

# **EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ADMINISTRATION OF A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTE IN THAILAND.**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The study was aimed to investigate the relationship between the numbers of the members of the Educational Quality Assurance Committees of a higher education institute in Thailand and the assessment points earned, the operational levels of educational quality administration, the correlation between educational quality administration and the educational quality standard, the influence of educational quality administration on the educational quality assessment. The sample groups consisted of 201 members of the Educational Quality Assurance Committees of eight subject groups. Data obtained from returned questionnaires were analyzed and expressed as percentage, mean, standard deviation, Pearson's product moment correlation and multiple regressions at the significance level of 0.05. The research findings showed that the less or more number of the members of the Educational Quality Assurance Committees did not have any effects on the assessment points earned. Educational quality administration operations of a higher education institution in Thailand, ranging from more to less, included planning, transparency in administration, organizational structure, administrative process, budget, legal aspect, and general administration management. The standard quality of graduates was correlated with general administration management, and academic service standard was correlated with planning, organizational structure and environment of development administration, legal aspect, budget, administrative process, general administration management, and transparency in administration. In addition, cultural promotion standard was correlated with planning, organizational structure and environment of development administration, legal aspect, budget, administrative process, general administration management, transparency in administration, and planning. Institutional and personnel development standard was correlated with planning, organizational structure and environment of development administration, legal aspect, budget, administrative process, transparency in administration, and planning.

**Keywords:** Educational quality administration, a higher education institute in Thailand.



## INTRODUCTION

The existing Thailand's educational system is still unable to respond properly to an increase in international competitiveness of the country. In 1994, some businessman predicted that Thailand's economy would fall into crisis in 1997, and the prediction came true by that year because of the lack of awareness of the imminent crisis and untimely preparation in the Thai society. Thailand's educational system did not lead to proper preparation among Thai people (Ketudat, 2005). To this extent, Nakornthap (1997) voiced his comments from his previous research findings that the number of students was increased, whereas resources were remained unchanged or increased only slightly, thus resulting in the insufficient resource allocation.

Higher education serves as a main mechanism for producing highly efficient workforce. Research undertaking for creating new knowledge and technology for national development and upgrading international competitiveness requires development of educational quality in graduate production, research, academic services and cultural promotions. Higher education would subsequently serve as an efficient mechanism for guiding national development (Office of the National Education Commission, 2003). The recent Uruguay Rounds of Trade Negotiations of the World Trade Organization (WTO) urged Thailand to liberalize its local educational services, which, in effect, would lead to greater competition from inside and outside the country. In a broader extent, it would be essential to immediately strengthen the quality of educational services in Thailand (The Office of the National Education Standards and Quality Assessment [ONESQA], 2004).

In the first quality assessment by ONESQA on October 14, 2005, one of higher education institutes in Thailand achieved the assessment results at an "attempt" level (attempting to upgrade educational quality at a standard level) (ONESQA, 2005). In the second quality assessment, during August 1-6, 2006, the External Quality Assessment Committee of ONESQA assessed the overall

educational quality of the given higher education institute in Thailand at the average rate of 3.80 (ONESQA, 2006).

The third round external assessment is scheduled during 2011-2015. Consequently, the author has an interest to conduct this research to find out the appropriate administrative patterns in the second round to be used as guidelines for the upcoming third-round educational quality administration in order to achieve higher assessment points than what were earned in the second round.

The objectives of this research were aimed to study the correlation between the number of members of Educational Quality Assurance Committees of one of higher education institutes in Thailand and the assessment points earned, the operational level of educational quality administration, the correlation between educational quality administration and educational quality standards, and the influence of educational quality administration on the educational quality assessment results of the given higher education institute in Thailand.

## Research hypotheses

Educational quality administration, concerning planning, organizational structure and environment, legal aspect, budget, administrative process, general administration management, and transparency in administration is related to educational quality standards.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Population

Population included 286 members of 21 Educational Quality Assurance Committees of a higher education institution in Thailand, classified as eight subject groups and as Educational Quality Assurance Committee of each faculty during the second round external educational quality assessment, during 2006-2010. The sampling groups included 78 members of Health Science group, 64 members of Physical Science group, 12 members of Engineering group, 10 members of Business Administration



group, 16 members of Education group, 18 members of Fine Arts group, 32 members of Humanities and Social Sciences group, and 56 members of Interdisciplinary group. The sample size was calculated using the formula:  $n = N / (1 + N [e]^2)$  with the level of error was allowed at 0.05. Thus, the total sample was equivalent to  $286 / 1 + 286 (0.05)^2 = 166$  persons. However, the author added 35 more subjects to make the total of 201 persons in order to achieve the sample size in excess of 200 persons, given that the minimum number of subjects for calculation of “mode” value under SPSS program must exceed 200 persons.

