

**ASSESSING THE INTERNAL CONTROL SYSTEMS OF PUBLIC
INSTITUTIONS
(A CASE STUDY OF TAMALE POLYTECHNIC)**

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work towards the award of a Master of Business Administration Accounting Option and that to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published by another person or any material which has been accepted for the forward of any other degree of the University, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the Almighty Allah for His guidance and support.

Also to my wonderful wife (Mrs.Abukari Beatrice) who have been so wonderful in my life throughout my project work. For her understanding, unceasing support, patience, sacrifice, prayers and encouragement which gave me the ability to successfully complete my course. May Allah richly bless you.

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Last but not the least I would like to thank my family and friends for their incessant support and approval. I am ever grateful to all.

Nevertheless, I must proclaim my acceptance of all remaining errors.

ABSTRACT

There have been several cases of embezzlement of funds and misuse of resources in Public institutions though such institutions have several rules and control measures to Guide their operations. The main purpose of the research was to assess the effectiveness of internal control systems at Tamale Polytechnic. The specific objectives were to find out the internal control systems at Tamale Polytechnic, employee's awareness of the internal control systems, whether management is able to override the control systems and how consistent are the control Systems with international standards. The descriptive research method was employed in the study. The population was all staff at the Polytechnic in the year 2014-2015. The sample was made up of 50 respondents comprising of 40 experts (Finance, audit, procurement and stores) and 10 non-experts from other departments apart from the ones already mentioned. The purposive and the simple random sampling technique were used to sample the population and the main instruments used for the collection of data were the questionnaire. Some of the findings the research revealed are the existence of strict supervision, authorization and segregation of duties. The findings revealed that management does not communicate to the staff of new control policies introduced. Again the findings indicated that the control systems at the Polytechnic are quite effective and are directed towards the detection and prevention of fraud and error. Some of the recommendations to the management of the Polytechnic include the embossment of the institution's logo on all assets and that management must keep the employees informed of new control policies introduced. Finally, the Polytechnic must invest in computerizing most of its manual operations.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Globalisation of business, advancing in knowledge and wide increase in fraud that leads to collapse of business such as the New Zealand, United Kingdom and other nations and institutions in Europe have been encouraged to put emphasis on risk management, their internal audit and internal control systems. Corporate entities, irrespective of their size maintain financial control systems if they wish to uphold the practice of good corporate governance. The purpose is to comply with applicable standards and financial information reliability as well as to ensure effective operation of business. In general managing Risk and financial controls precisely are those remained careful as essential features of structural power.

Internal Controls of every organization remains one of the strategic tools for improving corporate governance and financial management administration for public sector is not an exception, especially in the face of limited resources of a country which adopted the Economic Recovery Programme (ERP) in April 1983, followed by the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in August 1986 and HIPIC Initiative in 2002 so as to salvage the ailing Ghanaian economy.

Organisations are set up to pursue certain objectives. For profit making organisations the ultimate objective is to create wealth for shareholders and make reasonable profit to sustain the business. Not all organisations have similar objectives to achieve.

Management of controls in non-profit making organisations is a subject to which very little information exists in the accounting for literature. Though the way in which managers may apply the concepts of management control may differ in some esteem, the

basic concepts of management control are the same for both profit making firms and non-profit making organisations (Anthony and Young, 1994).

In pursuing these goals and objectives certain tools are employed to assist them in the efficient management of the scarce resources at disposal to bring the best out of them. In this regard, the right environment and tools are needed to employ to achieve the desired objectives. This involves both management and employees to ensure that enabling environment is created.

The issue of stewardship and accountability is dated back to the biblical days when God placed the first man in the Garden of Eden and tasked him to be accountable and keep the Garden (Gen 2:7). The complexity of the modern day business operation demands the use of adequate programmes, tools and policies to ensure that proper procedures are followed to achieve the objectives of the organization, Jones (2008) said that internal controls was a core element in ensuring accountability and the principle of agency theory .

According to Creveld [n.d] ancient times existed in control systems. The dual administration in Hellenic Egypt were one is bureaucrats responsible for assembling taxes and an observation on the other side.

Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (2007) stated in their manual indicated that all organisations are exposed to the fraud and risk. Big thefts have led to the collapse of firm's institutions and resulted to massive venture sufferers, substantial of legal costs, confinement of key individuals, and destruction of self-assurance in money markets. Broadcast fraudulent behaviour by key directors has destructively impacted the standings, brands, and images of many organisations round the globe.

A 2004 study by the ACFE discovered that 83% of internal fraud cases were committed by first time offenders, not career criminals. In its 2006 study, the ACFE disclosed that the banking industry is the biggest victim of internal fraud. The report on ACFE's 2008 is about Occupational Deceit & Abuse raised the internal deceitful loss rate to seven per cent of annual turnover for all organisations.

Many institutions in parts of the country do not attain high profit such as the collapse of Enron, Worldcom, Parmalat, mention just a few. This implies no company can be too big to fail. (Babalola, 2010) identified as a common trend in all these failures. Expectations from clients are those external auditors are those to generate unqualified report for them. Giant companies have fallen due to financial distress which has been known as a compromised of Auditors which resulted to absolute dissolutions of corporate bodies in the United States due to poor internal control systems. An instance of financial distress is normally as a result of poor corporate governance. Many institutions in Ghana are identified to have weak internal controls which impede their smooth running of the business. Disclosure of financial information leads to fraud and this is an indication of weak internal controls makes decisions. Regulators and investors make their decisions most in listed companies due to the quality nature of that financial information disclosure.

There are increasing tendency of business organisation to measure of performance and presentation of financial reports. Nevertheless, auditors of public sector organizations have always been concerned not only testing financial statement but also reviews non - financial information. This is because of the unique nature of such organizations.

Consequently, at hand are several methods that public sector organizations are held accountable and for many dissimilar traits of their presentation. Generally, however, they usually prepare and present financial reports.

This information provide a picture of the resource entrusted, how the resources were employed during a given period usually one year, and in what form the resources are now held. The emphasis, therefore, has still been on producing verifiable statement of income and expenditure balance sheet and flow of funds.

It is expected that the reports of public organizations not only reveal the resources entrusted and their use but more importantly, the degree of efficiency and effectiveness achieved in the employment of the resource.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Internal auditing has become an integral part of the administrative system of tertiary institutions in Ghana. As autonomous as they are, tertiary institutions receive subventions from the central government to facilitate the execution of their duties. In the process of this, internal audit units of the various tertiary institutions play pivotal role in ensuring that the control systems in these institutions are effectively complied with so as to ensure good governance.

The year 2003 saw the enactment of Act 658 and the subsequent formation of internal audit unit now in the institution of higher education such as polytechnics as specified by the internal Audit Agency act. Section 16(1). It is compulsory for every Ministry, Department as well as Agencies (MDAs) are to create internal audit units to exercise their roles on all activities of such institutions in which they operate.

The public procurement act was not to be left out as well as the Financial Administration Act and the Internal Audit Agency Act was made to work effectively.

However, it is worth noting that most units and departments in universities and polytechnics have not fully appreciated the role of internal controls as being one to ensure efficient utilization of the resources of these institutions.

Public institutions are guided by rules and control measures to help them achieve their aims and objectives and also to curb corruption. There have been several reported cases of embezzlement of fund and misuse of resources in the public institution, though these control measures are put in place especially in the Ministries, Custom Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS), public educational institutions, just to mention a few. A typical example is what happened in Tema port where the state lost millions of cedis through tax evasion. One will even doubt whether public institutions are indeed guided by control measures.

From the foregoing the researcher decided to find out whether or not the effectiveness of internal controls put in place by the public procurement act, the financial administration act as well as the internal audit agency has ensured effectiveness and efficiency in the management of scarce resources in achievement of institutions objectives.

In light of these happening, the researcher decided to research into the operations of Tamale polytechnic an educational institution to establish whether their internal controls are really working and in achievement of their objectives.

1.3 RESEACH OBJECTIVES:

The main objective of this research is to study and assess the influence of internal control systems in Tamale Polytechnic.

The Specific objectives are:

1. Determine what are the internal control system existence at the polytechnic and the extent to which they have been achieved.
2. Find out if management of the Polytechnic are overriding the internal control systems.
3. Determine if internal control systems at the polytechnic are consistent with internationally acclaimed standards, contained on Committee of Sponsoring Organizations (COSO).framework.

1.4 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research sought in providing answers to the following questions:

1. What are the internal control systems in existence at Tamale Polytechnic?
2. Is management at the Polytechnic able to override the control systems?
3. How consistent are the internal control systems at the Polytechnic to the COSO framework?

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The achievement of this objective, among other factors, is predicated on the existence of effective control systems. The outcome of this study will bring to light to the management of Tamale Polytechnic, the degree of internal controls system in the Polytechnic. This would assist management of the institution to strengthen its internal control mechanism.

Finally, the study will serve as a contribution of knowledge to help future researchers on the same topic. Researchers may fall on this study as a secondary source of literature on their research work.

1.6 METHODOLOGY

The research design used was the descriptive research method. The population is the study of all the staff of the polytechnic. The sample size used was 50 administrative staff of Tamale Polytechnic which was group into 10 academic and 40non-academic staff.

The sample procedure used was purposive selection for academic staff as also the simple random selection for non-academic staffs. The data collection method was Questionnaires for non-academic staff.

1.7 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

There are many public institutions in the country but the researcher chose Tamale Polytechnic because of proximity and time constraint. Among some of the difficulties faced by the researchers was the combination of the research work with the semester's course work. Limited financial resources to undertake the study adequately and Unwillingness on the part of some respondents to give out information which they consider delicate and private to the organization and the choice of words to represent what is actually in mind.

Despite the above limitations, the data collected was sufficient and appropriate to help make helpful suggestions and valid conclusions.

1.8 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

This study was organized into five chapters to enable reader's attention. Each chapter is arranged accordingly. Chapter one talks about background of the study, statement of the

problem, the objectives of the study, research questions, significance, as well as scope and limitations of the study.

The chapter two tries to review existing related literature concerning internal controls to acquire detail understanding on the topic. This chapter gives detailed of the definitions of internal control, importance of internal control, composition of internal control and the limitations of internal control systems. chapter three looks at the scope of the methodology, the design sampling procedure of data collection, chapter four present the analysis of data and presentation of facts, finally chapter five also presents the summary , conclusion and recommendations for the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter two tries to look at the related literature on internal control systems or policies to some organizations. In this chapter, literature relating to what is internal control definition, the importance associated with internal control, components relating to control systems, as well as limitations to those control systems and how they are reviewed to establish the basis for an objective evaluation of the internal control systems at Tamale Polytechnic.

2.2 EVOLUTION OF INTERNAL CONTROLS

Maintenance of effective control systems is a key fundamental responsibility of every institution or organisation. It is the duty of management duty to maintain and develop control system. Is also important for management to be concern with the use of organisations resources and how these resources have been utilised to satisfy the agency theory concept. Therefore organization's resources must be used effectively and efficiently to meet their goals. Programmes must be implemented and resources used accordingly with the purpose for which organisations are establish in an agreement to appropriate directions and principles to reduce waste of resource, fraud, and mismanagement.

