers and examples of good practice

METHODS



MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE IN CONTEXT

Changing face of governance and management in higher education (Rhoades, 1992; Braun and Merrien, 1999; Amaral et al., 2003; Bleiklie and Kogan, 2007; de Boer et al., 2008)

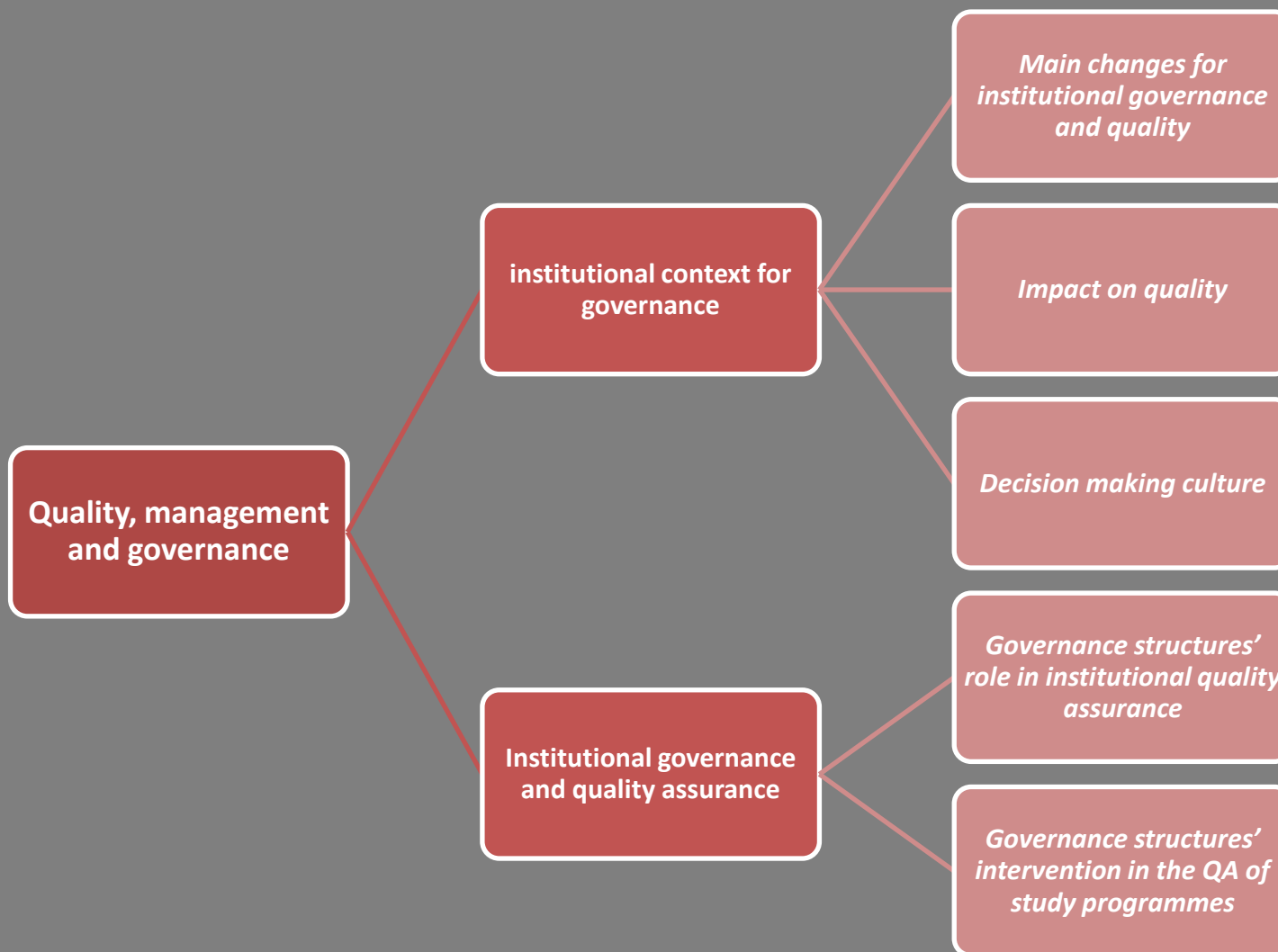
Less on the relationship of changing governance structures and developments in quality in higher education (Salter and Tapper, 2002)

Implicit link between governance and management structures and quality in the ESG – ‘a common grammar (Magalhães et al., 2012)’

Other steering mechanisms:

- National states
- From a ‘republic of scholars’ to a ‘stakeholder organisation’
- Market for HE
- Students as consumers

FINDINGS



INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT FOR GOVERNANCE

Main changes for institutional governance and quality

Changes have occurred in all countries studied, namely in the legislative or policy framework

- Ministry
- Accreditation and/ or quality commissions and agencies
- European Commission

Explicit national policies promoting internal mechanisms of quality assurance

Accreditation mechanisms are key evaluation tools

Changes orient higher education towards the modernisation of governance structures

Enhanced representation of students in decision-making

INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT FOR GOVERNANCE

Impact on quality

Agencies and bodies created at national and institutional level have been having an impact on quality at institutional level

Establishment of a wide range of bodies at institutional level

INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT FOR GOVERNANCE

Decision making culture

What balance between
bottom-up and top-down
approaches?

Combinations of top-
down and hybrid cultures

Tensions between central
administration and the
shop-floor level

INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNANCE AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

Governance structures' role in institutional quality assurance

Hybrid mechanisms of decision-making

Subsistence of a formalised institutional quality culture

Association between decision-making cultures and institutional quality cultures

INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNANCE AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

Governance structures' intervention in the QA of study programmes

Compliance with formal mechanisms for the approval, periodic review, and monitoring of their programmes and awards

Commitment of academics at the shop floor level

Inconclusive whether the quality assurance activities surveyed follow very strictly the guidelines previewed in the ESG

Careful attention to curriculum and programme design and content is visible in all case-studies

Availability of appropriate learning resources is to be confirmed under the framework of accreditation processes

BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES

Low awareness about ESG

Balance between a national initiative that contributes to raise awareness and the consequences of national top-down movements which can have perverse effects

National top-down movements may not favour the development of institutional quality cultures

National structures and processes of governance are probably better understood taking into account national and institutional specificities and priorities

At institutional level, it is apparent that there is a tension between the development of a quality culture and centralised control management

GOOD PRACTICE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

national and institutional specific settings

the participation of students in decision-making processes is perceived as a good practice

balance between what is a good practice and what could turn into a barrier

The important thing may be that good practice derived from the ESG is promoted through national and institutional governance and management arrangements and changes practice for the better and has a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning

might require changes to governance arrangements

CONCLUSIONS

national and institutional contexts of policy implementation are important factors to grasp

the analysis of the implementation of ESG at institutional level is complex due to the existence of a wide range of drivers for change

hybrid mechanisms of both top-down and bottom-up decision-making and the need to cope with dynamic equilibriums regarding institutional quality management

students are increasingly perceived as clients and consumers, or simply as important stakeholders, as active actors in the teaching and learning process

administrative and management staff are driving changes to quality management by overseeing institution-wide processes (for example, student surveys) and are key actors in quality processes

CONCLUSIONS

important shift in the balance of power in many institutions

academics often fear the possibility of them intruding in the actual teaching and learning process

reinforcing the quality management system

a quality culture characterised by compliance and formalism, rather than genuine improvement of teaching and learning

tensions between academic staff and administrative and management staff

the need to cope with and manage these tensions, through appropriate balanced governance arrangements, is necessary and might in itself constitute a good practice