Variables

The variable factors were considered both of independent and dependent variables. The independent variables were consisted of seven categories, i.e., operational planning such as intention of an organization, policies, objectives; organizational structure and environment of educational administration including pattern, structure, executives, officials, and committee members; legal aspect including the constitution, acts, rules, regulations, announcements and resolutions; budget including sufficient government budgets, budget audits, sufficient budget revenue, revenue budget audits; administrative process that emphasizes on plan, do, check and action; general administration management, and transparency in administration.

The dependent variables were including of the second-round external educational quality assessment results, and the level of assessment points of educational quality standard in seven areas of education.

Instruments

The questionnaire, for data collection, can be divided into four parts, as follows: Part 1 was concerning of primary information of educational quality assurance, totaling four items. Part 2 was concerning of educational quality administration, totaling 20 items. Part 3 was concerning of educational quality certification, totaling 7 items including quality standard of graduates, research and creativity standard, academic service standard, cultural promotion standard, institutional and personnel development standard, curricula and instruction standard, and quality assurance standard. Part 4 was concerning of open-ended questions for comments and recommendations for educational quality administration.

METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The author distributed the questionnaires to faculty offices and subject groups of a higher education institute in Thailand, and collected the data from the completed questionnaires.

Table 1. Number of questionnaires for each subject group.

Subject groups	Population (persons)	Planned sample (persons)	Achieved sample (persons)
1 Health Science	78	61	61
2 Physical Science	64	42	42
3 Engineering	12	8	8
4 Business Administration	10	8	8
5 Education	16	10	10
6 Fine Arts	18	13	13
7 Humanities & Social Sciences	32	23	23
8 Interdisciplinary	56	36	36
Total	286	201	201



**Table 1** shows the total 201 respondents of the questionnaires. After verification, the author encoded the data for the analysis through SPSS for Windows Version 12.

**Data Analysis**

The author analyzed the data with SPSS for Windows Version 12 Program, for calculating percentage, mean, standard deviation of the general information, i.e., the number of years and educational quality assurance memberships, previous membership records of educational quality assurance committees of a higher education institution in Thailand, previous membership records of External Educational Quality Assessment Committees of ONESQA, percentage of subject groups in educational quality assessment, seven areas of quality administration. Pearson’s correlation and multiple regression analysis for identifying correlation between educational quality administration and the assessment results were conducted.

Regarding the analysis of the influence of educational quality administration on the educational quality assessment results, if there is an increase by 1 unit for the use of innovation in educational administration, there will be an increase in the quality standard of graduates by 0.325 units. If there is an increase by 1 unit in terms of transparency in administration, which can be audited, there will be an increase in the quality standard of graduates by 0.175 units. If there is an increase in the use of administrative process by 1 unit, there will be an increase in cultural promotion standard by 0.322 units. If there is an increase in the use of organizational structure and environment of development administration by 1 unit, there will be an increase in academic service standard by 0.280 units. If there is an increase in the use of innovation for general administration management, there will be an increase in academic service standard by 0.157 units. If there is an increase in budget by 1 unit, there will be an increase in institutional and personnel development standard by 0.191 units. If there is an increase in the use of legal aspect by 1 unit, there

will be an increase in institutional and personnel development standard by 0.165 units.

**RESULTS**

The number of members in Educational Quality Assurance Committee did not have any effects on the less or more assurance points earned. For instance, there were 78 committee members for the Heath Science group, but the assessment points earned were less than the Business Administration group, which had only 10 committee members. While the Physical Science group, which had 64 committee members, earned less assessment points than the Humanities and Social Sciences group, which had 32 committee members.