Control systems provide realistic assertion that no material weakness exist in the design of business operations that can negatively affect institution's capacity to meet its operations. It further ensures that discovery and stoppage of theft a key factor to internal control systems.

Internal control policies and procedures intended to encourage effective, competence and usefulness by management. Further it stressed that internal control seeks to present

accuracy and reliability of financial information. Interior guidelines are book keeping procedures, numerical or bodily checks that safeguard properties against irregularities and defalcations. Agreeing to Tipgos (2002) and Byrne (1957) physical internal checks include as stated examples like watchmen, fences of gates, among others. Those classifications were made with reference to the COSO report 1992 particularly in auditing context of internal control systems.

The joint initiative of free private sector firms as contained in Committee of sponsoring organization real way commission established and dedicated to provide good leadership to decision-making organisation and governance of entities on critical aspect of organization. The COSO report been formed a common platform model against which businesses and organizations may evaluate their control systems. COSO is supported by five supporting institute including the IMA that is institute of management Accountant, AAA which stands for the American Accounting Association , the AICPA meaning American Institute of Certified Public Accountant and IIA that is, the Institute of Internal Auditors and financial executives International FEI. “The origin of auditing goes back to time scarcely less remote than that of accounting. Whenever the advanced of civilization brought about the necessity of one man being entrusted to some extent with the property of another, the advisability of some kind of check upon the fidelity of the former will become apparent”. The above quoted statement is the works of an accounting With references to 4000BC history is believed that good book keeping system was earlier on adopted by most institutions and organized business and government. The concerns of government and management of various enterprises. However, the need for indications of audit and for that matter internal audit could lead to tracing finances of the public system to olden Babylonian, Institutions that develop internal checks and counter checks such as the Roman Empire, the Greece etc. was mainly to guide internal control policies.

Governments of those times was worried about unskilful which could affect making the journals leading to misstatements as well as some officials who were known as committing errors due to the fact of motivation. Another main reason in the development of internal controls was to strengthen span of control as a principle of management faced in business engaging several number of people and piloting procedures in many positions. The key unbiased of internal controls was mostly to shape around the safety of resources.

Prior to 1941 internal controls and internal audit was clearly a clerical function for many organization setup and principle and also no code of conduct. Internal auditing is the oldest concept that was made as assurance engagement as a rational for which fraud detection the reason behind public accountants and the yearly audit report. The turning point by the end 1941 was marked significantly as events occurred in the emergence of internal control systems. A book that was published by Victor Z Brink's on internal auditing gave a foundation for the institute of internal auditors to be formed.

1971 saw the approval of standard for professional practice for internal auditing. This was further reviewed in 1976, 81 and 90 to reflect the rapid changes in the profession. The process which was formerly known as audit for management in today's language can only be an audit of management (Reeve, 1986).

Some major accounting organizations like the AICPA, American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, the AAA, American Accounting Associations, and Financial Executives Institutes(FEI),and the Institute of Internal Auditors(IIA),the Institute of management Accountants sponsored by National Commission on Fraudulent Financial Reporting (Treadway Commission, 1985) to study causal factors associated with fraudulent reporting. The guidance included criteria against which control systems can be

assessed, as well as information on preparing management internal control effectiveness. This document provided guidance to management and boards of directors, rather than to auditors. At the end of its sitting, the commission made several recommendations aimed at directly addressing conceptual issues and definitions of internal control. The attention on Tread way organisation (1985) was to definition of fraud reporting and to detect fraud, not prevention.

According to COSO (1992), Treadway commission's recommendations included the following:

That top management creates a control environment. That is, an atmosphere of control awareness within the organization should be created to effectively handle employee fraud.

That the audit committee and the internal audit function should serve as checks on management to create an atmosphere of controls within the organization.

That an improvement in audit quality is required by having auditions take more responsibility for fraud detection. However, this recommendation ran into trouble as it could only be applied to some extent. The fact is that, this recommendation can fully be applied if the independent auditor could allow itself to be exposed to the possible resulting legal liability. The recent audit failures, particularly Enron, have shown that the accounting professions, despite its 100 years franchise to serve the public interest sometimes does also pursue their own interest.

That improvement in laws and regulations are required to serve as deterrent to fraudulent financial reporting and to regulate the public accounting profession to facilitate the improvement of audit quality. Unfortunately, laws and regulations only show the

perpetrators that crime does not pay. The perpetrators of the Enron scandal are serving prison sentences, but only after they have inflicted damage on many lives and the financial markets.

The business schools around the world include ethics in their curricula.

However, because of some shortcomings in some institutions, principally the failure to state neither authoritatively in its recommendations that internal controls are nor to be override by management, fraudulent financial reporting continued as evidenced by the declaration of bankruptcies by corporate giants Enron, Global Crossing and World Com during the period 2001 to 2002.

To remedy the situation, the U.S Congress enacted in 2002 by Sarbanes – Oxley Act (SOX) was to be applicable.

The Act amended significant of the U.S securities laws and regulation. The Act also specified among other things, called for Chief Directors (CDS) and Finance Directors (FDS) makes sure that companies' annual and quarterly reports are up to date and not misleading, for the internal controls are evaluated as a responsibility of management. Also, one main objectives of Sarbanes- Oxley Act (SOX) is to ensure that managements do not override internal control (Guy, 2004)

2.3 DEFINITION OF INTERNAL CONTROLS

According to Whittington and Pany (2004), diversity of views has existed long ago regarding the internal control objectives and meaning. Some others understand internal control to mean by business taking measure to protect misappropriation of resources and fraud reporting of financial statements.

A bulletin that was submitted by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants the year 1936 (AICPA) titled 'Examination of Financial Statements by Public Accountants' internal control refers to procedures and approaches accepted within the organization to safeguard the cash and other assets of the company as well as to check the clerical accuracy of the bookkeeping". Internal controls may be clerical errors that can allow loss of cash and companies assets.

In AICPA report 2013/2014 for accounting and auditing prescribe Procedures internal control to include a strategy of an organization and all of the harmonized techniques and measures assumed inside the industry to protect its assets and accuracy and consistency of its bookkeeping records. It also promotes operative proficiency, and boosts obedience to recommend organization rules.

According to Noordin (1997), as pointed in the International Journal of Government Auditing, the definition meant by internal control varies differently. However, both accounting and administrative controls are widely considered in broad sense. Methods and procedures used by management to control areas such as budgeting and financial performance are termed administrative controls. Accounting control on the other hand is concerned with the authorization of transactions, protection of properties and perfect economic accounts.

A study of the COSO Framework titled "Internal Control –Integrated Framework" outlines core mechanism of control as a process caused by an entity's panel of bosses, controlling, and extra recruits, deliberate to offer rational guarantee concerning the attainment of purposes in the resulting classes as:

- Reliability of financial reporting
- Effectiveness and efficiency of operations

- Compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

The COSO meaning of internal control highlights that internal control is a method realized by persons and not only strategy makers handbooks, and procedures. Also inclusion of written manual provide reasonable assurance in COSO's model of control systems signifies no absolute assurance for internal control auditing but only gives reasonable level of assurance that system of government aims can be completed. The definition recognizes the rate preceding an organization inside mechanism ought not to outstrip the welfares likely to be resulting. COSO's explanations and complete in that it statements the attainment of objective popular parts of economic reportage, processes, and submission by rules and principles. Explanation exists all-inclusive in that it reports the success of purposes in the areas of financial reportage, procedures, and agreement with acts and guidelines. The definition covers approaches through which top most managing authority assign roles obligation for such purpose as trade, buying, bookkeeping and manufacture. Other concerns incorporated in the definition include package for making, confirming and allocating to several stages of managing those existing information and investigation which are performed in large organizations.

Internal control also incorporates the potentials of respectable organisation and is reliant upon people and would do well or fail liable to the attention given it. Further still, the definition underscores that internal control becomes real once all the persons and the nearby surroundings work organized to deliver a level of ease concerning the possibility of attaining organizational goals as well as its duty.

With reference made from Millichamp (2002), internal control is about the entire system of controls recognized by the board to carry out the industry or enterprise in a sound

manner. It is also to certify that managers adhere to rules, maintenance of their assets and obtaining as much as likely comprehensive and accurateness of the facts.

There are various ways in which internal controls are published and defined in most groups and organisations. Therefore internal controls are documented with divers arguments. Most explanations of internal controls are similar. In the opinion of the researcher internal controls can be defined strategies, plans, policies, and procedures, whose implementation require the collective efforts of both management and employees in ensuring the achievement of the task and neutral performance of a business.

The definition of internal controls provided by institute of Chartered Accountants of Ghana (2008) states that policies and procedures adopted by management of an entity to assist in their objective of achieving as far as practicable, the orderly and efficient conduct of the business, \including adherence to internal policies, safeguarding of assets, the prevention and detection of fraud and en-or, the accuracy and completeness of accounting records, and the timely preparation of reliable financial information.

Bishop (1991) also provided a definition of internal control as means by which an organisation's resources are directed, monitored, and measured. Trenerry(1999) also added that internal control systems are to detect fraud and protect an organization's assets such as, machinery, and landed property and intangible e.g. reputation or intellectual property such as trademarks). At the organizational level, internal control objectives relate to the reliability of financial reporting, timely feedback on the achievement of operational or strategic goals, and compliance with standards.

n lander (2004) internal controls was for financial reporting as a process designed by, or under the supervision of, the company's principal executive and principal officers and implemented by the company's board of directors, management and other personnel to

provide reasonable assurance for the reliability of financial reporting and the preparation of financial statements for external purposes in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. According to Lander, this includes those policies and procedures that cover maintain records in reasonable detail, that is accurately and in fairly reflecting the transactions and dispositions of company's assets;

Provide reasonable assurance that transactions are recorded as necessary to prepare financial statements in accordance generally accepted accounting principles, and that receipts and expenditures of the company are made only under the authorizations of management and directors of the registrants; and Provide reasonable assurance for the prevention or timely detection of unauthorized acquisition use, or disposition of the company's assets that could materially affect the Statements.

To Simmons (2009), internal controls was the one provided by the Committee of Sponsoring Organization 1992 (COSO) which outlines a process, effected by an entity's board of directors, management and other personnel, intended to achieve truthfulness declaration 'regarding the achieving of objectives in the following categories: a) Effectiveness and "efficiency of operations; b) Reliability of financial reporting; and c) Compliance with COSO regulations.

2.4 IMPORTANCE OF INTERNAL CONTROL

The Internal Revenue Service's Policies and procedures for its internal Audit division (Act2004) explains internal controls as procedures and policies that help financial managers to program their work in achieving preferred marks and revenue mobilization. Internal Control Systems are used by Accountants and managers as a means of measuring performances as against standards provided.

This is also applicable in the Ghana Health Service, Educational Institutions, public corporations to mention but a few. Internal control evolutions have become interest to public expectations of auditing standards. An auditor tries to sometimes avoid aggregating their roles that can affect performance.

A current consultation about the review of literature on internal control in accounting and management is an area of concerned goes beyond simple checking procedures. For instance, Thompson [1967], Ouchi and Maguire [1975], Ouchi [1977, 1979, 1980 and 1981], Boland and Pondy [1983], Mintzberg [1983], and Macintosh [1985] are all complex models for discussing internal controls. The historical also saw the need for changes in models of controls defined by Parker [1986a, 1986b, 1986c]. The trend is reflected in expert auditing standards, to develop terms such as “control environment”.

A newspaper which presented findings of a study of internal control conducted by professional Accountancy Bodies in the New Zealand, United Kingdom, United States and Australia was not to be left out of this content on the evolution of internal control. Internal o controls embodied are also in auditing standards under ICA standards.

2.5 COMPOSITION / COMPONENTS OF INTERNAL CONTROLS

Internal control varies differently from organisation to organisation depending on numerous issues, which include the scope, nature of operation, and mission of the organization. The internal control of a Polytechnic differs from the internal control of a community college. In addition, internal control of a hospital differs from that of a communication company. However, whatever the size, nature of operations, and objectives might be, certain features are common to the internal control of all organizations. According to Whittington and Pany (2004), internal controls of any organization include the controlling the environment, process of risk calculation,

accounting system important to consistent financial reporting, control activities as well as monitoring those activities.

2.6. THE CONTROL ENVIRONMENT

Based on COSO model 2004, control setting is measured as the base in which all other structures of the internal control exist. It provides improvement and planning of an organisation. It also consists of the conduct, responsiveness, rules, and actions of management and board members to attached importance relating to internal controls.

In Messier, Glover and Prawitt (2006) a report submitted indicates that the controlling the environment tis to pave way for an organization to encourage employees about the control awareness. It is the basis for other modules of internal control provide discipline and structure. To Castellan and Lightle (2005), also pointed out that the manner upsets company philosophy, by persuading top managers to react to situational forces. When submitting internal budget for a projected profit target. Control environments supported by the ethical approach for which superiors lays foundation that allows a system of internal control to prevent overriding them.

As emphasized by (Ghana Health Service Policies and Procedures Manual for the Internal Auditing Division of the service, 1998), "a strong general control environment serves to reinforce control procedure employed in activities/functions". It also pointed out that, controlling the environment refers to the ability and the idea to both administration the entire staff, as well as the way in which they carry out their duties.

Control environment consists of the actions, preparedness, procedures, and activities of management and the board of directors to attached importance on internal control systems. Messier, Glover and Prawitt (2006) submitted that the control environment sets the tone of an organization and it influences the control consciousness of employees. It is

the foundation for all other components of internal control providing discipline and structure.

Also to Whittington and Pany (2000) a report submitted indicates that several factors affecting the control surroundings are:

Honesty, moral values, pledge of proficiency, the board Audit committee and directors as well as Management's operating supervision and Organizational culture.

(I) Integrity and Moral Values

Organization must create developmental and moral values that would deter employees from engaging in act that would lead to fraud, immoral and unlawful conducts. These standards must be effectively communicated by suitable means, including official rules, codes of conduct and others as examples. They further pointed out that, in order to succeed in reducing the incidence of improper behaviours, management must observe the following:

Set the tone by example, demonstrate integrity and practice ethical behaviour.

Communicate to all employees that the same behaviour is expected of them. Let each employee know that he or she has a responsibility to report known or suspected violations to a higher level in the organization, and that violation will attract penalties.

Reduce incentives and temptations that will encourage individuals to engage in dishonest, illegal or unethical acts. Incentives for undesirable behaviour include placing undue emphasis on short-term results or on meeting unrealistic performance target, and offering bonus and profit sharing plans that, in absence of necessary control, might encourage fraudulent financial reporting practices. Examples of temptations include the absence of factors regarded as essential for a good control environment; for example, the

board of directors may be ineffective, or there may be a lack of clarity in the assignment of authority and responsibility.

Management can enforce ethical values by crafting and preserving a philosophy of truth and morals. Valuating the risk of deceit and instituting measures to controls may solve internal control risks.

. (II) Commitment to Competence

In Whittington and Pany (2000) report workers in every institution should have the understanding and abilities that would help to perform their duties properly. Management must provide staffs with some level of training programs on important topics in their particular areas of obligation. For instance, submitting monitory reportage, the aim derived in bigger public firms normally entail supper levels of capability on the portion of Chief Executive Officer and Finance Director. Finally, the description of job is also a means of describing tasks needed to perform that job.

(III) Audit Committee of the Board

Audit Committee are responsible in reviewing the work of management. They assist the management to ensure corporate governance and in the exercise of their main responsibilities. The audit committee of listed companies require that:

The audit committee should consist of at least three non-executive directors who are autonomous of management.

The members should have a wide range of business and professional skills.

The members should a have good understanding of the business yet should have had no recent involvement with direct management of the business.

The committee should have clear written terms of reference setting out its authority and its duties.

Clearly this can sometimes be difficult to achieve. However, the object is to create a committee which is competent to carry out its role, is independent and is free from bias. The key objective associated with the setting up of Audit Committees, from the point of view of corporate governance generally, is:

Published financial report which are of much interest to the public and free from material misstatements.

That apart Audit committee should set up measures in place and to act as independent of the Board and business supremacy which can value resources, mainly with degree maintaining fairness truthfulness of internal audit function (Millichamp& Taylor 2008, pp.18-19).

Ghana Health Service Internal Audit Division Manual (1998) submits their report that is concerned to responsibility of an Audit Committee it is also to mean that audit committees maintains and exercise a watchful oversight of the financial reporting and auditing activities of the service on behalf of the Council.

IV Management moral values and functions

According to Whittington and Pany (2004), management philosophy and operating style vary from one organization to another. Some managers are violent in economic reportage. They create pressure and expect higher earnings as well as making projections. Such managers will embark on risky areas with the intention of reaping profits. Others are conversional and danger opposed. These moral values differing functions of management may the overall consistency of preparing financial reports.

Reliance on informal face-to-face contacts with key managers versus a formal system of written policies, performance indicators and exception reports

Attitude towards information processing, accounting functions and personnel Management that appreciates effective controls prefers written policies, performance reports and exception reports as a way of controlling its various operating activities as opposed to verbal policies and face-to-face contact with employees.

(V) Organizational Structure

Whittington and Pany (2000) pointed out that an organizational structure adds more value in achieving organisational goals.

The organizational structure helps to divide responsibilities in line with authorizing events for record keeping for transactions and protection of properties assets. Organizational structure facilitates the assignment of authority to employees throughout the entity relating to their specific job functions. Through the organizational structure, explanations work carrier in which references are made and other associated task to perform available for employees thus empowering them to correct problems or implement improvements when it is appropriate.

Whittington and pany (2000) submitted that several factors upset the control atmosphere and this consist of truthfulness and moral values, promise assurance to fitness, Audit committee of the management boards, their attitude and functional style, legislative arrangements, Assigning duties and responsibility is a personnel practices.

2.6.1 Assessment of risk

For internal control purposes risk assessment is relevant for all firms. It forms part of forming an opinion for auditors base on which a report is made to management. The COSO framework cannot be overridden when performing an audit work.

Bies (2003) emphasized that effective risk management needs effective internal control. According to Bies (2003), risk assessment involves evaluation and identifying areas of fraud and mismanagement of organisation resources. Risk identifies potential areas that are necessary and of relevance to financial presentation.it is material for auditors to use controls in identifying high risky areas based non which a report is submitted to management.

2.6.2 Accounting Information System to Financial Reporting

Gyasi (2005) pointed out that accounting information system provides information about the financial resources to managers at all levels to facilitate sound economic decision making. The accounting system, which forms an integral part of the overall information system, provides managers with accurate, relevant, reliable, and comprehensive information needed to suit current decisions so as for managerial functions to accomplish in an organization.

Noordin (1997) submitted that irrespective of organisation nature and type considering whether private or public, management must should be alert to the rudiments of financial systems of controls. Information recorded is kept for a varying reason based on internal control implementation. Financial data are kept for a various reasons, and the main reason is to allow managers to run their firms more successful and competently. Bolten (2004) also stated that pertinent and reliable accounting data should be known recorded and presented on timely for decision makers to make reliable decisions. Recchiute (2001)

underscored that for any organization to operate efficiently, that organization must be able to classify, arrest and transfer outside and inside information from period to period which will afford the staffs to perform their major work. Properly communicating effectively to employees helps them to understand organisational structures.

Control Environment, Risk Assessment, Control Activities, Information and Communication Controls as well as monitoring of Controls are all elements of internal controls derived from COSO framework 2014 revised. .

2.6.2 Control Activities

According to Recchiuti (2001), the policies and procedures designed for information systems for management is established to provide reasonable assurance engagement aimed at attaining the objective of control environment.

COSO Report submitted in 1992 spelt out areas that are concern to business and firms managers to carry out their responsibilities. There is a clear indication that management at the top level generates that information for strategic decision-making purposes. There is also the need to be effectively communication with external parties mainly such as customers, suppliers, regulators and shareholders.

2.6.3 Types of Control Systems

2.6.3.1 Preventive Controls

It is a type of controls instituted to guess and avert errors, omissions and intentional act of operational and input. It comprises errors, omissions or hateful act from occurring except of such control will include appropriate separation of responsibilities access to physical facilities (George Spafford, 2005)

2.6.3.2 Detective Controls

These are controls types that spot that an omission and malicious act that has occurred .it is use mainly to locate mistakes and it occurrence. E.g. it comprises replica, examination and summations of periodic presentation reporting with inconsistencies in totals.

2.6.3.3 Corrective Control

These are set of pedals which seek reduce the effect of dangers associated with the source and remedying difficulties, exposed by detective controls. It involves at adjustment of standing and dealing with system(s) to reduce future incidences.

2.7 MONITORING

COSO frame work (1992) suggested that internal control systems need to be monitored in order to t evaluates the value of the system's presentation over time. This is to ensure that monitoring is an ongoing activity which occurs in the course of business operations. Monitoring includes regular management and supervision of activities, and inactions of personnel in performing their duties. The possibility and occurrence of distinct assessments will mainly depend on an assessment of risks and the effectiveness of monitoring procedures. Internal control deficiencies should be reported on timely, with serious issues reported to top management and the board.

2.8 EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Prior studies conducted such as Mensah, 2011; Abdullahi, 1997; Birabwa, 2012; Noorvee, 2006; Dandago and Suleiman 2005 as well as Karpoff 1996 and Boyle Edmund 2004 show the need for internal controls systems in the management of productive resources. Their findings revealed that management of public institutions cannot override internal controls systems and also internal controls policies are made known and communicated to employees to ensure it existence. Similarly prior studies by

Ibadan 2010, show the need for internal controls to ensures financial management of resources.