Concerning the awareness and educational quality administration operations, the findings were as follows: (1) operational planning, categorized by means of awareness and operations, ranging from more to less average scores, comprising: clear objective setting 3.81, clear policy setting 3.79, clear intentions and visions 3.77, having mean at 3.79, considered as “high”. (2) Organizational structure and environment in educational administration, categorized by means of awareness and operations, ranging from more to less average scores, comprising: assignment of responsibility of committee members for educational quality development 3.73, assignment of executives and officials for educational quality development 3.64, arrangement of university structure contributing to educational quality development 3.63, having mean at 3.67, considered as “high”. (3) Legal aspect, categorized by means of awareness and operations, ranging from more to less average scores, comprising: actions in compliance with rules, regulations and announcements 3.41; actions in compliance with resolutions of university president’s meeting, actions in compliance with the given higher education institute Act 3.21, actions in compliance with the constitution 2.98, having mean at 3.25, considered as “medium”. (4) Budget, categorized by means of awareness and operations, ranging from more to less average scores, comprising: allocation of budget for educational quality, which can be audited



3.52, allocation of revenue for educational quality, which can be audited 3.42, allocation of sufficient revenue for expenses 3.36, allocation of sufficient budget for expenses 3.33, having mean at 3.45, considered as "high". (5) Administrative process, categorized by means of awareness and operations, ranging from more to less average scores, comprising: plan 3.72, do 3.59, check 3.55 and action 3.51, having mean at 3.59, considered as "high". (6) General administration management categorized by means of awareness and operations, having mean at 3.08, considered as "medium". (7) Transparency in administration, categorized by means of awareness and operations, having mean at 3.72, considered as "high".

There was a significant correlation between educational quality administration and educational quality standard, using Pearson's correlation ( $p < 0.05$ ). In the questionnaire, the respondents were not requested to identify the correlation level, but the findings of the level of implementation under the educational quality principles were as follows: (1) quality standard of graduates was correlated with the general administration management. Each subject group significantly applied the general administration management to promote quality standard of graduates. (2) Academic service standard showed correlation with educational quality administration in planning, organizational structure and environment of education quality administration, legal aspects, budget, administrative process, general administration management, and transparency in administration. In other words, there was a significant correlation between educational academic service and educational quality administration, probably because all subject groups placed importance on all aspects of educational quality administration towards academic service standard. (3) Cultural promotion standard was correlated with planning, organizational structure and environment of education quality administration, legal aspects, budget, administrative process, general administration management, and transparency in administration. In other words, there was a significant correlation

between educational academic service and cultural promotion standard, probably because all subject groups placed importance on all aspects of educational quality administration towards cultural promotion. (4) Institutional and personnel development standard was correlated with planning, organizational structure and environment of education quality administration, legal aspects, budget, administrative process, general administration management, and transparency in administration. In other words, there was a significant correlation between educational quality administration and institutional and personnel development standard, probably because all subject groups placed importance on all aspects of educational quality administration towards institutional and personnel development standard. (5) Curricula and instructional standard showed no correlation with the principles of educational quality administration.

Multiple regressions were used for studying the influence of educational quality administration and the educational quality assessment results. (1) As for quality standard of graduates: if there is an increase by 1 unit for the use of innovation in educational administration, there will be an increase in the quality standard of graduates by 0.325 units. If there is an increase by 1 unit in terms of transparency in administration, which can be audited, there will be an increase in the quality standard of graduates by 0.175 units. (2) Cultural promotion standard: if there is an increase in the use of administrative process by 1 unit, there will be an increase in cultural promotion standard by 0.322 units. (3) Academic service standard: if there is an increase in the use of organizational structure and environment of development administration by 1 unit, there will be an increase in academic service standard by 0.280 units. If there is an increase in the use of innovation for general administration management, there will be an increase in academic service standard by 0.157 units. (4) Institutional and personnel development standard: if there is an increase in budget by 1 unit, there will be an increase in institutional and personnel development standard by 0.191 units. If there is an increase in the



use of legal aspect by 1 unit, there will be an increase in institutional and personnel development standard by 0.165 units.

## DISCUSSION

Those subject groups, which earned higher points from the external educational quality assurance had applied the principles of educational quality administration, ranging from more to less, included planning, organizational structure and environment of development administration, transparency in administration, administrative process, budget, legal aspect and general administration management. These research findings differed from the findings, as concerned the first round of the external educational quality assessment of a higher education institute in Thailand, conducted by Wiroonratch (2007), i.e., Thai higher educational institutes, entering the first round external educational quality assessment, at achievement level, administered educational quality by the following components, ranged from more to less, i.e., budget, transparency in administration, legal aspect, organizational structure and environment of development administration, planning, administrative process and general administration management.