Internal controls cannot be overridden by management of institutions as documented to prior study conducted by Asika, (2008), which recommended that internal control mechanisms ensures the maintain ace of international standards as well as concluded by , Ikeja: Wiston 2006 in their prior studies..

Prior studies also in other countries also concluded by Salihu and Adama 2015 University also highlighted that internal controls exist in achievement of their objectives.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter three presents a technique which was followed in conducting the research. It deals with the study plan, study populace, the research sample and sampling procedures, the procedures followed in the data collection, data presentation and examination of facts.

3.2 THE RESEARCH DESIGN

This study looked into effectiveness internal control systems at Tamale Polytechnic. The descriptive research method was employed in the study. This was because the study attempts to give a clear picture of how effective the control systems were in the institution. The researchers chose the descriptive research because it helps to describe the actual condition of a situation at a particular point in time. Trochim (2006) champions qualitative research as a method to develop new ideas and study of phenomena in great details and understanding whereas quantitative research is to look for the ability to generalised data and information.

3.3 STUDY POPULATION

Population of a study is the elements or people to be studied and from whom data will be obtained. Again, it is the entire group of persons that have the characteristics that interest the researcher. The population for the study was all staff of Tamale Poly. The polytechnic staffs were categorized into senior members, older staff and lower grade staffs. Apart from these classifications, they are further grouped into academic and non-academic staff. The institution currently has a staff population of (525), which is made up of 203 academic staffs and 322 administrative staff. (Source: Tamale Polytechnic Planning Unit, 2015).

3.4 SAMPLE SIZE

The study focuses attention to the entire population particularly the administrative staff of the Polytechnic. However, due to limited time frame and financial constraint, a sample was selected. Selection of a part of a group to obtaining information about the population is known as sampling. The information needed could be obtained from those who were involved in monitoring and enforcing controls at the Polytechnic. Accordingly, the finance, internal audit, procurement and quality assurance departments were considered for the study. The table below depicts the distribution of the sampled *respondents*.

Table 3.1 This attribution of sample

Department	Number of Staff
Academic	10
<u>Non academic</u>	
Finance	16
Audit	11
Procurement	8
Quality Assurance	5
Total	50

Source: field survey 2015

Furthermore, ten (10) teaching staff member, who were not members of the expert departments, were also selected to be part of the sample. The reason for including these members was to compare their views with those involved in monitoring and enforcing control in the institution. This helped the study to have a true picture in the efficacy with internal control policies in an institution. The study sample was made up of fifty (50) respondents.

3.5 SAMPLING PROCEDURE

The researcher adopted the purposive sampling technique. The purposive sampling method for the non-academic staff or expert departments (audit, finance, procurement and quality assurance) and simple random sampling for the academic staff division. These was so because they are the key departments responsible for monitoring and enforcing controls, and were perceived by the researcher to have the information sought by the nature of the study. In purposive sampling, the selection of the sample was based on judgment of the researchers such that those selected are the key individuals who can give the information required for the study.

Also, the researchers selected ten (10) teachers who did not belong to the expert departments by the use of random sampling technique. The researchers used this technique because the respondents were asked general questions which did not require much experience. With this technique, the researchers questioned the people as and when they approached them in the institution.

3.6 TYPE OF DATA AND RECORD GARTHERING PROCESS

The methods applied for collecting primary information were the use of face to face interviews and questionnaire. This was so because the question method was said to be stable and had a uniform measure without variations. Again answers to questions on questionnaire enabled the study to find answers to research problems and also to achieve the objective of the study out of the fifty questionnaires distributed forty six (46) were return representing ninety-two (92) percent collection rate.

The study used structured interview method of three (3) administrative staff members. Face-to-face interview was conducted personally and in the language of respondent's

choice. This method was employed because the study wanted the respondents to feel free and express themselves and to compare responses with that of expert department.

There are two kinds of data – primary data and secondary data. This study largely used primary data. Primary data were collected from direct interview and administering of questionnaires. The study used the questionnaire method for the expert departments and the teaching staff. Again, the study conducted the face to face interview personally and in the English language. The interview method was employed because the study wanted respondents to freely express themselves and to compare their responses with that of expert respondents. The study used both opened- ended and closed – ended sets of questions. Because the researcher wanted to allow the respondents to freely bring out their views.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Analysis of data allowed the study to judge and assess out comes to attain lawful, significant and important decision. The retrieved questionnaires were critically read through to check for consistency in responses. The questionnaires were then coded so that similar responses were coded as one to aid easy analysis. Responses from respondents interviewed were also coded to aid the analysis. Statistical tools such as frequency table and percentages were used to present the data. Tables and figures were used to present the responses. However, some responses were only discussed without tables. The frequency table provided the synopsis of the data for easy understanding and comparison. The percentages addressed the relative frequencies of the data, and the table and figures were used to show diagrammatic representation of the responses.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTAION, ANALYSIS AND DISCURSIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This study section deals with the presentation, examinations and discussion of results collected from field. Bell (2004) reiterated that regardless of the means used to collect data, the raw data collected serve little or no purpose unless analysed and interpreted. The chapter deals with an overview of the demographic characteristics of respondents and then the responses from which are presented in line with the research question.

4.2 DEMOGRAPH OF RESPONDENTS

This section talks about the demographic characteristics of staff of the polytechnic according to their gender, category of staff ,their working period and level of education and how long they have worked at the polytechnic.

Table 4.1 Category of gender.

Sex of Respondent

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Male	33	71.7	71.7	71.7
Female	13	28.3	28.3	28.3
Total	46	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Based on the data responses gathered, majority of them who answered were 71.7% made up male and 28.3% represented females. Similarly it can be concluded that 80%. This means that, males are the dominant staffs in most institutions and contributed a fair view on how gender perceives internal controls in the Polytechnic.

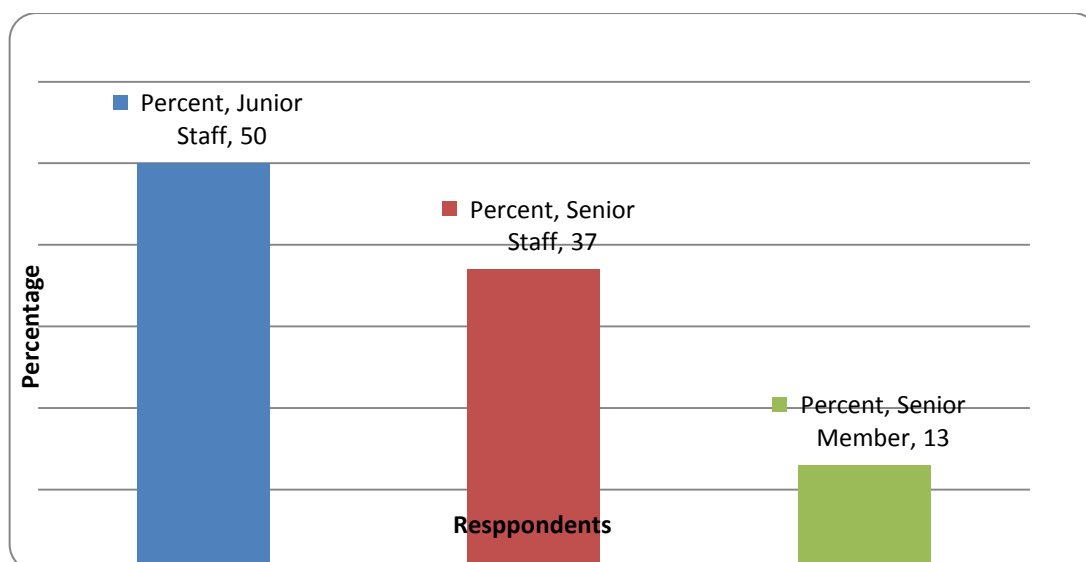


Figure 4.1.1 Category of Staff

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Looking at the figure 4.1.1 above, majority of the respondents were junior staff representing 50%, followed by senior staff representing 37% and lastly 13% represent senior member. It can be seen from the figure that the junior staffs dominate the entire institution.

Table 4.2 Level of Education

	Frequency	Percent
HND	11	23.9
First Degree	30	65.2
Second Disagree	5	10.9
Total	46	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Table 4.2 shows that eleven (11) respondents representing 23.9% were HND graduates, thirty (30) respondents representing 65.2% are first degree holders and five (5) respondents which represent 10.9% are second degree holders. From the table it can be said that majority of the staff members are first degree holders who are working in the

institution.

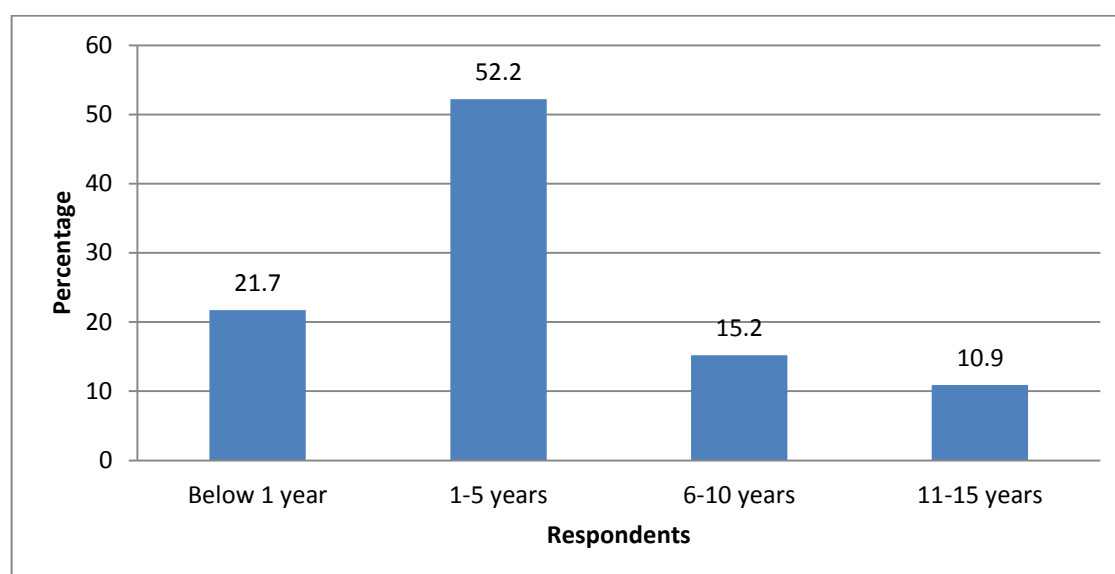


Figure 4.1.2 work period

Source: Field Survey, 2015

According to the Figure 4.1.2 majority respondents which representing 52.2% have between one and five years' experience in the employment, 21.7% have worked below 1 year, 15.2% have worked between 6-10 years and 10.9 % also represent respondents who have worked above ten years. It can be concluded that most of the respondents were staffs who have worked above 5years in the institution.

4.2.1 Internal control consistent to international standards

This section examines the extent to which the internal controls adhered by the Tamale Polytechnic are in consistent to t6he international standards such as the COSO framework generally known and other Laws applicable to internal controls in Ghana. Findings concluded truly that the Polytechnic maintains their records to such standards. This can also be proven in a research conducted by Salihu Alihu 2015 of Nigeria. Below are Analysis and discursions to those objectives

Table 4.3: The Polytechnic has purely autonomous audit committee which the internal audit unit reports to.

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	19	41.3
Agree	21	45.7
Strongly Disagree	2	4.3
Disagree	4	8.7
Total	46	100.

Source: Field Survey, 2015

From Table 4.3, nineteen (19) respondents representing 41.3% strongly approves the existence of audit committee in the institution which reviews report and twenty one of the respondents which represent 45.7% agreed to this assertion. Six (6) respondents representing 13% disagree. This implies that the respondents confirmed there is an audit committee in the polytechnic.

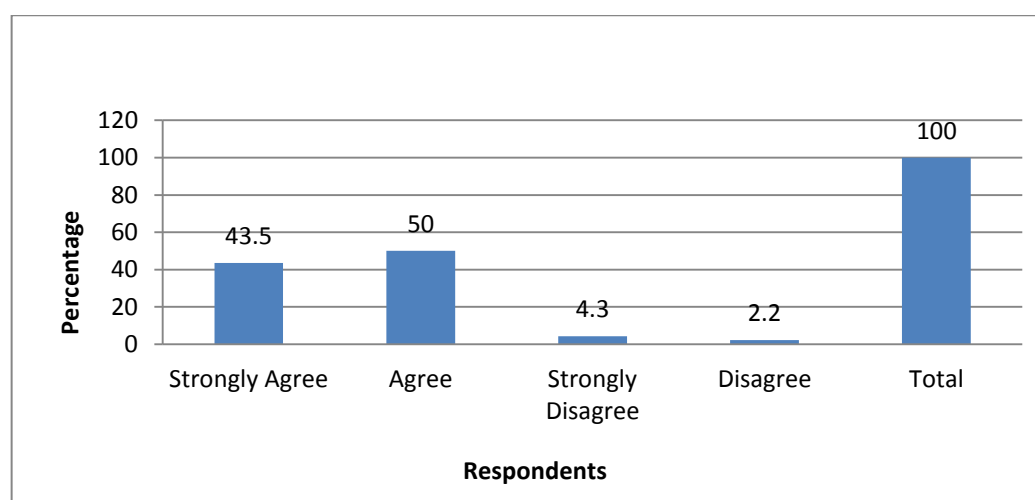


Figure 4.1.3 Financial records are prepared based on the international Accounting standard

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Majority of respondents in figure 4.1.3 established that financial records are prepared base on international accounting standard. 93.5% agreed that fiscal accounts are ready to

the global accounting customary, while 6.5% powerfully upset. This implies that the institution's economic events are maintained on a reliable base to meet the world-wide accounting average (COSO framework).

Table 4.4 Level of Independency by internal audit unit in conducting their roles.

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	9	19.6
Agree	33	71.7
Strongly Disagree	1	2.2
Disagree	3	6.5
Total	46	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Table 4.4 indicates that about 91.3% of respondents approved the fact that the internal audit unit is fair in the discharge of their work. Four of the respondents representing 8.7% also disagreed that. This concludes that the internal audit department is being objective in carrying out their work.

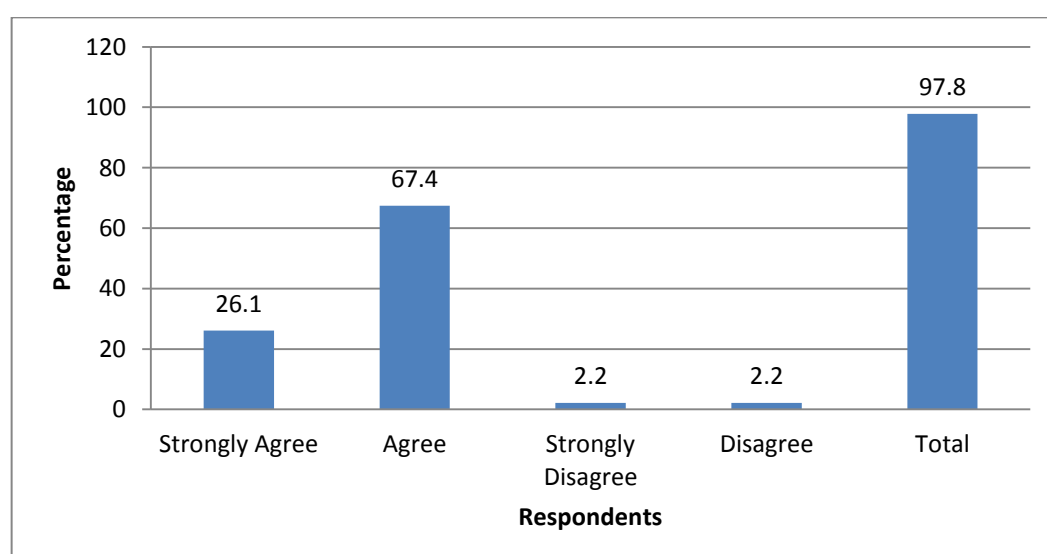


Figure 4.1.4 There is effective organization structure that shows lines of authorities

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Majority of respondents in figure 4.1.4 representing 93.5% agreed that there is effective organisational structure that shows line of authority and about 4.4% of the respondents disagreed that the institution have effective organisational structure that shows line of authority in the polytechnic. This implies that control structures exist in the institution.

Table 4.5: Management periodically reviews the control activities to ensure whether they are working to perfection

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	16	34.8
Agree	15	32.6
Strongly Disagree	6	13.0
Disagree	9	19.6
Total	46	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2015

From Table 4.5 sixteen respondents representing 67.4% strongly agree and fifteen (15) respondents also agreed that management periodically reviews the control activities to ensure whether they are working to perfection. six (6) of them strongly disagree and nine (9) out of the forty six respondents disagree representing 32.6%. From this analysis, it can be said that the institution's management periodically reviews the control activities to ensure whether they are working to perfection, taking into consideration the majority view point of the respondents.

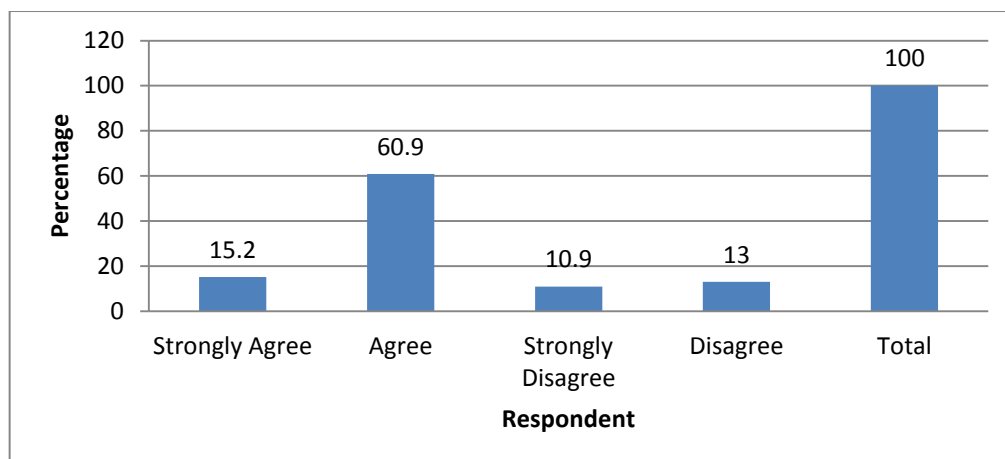


Figure 4.1.5 Effective Control Environment

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Majority of respondents in Figure 4.1.5 representing about 76.1%, agreed that there is effective control environment to address control activities. 23.9% disagree to that assertion. From the figure above indeed there is effective control environment to address control activities in the polytechnic

Table 4.6 No payments are made without supporting document (s)

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	24	42.1
Agree	16	34.8
Strongly Disagree	3	11.5
Disagree	3	11.5
Total	46	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2015

From Table 4.6 above out of the 46 respondents interviewed 40 of them representing 76.9%, agreed that no payment is made without supporting document whiles 23.0% respondents disagreed. This clarifies that no payment are made in the polytechnic without supporting document in the institution.

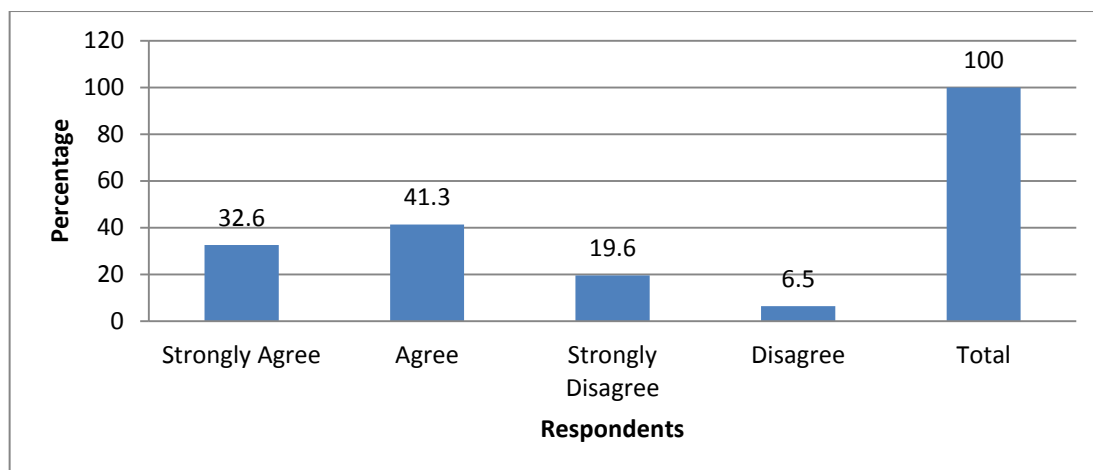


Figure 4.1.6 There is proper Authorization for every transaction.

Source: Field Survey, 2015

The figure above indicates that 73.9% of respondents agreed that there is proper authorization for every transaction, 26.1% disagreed. This can concluded that internal control policies exist, looking at the percentage of respondents gathered.

Table 4.7: The examination of internal control by the internal audit unit from period to period assess if they work in perfection.

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	13	28.3
Agree	24	52.2
Strongly Disagree	4	8.7
Disagree	5	10.9
Total	46	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2015

From Table 4.7 revealed in the research that 80.5% agreed that the internal audit department test the control from time to time, 19.6%disagreed. This is to conclude that the internal audit department at polytechnic examines the controls period to period time to determine how effectively and efficiently they work.