It is interesting to note that, in the external educational quality assessment, 42 universities recorded the assessment results at "achievement" level, by placing budget in the first priority among the components of educational quality administration, as against the assessment results of the given higher education institute, which placed budget in the fifth priority. As a result, if there is more budget allocated for the implementation of educational quality assurance, the external educational quality assessment results may improve. This is in line with the findings by Viriyasuebpong et al. (2004) showing that the quality in academic services at the higher educational level must rely on effective budget management, due to the fact that budget is an important tool to move all works ahead.

The number of committee members has no impact on the assessment points, which agrees with

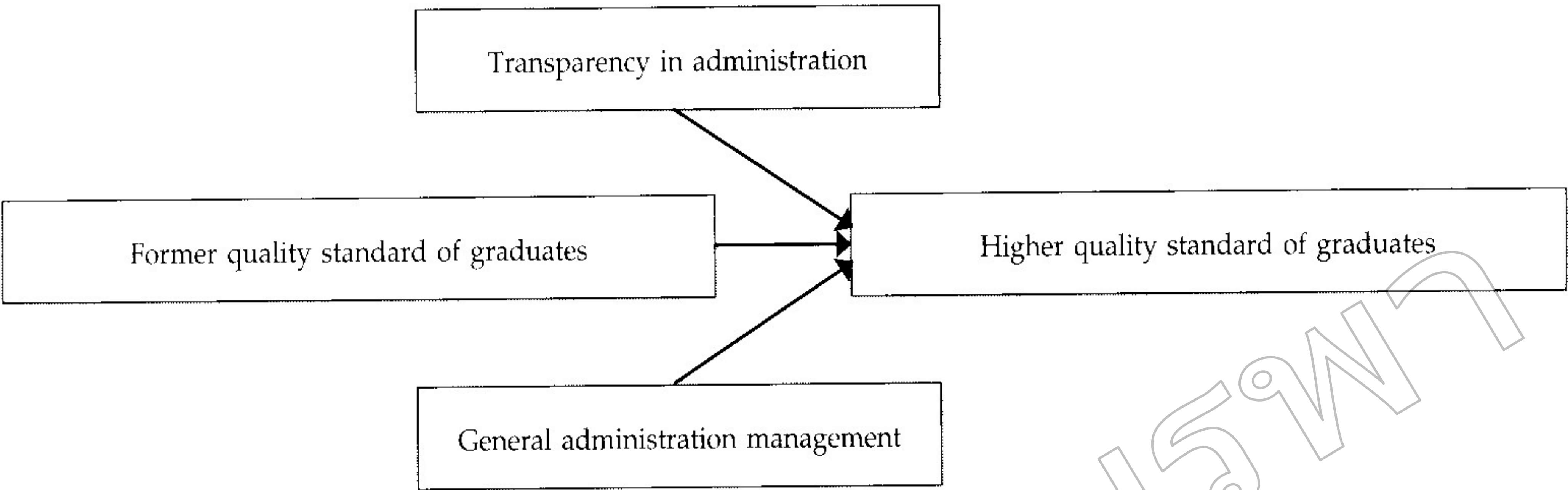
the finding by Kaplan and Norton (1996) who voiced their comments on balanced scorecard that, from learning and growth perspectives, indicators include competency of the employees, but not the number of personnel.

Concerning the awareness and operation of educational quality administration, there have been operations in all seven areas. These imply that the educational quality standard must rely on educational quality in many aspects. These are in line with the findings by Wiroonratch (2007), who stated that the external educational quality assessment results at "achievement" level would rely on sound educational quality administration in all seven key areas.