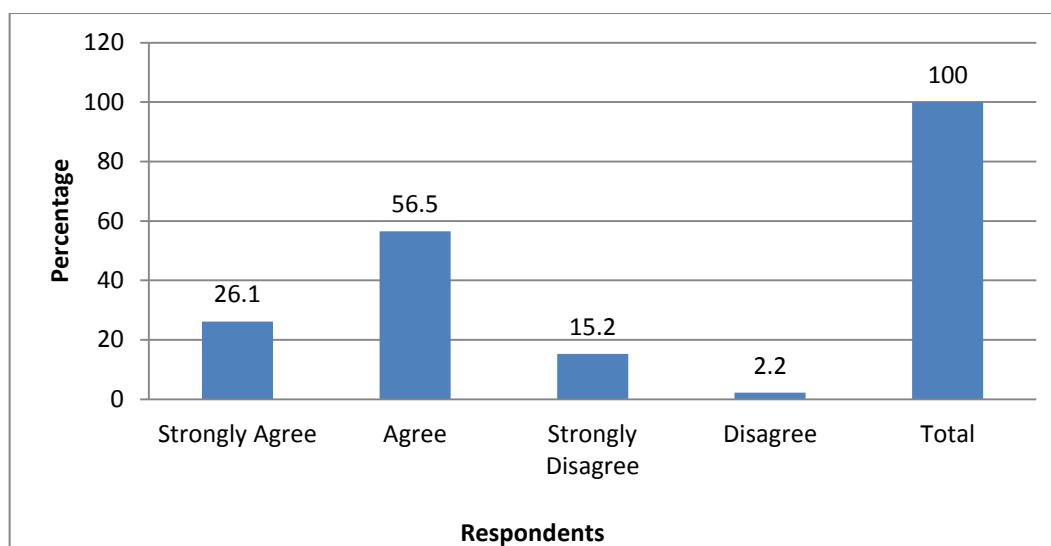


Figure 4.1.7: The Institution do gives notice to the banks for any staff allowed to perform bank transactions.

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Majority of the respondents as showed in figure 4.1.8, agreed representing (82.6%) that, the bank is quickly been notified if there is a change of staff that is to be authorized to perform bank transaction, 17.4% disagreed. Majority of the respondents affirms to that assertion.

Table 4.8 Internal Control System is an on-going process with no time specification.

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	7	15.2
Agree	22	47.9
Strongly Disagree	3	6.5
Disagree	14	30.4
Total	46	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Table 4.8 reveal about 63.1% agreed to the fact that internal control system is an on-going process with no time specification, while 36.9% disagreed to that assertion. It clears from the study that employees of very institution are aware that internal control systems

is not one off activity.

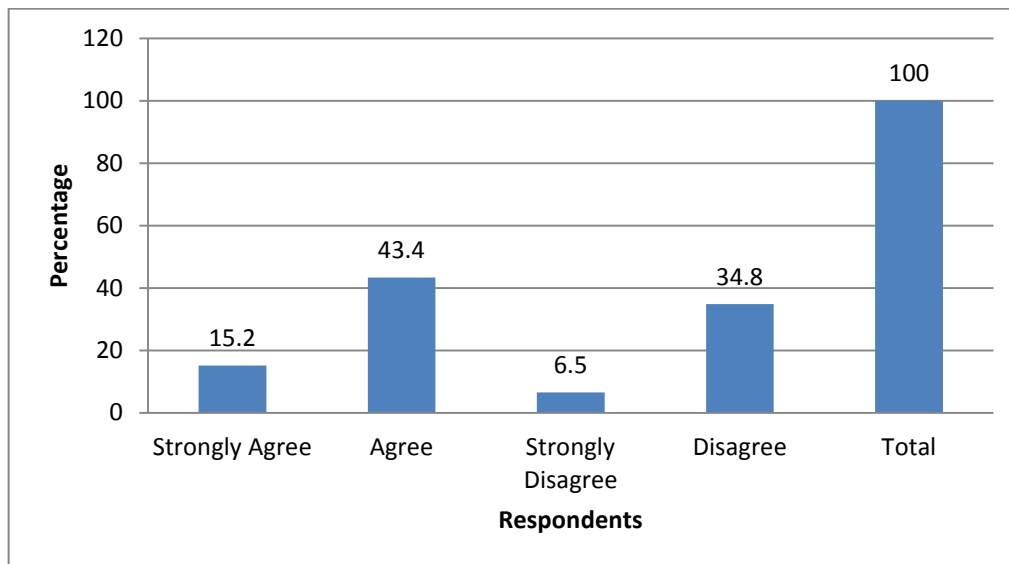


Figure 4.1.8 The employees are comfortable with the internal control systems

Source: Field Survey, 2015

The figure above indicate about 58.6% agreed that employees' attitude were comfortable with the internal control system, 41.3% disagreed to that matter. This can be concluded that staffs of the polytechnic are comfortable with any internal controls put in place.

Table 4.9: Employees have sufficient knowledge of control procedures applicable to their duties

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	11	23.9
Agree	30	65.2
Strongly Disagree	3	6.5
Disagree	2	4.3
Total	46	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Table 4.9 shows that 89.1% agreed that employee has sufficient knowledge of control procedures applicable to their duties, whiles of about 10.8% disagreed to the response. It is clear from the study that there are control procedures that are adhered to all employees

of every institution of study.

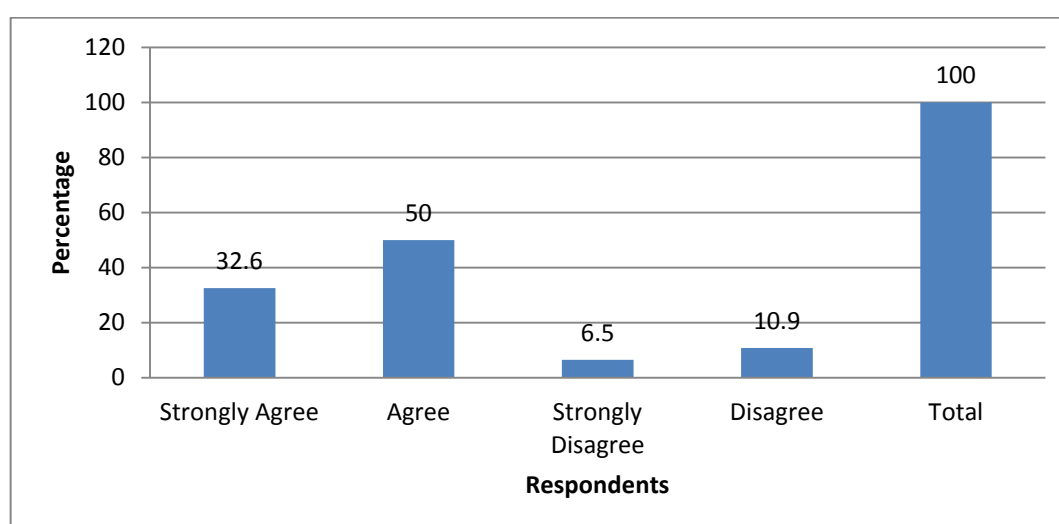


Figure 4.1.9: Management communicates to staff members of new internal control policies or Procedures

Source: Field Survey, 2015

The figure above indicates that 82.6% of respondents agreed to the fact that management communicates to staffs about new internal control policies creating their awareness of it, 17.4% disagree. This indicates that communication of controls policies are timely done to avoid errors occurring in the institution.

Table 4.10: Staff Activities are strictly supervised by their Heads of Departments

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	13	28.3
Agree	26	56.5
Strongly Disagree	5	10.9
Disagree	2	4.3
Total	46	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2015

From Table 4.11 it explains about 84.8% of respondents agreed that staff activities are strictly supervised by their various Heads of Departments, while 15.2%, disagreed. This

is clear from the study that there is a principle of chain of command in the institution.

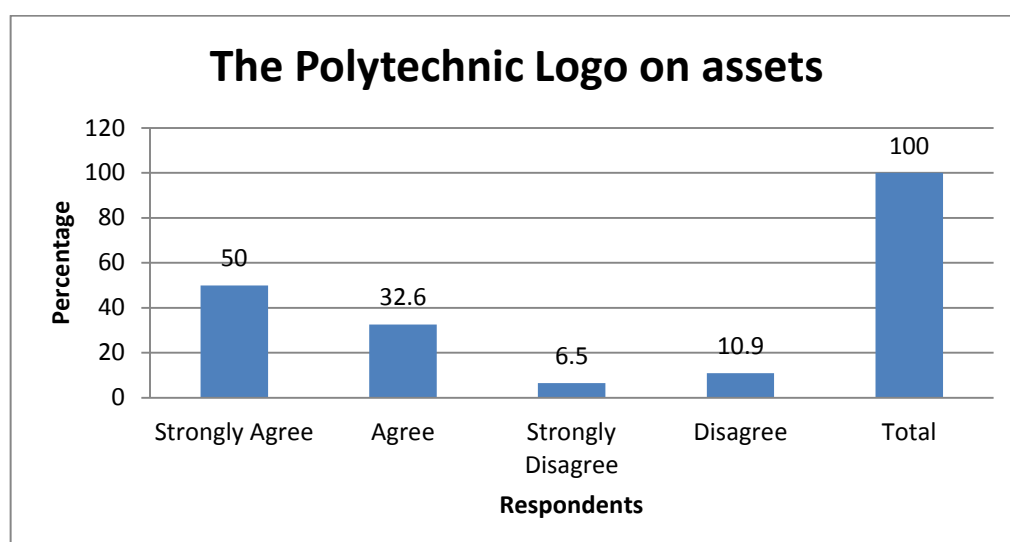


Figure 4.1.10 the polytechnic has its logo embossed on all assets.

Source: Field Survey, 2015

The figure showed above indicates 82.6 % who agreed that the polytechnic has its logo embossed on all assets. 17.4% disagreed to that fact. Based on the responses gathered most polytechnics has their logo embossed on all their tangible properties.

Table 4.11: The rector Authorizes all Payments after approval by Internal Auditor.

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	22	47.8
Agree	20	43.5
Strongly Disagree	1	2.2
Disagree	3	6.5
Total	46	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2015

From Table 4.12 it indicates 91.3% of the respondents approved that the rector allows all payments after approval by internal auditor. 8.7% disagreed. From the respondents, it is concluded that most institutions make payments based on rightful authorization and approval.

Table 4.12: All management request are certified by the Internal audit unit

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	11	23.9
Agree	25	54.3
Strongly Disagree	2	4.3
Disagree	8	17.4
Total	46	100.0

Source: Field survey 2015

From Table 4.14 shown above 78.2% agreed that, all management requests are certified by the internal audit unit before it is been granted. About 21.7% on the other hand disagreed. It is clear from the respondents to conclude that institutions comply with the procedures use in the public procurement Act.

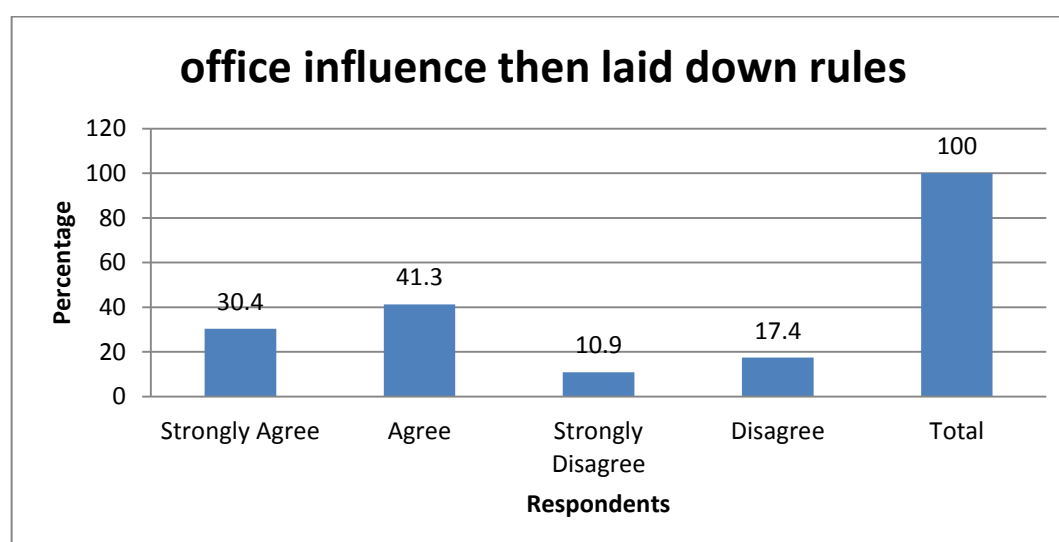


Figure 4.1.11: Management at times perform activities without duly ensuring the laid down instructions.

Source: Field Survey, 2015

From the research conducted 71.7%, of organisations now and then use their locus to perform activities not resulting to lay down instructions. 28.3% 9% disagreed on the other

hand. From the study there is the need to supervise the work of employees in most institutions of study not to disregard internal controls.

Table 4.13: The Institution prohibits the overriding of Controls by Managements

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	8	17.5
Agree	27	58.6
Strongly Disagree	5	10.9
Disagreed	6	13.0
Total	46	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2015

From table 4.15 76.10% agreed to the institution prohibiting the overriding of controls by managements. 23.9% Disagreed. From the study conducted most institutions do not allow the override of control policies put in place.

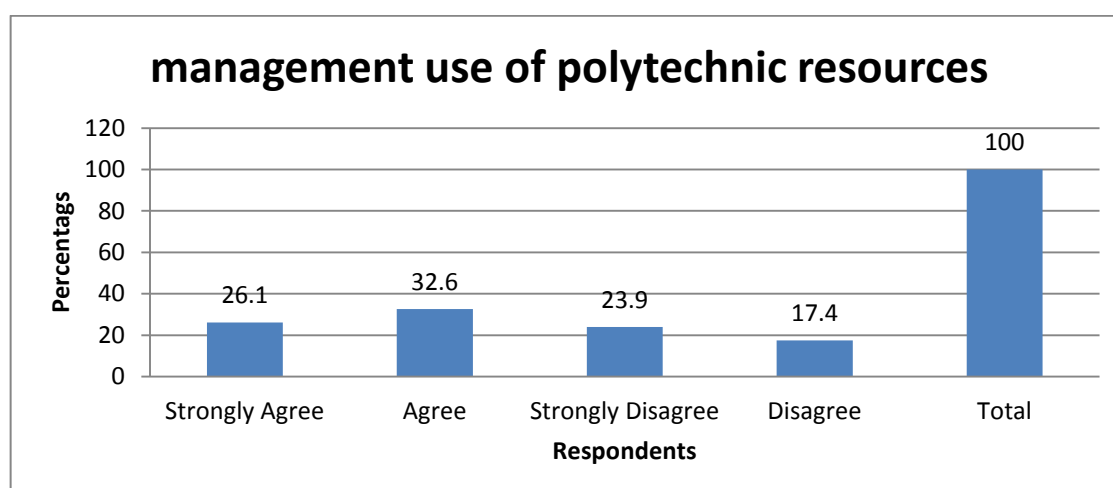


Figure 4.1.12: Management sometimes use the Polytechnic resources for their personal interests

Source: Field survey, 2015

The figure above indicates that 57.7% agreed that Management sometimes use the Polytechnic resources for their personal interests. 41.3% Disagreed.

This concludes from the study that majority of the respondents attested to fact that most

employees in some institutions some time profits from institution resources.

Table 4.14: Duties of Staff are Adequately Segregated

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	9	19.6
Agree	28	60.9
Strongly Disagree	3	6.5
Disagree	6	13.0
Total	46	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2015

From the table above indicates that 80.5% agreed that duties of staff are adequately segregated, while 19.5% disagreed. This can be said that management of polytechnics discharges their role and responsibilities accordingly.

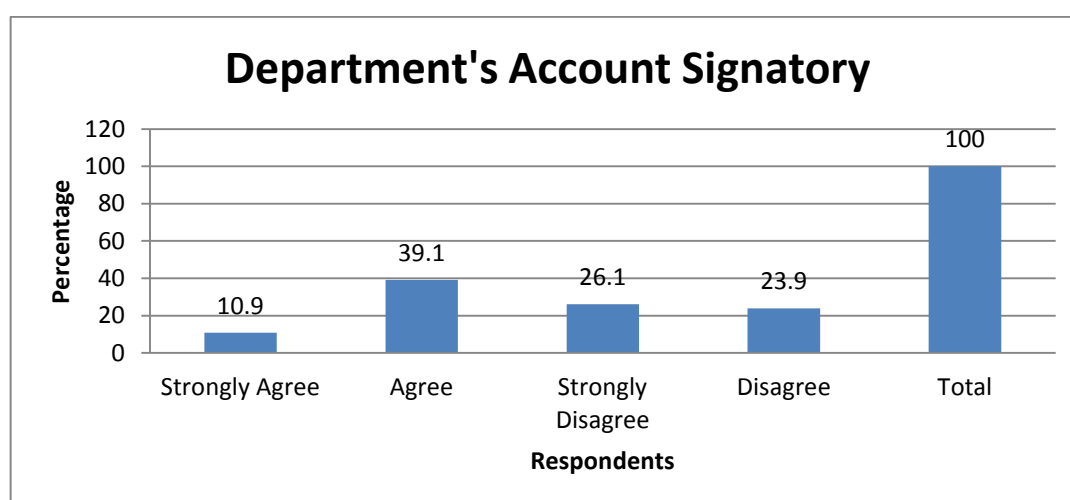


Figure 4.1.13: there is only one signatory to the department's account.

Source: Field Survey, 2015

The figure above indicates that 50.0% agreed that there is only one signatory to the department's account. 50.0% disagreed. Based on the respondents, employees are aware that every account in institution must have signatories to it.

4.2.2 Management overrides internal control

This section examines whether or not Management of the Polytechnic overrides the internal control systems. Findings revealed that management do not over ride internal controls as similar to a research conducted by W. Birabwa 2012.below is the Analysis.

Table 4.15: Payment Vouchers are supported with receipts.

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	22	47.8
Agree	22	47.8
Strongly disagree	1	2.2
Disagree	1	2.2
Total	46	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Table 4.17above 95.6% agreed that payment vouchers are supported with receipts. 4.4% disagreed to that fact.it is clear from the table that payments made in most institutions are supported with relevant documents suitable for internal audit purposes.

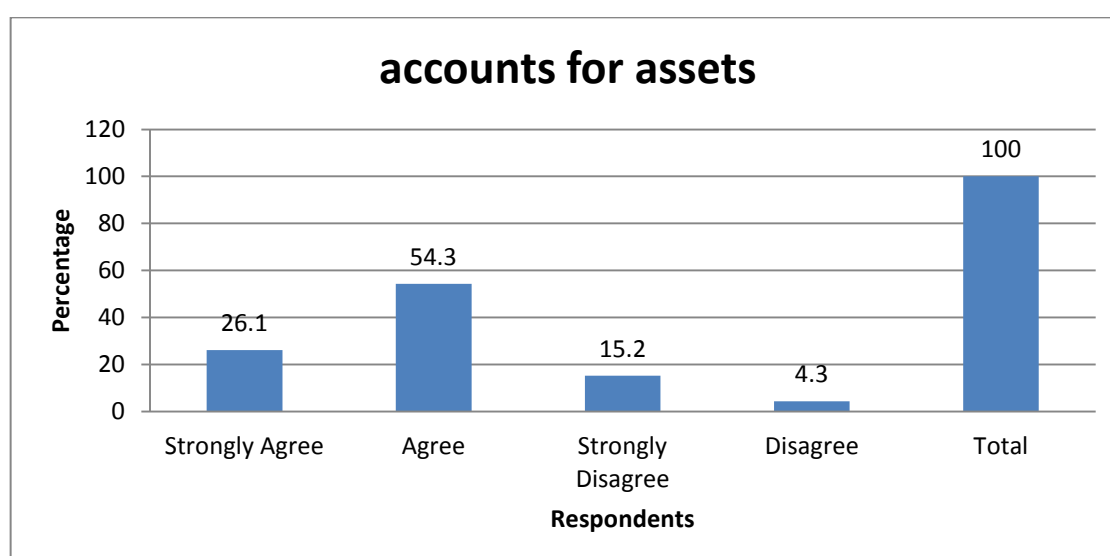


Figure 4.1.14: the polytechnic outline measures for ensuring the additions, disposals and transfers of properties.

Source: Field Survey, 2015

From the figure shown above, Out of the respondents 80.4% approved in the study that measures dwelling around adding properties, disposals then transfers were considered.19.5% disagree. It is a clear indication that the polytechnic adhere to the International Accounting Standards with regards to disposal additions and transfer of all fixed assets.

Table 4.16: All cash received are Accounted for.

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	11	23.9
Agree	28	60.9
Strongly disagree	7	15.2
Disagree	nil	0
Total	46	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Table 4.18 above concludes that 84.8% responded all cash received are accounted for. **Nil** disagree and 15.2%disagreed. From the study, it can be concluded most institutions account for proceed of all cash and payable to the bank.

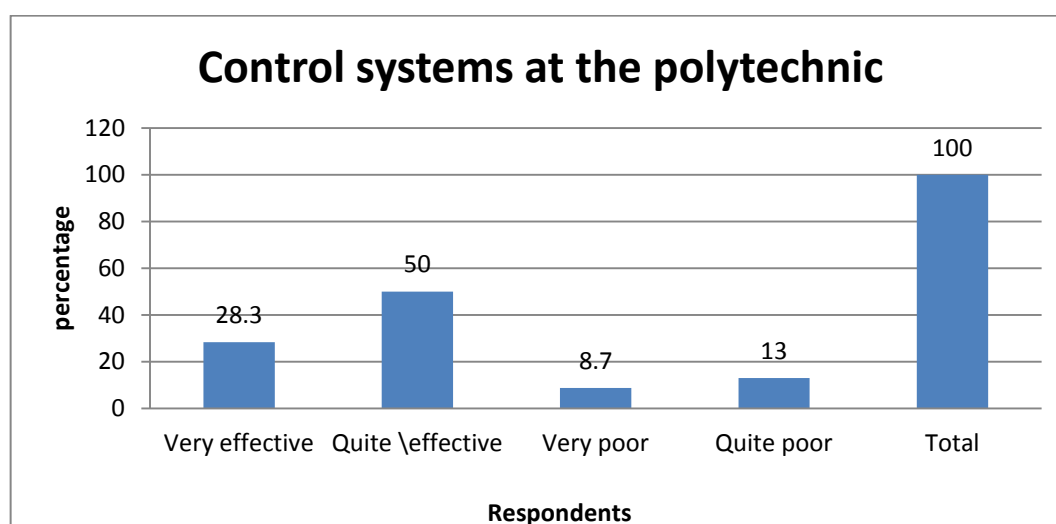


Figure 4.1.15: How do you assets the control systems at the Polytechnic?

Source: Field Survey, 2015

From the figure above, 78.3% of the respondents stated and that the control system at the polytechnic are quite and very effective. 21.3% said very poor and quite poor. Purely respondents agreed that controls exist in every institution and working effectively to achieve an objective.

4.2.3 Internal control existence in the polytechnic

This section was to establish the extent to which internal systems existed at the polytechnic and how they are directed towards achieving their stated objectives. Below is the analysis and discussions to such objective.

Table 4.17: The control system at the Polytechnic are directed towards which of the following?

		Frequency	Percent
i. To conduct business in an ordinary and effective manner	YES	24	52.2
	NO	22	47.8
ii. Adherence to internal policies	YES	30	65.0
	NO	14	35.0
iii. Safeguarding assets	YES	26	56.5
	NO	20	43.5
iv. Prevention and detection of fraud and error	YES	28	60.8
	NO	16	34.2
v. Accuracy and completeness of financial records	YES	32	69.5
	NO	16	30.5

Source: Field Survey, 2015

From the table above 52.2% of the respondents said Yes to the fact that the control system has resulted to effective conduct of business.47.8% responded No.65.0% responded Yes that the internal control at polytechnic are directed towards achieving it intended objective and adherence to internal control policies.35.0% said No.65.5% responded Yes that the internal controls is able to safeguard assets, whiles 43.5% said

No. 60.8% said were certain that polytechnic can affirm to discovery of deceit. 34.2% said No. For accuracy and completeness of financial records, 69.5% said yes and 30.5% said no. This can be concluded that internal controls in the polytechnic exist to achieve its intended purpose.

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CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews all the research results made, draws conclusion on them and finally make recommendation.

5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The research sought to describe the internal control polices at Tamale Polytechnic. The findings of the research revealed that the internal control policies that exist in the Polytechnic include strict supervision by heads of departments, authorization by the rector and adequate segregation of staff duties. Also the study revealed that all cash received are accounted for, and all payments are supported with valid receipts. .

Secondly, the research sought to find out if the employees in the Polytechnic are aware of the internal control policies. The findings of the research revealed that, employees are aware of the fact that the Polytechnic has an internal audit department and they are comfortable with it. Again, the study revealed that employees have sufficient knowledge of control procedures applicable to their duties.

That apart, the research sought to examine if the extent to which internal controls system has achieve its intended objectives in the Polytechnic. The findings of the research revealed that payments are supported with documents, proper authorization and segregation of the staff duties. However, the findings also indicated that, though internal audit department tests control policies for perfection, their bankers are notified of any change of staff assigned to transact banking duties.

Again, the study revealed that, the control policies of the Polytechnic are quite effective and are mainly directed towards avoidance and recognition of error or fraud.

The research also sought to find out if management override the internal control systems. The findings in this research revealed that management makes payment with supporting documents, management requests are certified by the internal audit unit and that the Polytechnic even prohibits overriding of control activities by management. On the other hand, the findings indicated that management in the institution are task oriented who would not always follow the laid down rules to get work done, and also use the Polytechnic's resources for their personal interest.

Finally, the research sought to find out if the internal control systems are consistent with international standards (COSO framework). The study revealed that the Polytechnic has an independent audit committee and also that financial report is prepared to meet global accounting standard. The study has shown that strong control environment exists to address control activities.

5.3 CONCLUSION

From the study, it is resolved that Tamale Polytechnic has well designed control system to guide its operations. Though the institution prohibits the overriding of controls, according to the study, the findings identified that management is task oriented and sometimes use positions to get work done without following the laid down rules. This study supports the works of the Tread Way Commission (1985), that top management must create a control environment and that the audit committee reviews management work as well as the internal audit role creating an atmosphere of control within the organization. In the whole, even though there have been few departments from effectively implementing internal controls in Tamale Polytechnic, the researcher concludes that internal control systems to an extent are effective in the institution

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Although good internal control can be expensive, the cost involved would be offset by the benefit to be received from it such as protection of assets and prevention of errors.

The following are the recommendation for the management of Tamale Polytechnic.

The management of the Polytechnic should as matter of urgency emboss the Polytechnic's name on all assets and update the fixed asset register thereon to safeguard all assets against pilfering and other irregularities.

The internal audit team of the Polytechnic should develop structure and consistent visits to all areas of the institution in order to keep all employees alert so as to eliminate any hidden transactions that may affect the institution's aims and objectives.

Management should always communicate to their bankers of any staff involved in banking activities whose appointment has been terminated. This would ensure that employees do not perform bank transactions unknowingly to the management of the Polytechnic. Systems of controls are well-known by managers that help them carry out business in a proper way. The management at Tamale Polytechnic should use their position to set good example by following the laid down procedures set by them so as to attain the aims and missions of the institution.

Since the internal auditor is appointed by management and for that matter forms part of management team, his duties could be influenced by management. However, the Polytechnic council should ensure a strong review agency for checking activities of the department of internal audit. Again, since the Polytechnic is a government institution, the Audit Report Implementation Committee set by the law should be up and doing.

The organizational structure in the Polytechnic should clearly show each person's role and the authorities required to perform those roles. The lines of authority should be clearly stated so that employees would know whom to report to or take instruction from in the Polytechnic.

Finally, Tamale Polytechnic should invest in computerizing most of its manual operations especially at the finance department. This would involve the acquisition of computers and various soft wares that would complement and facilitate smooth delivery of service to their services users.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STAFF

This questionnaire is purposely designed to obtain information on the topic “Assessing the Effectiveness of Internal Control Systems in Public Institutions – A case study of Tamale Polytechnic”. This dissertation is part of the requirement for the award of Masters in Business Administration. The researcher would appreciate if you could provide candid response to the items in the questionnaire. Confidentiality in respect of whatever information you give is fully assured.

Thanks for your co-operation.

SECTION A:

PERSONAL DATA OF RESPONDENTS

Please tick [☐] or write as appropriate

1. Sex of respondent: (a) Male [☐] (b) Female [☐]
2. Category of Staff (a) Junior Staff [☐] (b) Senior Staff [☐] (c) Senior Member [☐]
3. Level of education: (a) HND [☐] (b) First Degree [☐] (c) Second Degree [☐]
(d) Others [☐] Please Specify-----
4. Which department do you work with? -----
5. How long have you worked with the institution?
(a) Below 1 year [☐] (b) 1-5 years [☐] (c) 6- 10 years [☐] (d) 11- 15 years [☐]
(e) 16-20 years [☐] (f) Above 20 years

SECTION B

INTERNAL CONTROL CONSISTENT TO INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS.

Control systems are the policies and procedures designed to ensure that management directives are effectively implemented (Millichamp& Taylor, 2008). Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each of the statements below (COSO framework).

The scale is 1 to 4 where 1 = strongly Agree; 2 = Agree; 3 = strongly Disagree

S/N STATEMENT. standard variable		STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE
		1	2	3	4
Q6	The Polytechnic has an independent audit committee to which the internal audit department reports.				
Q7	Financial records are prepared on consistent basis to meet the international accounting standard				
Q8	The internal audit department is independent and objective in the conduct of its duties.				
Q9	There is effective organizational structure that shows lines of authorities.				
Q10	Management periodically reviews the control activities to ensure whether they are working to perfection.				
Q11	There is effective control environment to address control activities.				
Q12	No payments are made without Supporting document(s).				
Q13	There is proper authorization for Every transaction.				
Q14	The internal audit department tests the controls from time to time to ascertain if they are working to perfection.				
Q15	There is adequate segregation of staff duties.				

Q16	The Polytechnic's bankers are quickly notified of any change of staff that is authorized to perform bank transactions				
Q17	Internal control system is an ongoing process with no time specification.				
Q18	The employees are comfortable with the internal control systems.				
Q19	Employees have sufficient knowledge of control procedures applicable to their duties				
Q20	Management communicates to staff members of new internal control policies or procedures introduced.				

SECTION C

MANAGEMENT OVERRIDING THE INTERNAL CONTROLS

S/N Statement		Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree
		1	2	3	4
Q24	All management requests are certified by the internal audit unit.				
Q25	Management sometimes use their positions to get work done without following the laid down rules				
Q26	The institution prohibits the overriding of controls by management.				
Q27	Management sometimes uses the Polytechnic resource for their personal interests.				
Q28	There is only one signatory to the Department's account.				
Q29	Payment vouchers are supported With receipts.				
Q30	There are procedures in place to ensure that assets additions, disposals and transfers are Accounted for.				
Q31	All cash received are accounted For.				

SECTION D

INTERNAL CONTROL SYSTEMS IN THE POLYTECHNIC

Q34 How do you assess the control systems at the Polytechnic?

- (a) Very effective ☐ (b) Quite effective
(c) Very poor ☐ (d) Quite poor

Q35. The control systems at the Polytechnic are directed towards which of the following?

- i. The internal control system has resulted in effective conduct of business

Yes ☐ No ☐

- ii. The implementation has made it possible for the polytechnic to adhere to internal control policies

Yes ☐ No ☐

- iii. The polytechnic is able to safeguard assets base on internal control policies.

Yes ☐ No ☐

- iv. The internal control policies is able to prevent and detect fraud and errors

Yes ☐ No ☐

- v. The implementation of controls on the polytechnic is accurate and complete in the keeping of financial records

Yes ☐ No ☐

ASSESSING INTERNAL CONTROL SYSTEMS IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS (A CASE STUDY OF TAMALE POLYTECHNIC)

ORIGINALITY REPORT

11%	8%	4%	9%
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3	Submitted to Ghana Technology University College Student Paper	1%
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