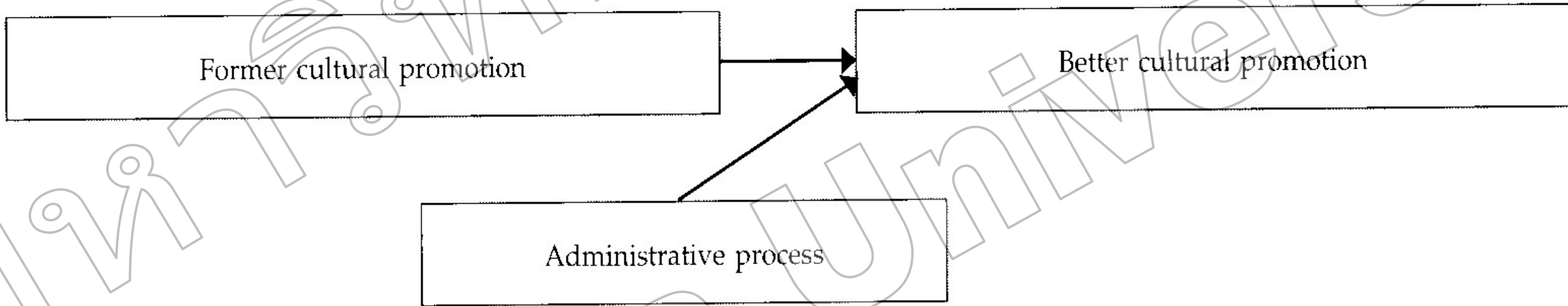
As for the correlation between educational quality administration and educational quality standard, Wiroonratch (2007) suggested that: (1) any subject group of should emphasize the actual implementation in educational quality administration in the order of planning, organizational structure and environment for development administration, legal aspect, budget, administrative process and transparency in administration, in order to eventually contribute to the standard quality of future graduates. (2) Any subject group should emphasize the implementation in research and creativity standard in the order of budget, organizational structure and environment for development administration, administrative process, planning, legal aspect, transparency in administration, and general administration management. (3) Any subject group should emphasize the implementation in curricula standard in the order of organizational structure and environment for development administration, legal aspect, administrative process, budget, transparency in administration, planning, and general administration management. And for the instructional standard in the order of legal aspect, organizational structure and environment for development administration, budget, planning, transparency in administration, administrative process, and general administration management.



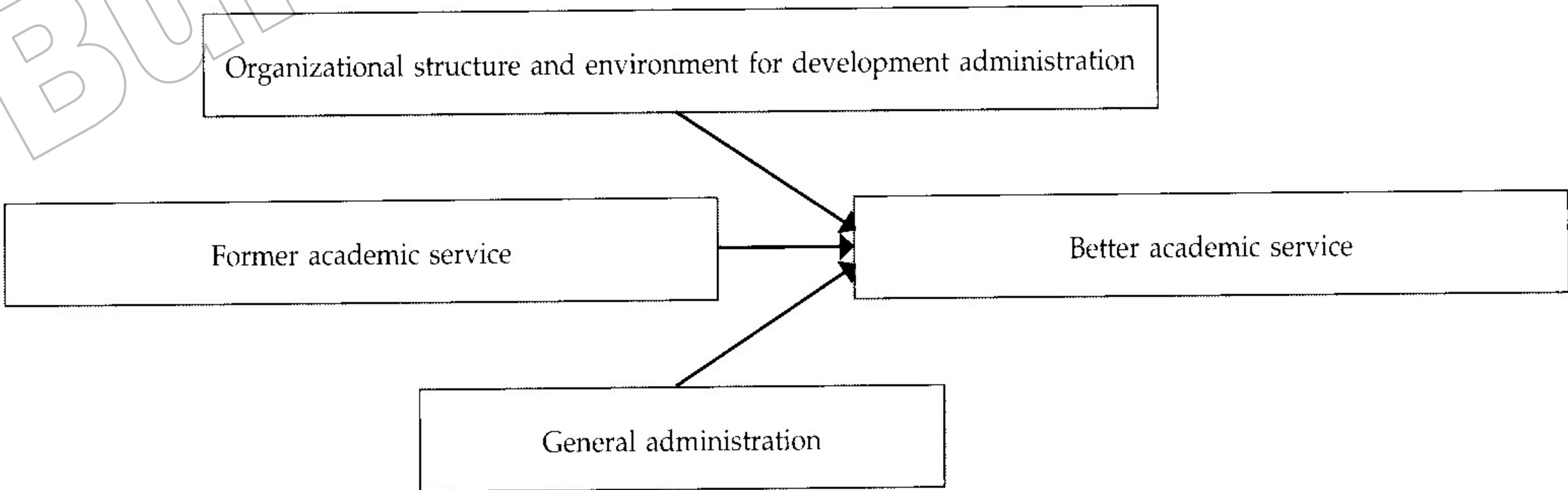
Concerning the influences of educational quality administration the author suggests that: (1) To raise educational quality in terms of quality standard of graduates, appropriate actions should be considered as below:



The figure shows quality standard of graduates through increase in educational quality administration in terms of transparency in administration and general administration management. (2) In order to raise educational quality in terms of cultural promotion, appropriate actions should be considered as below:

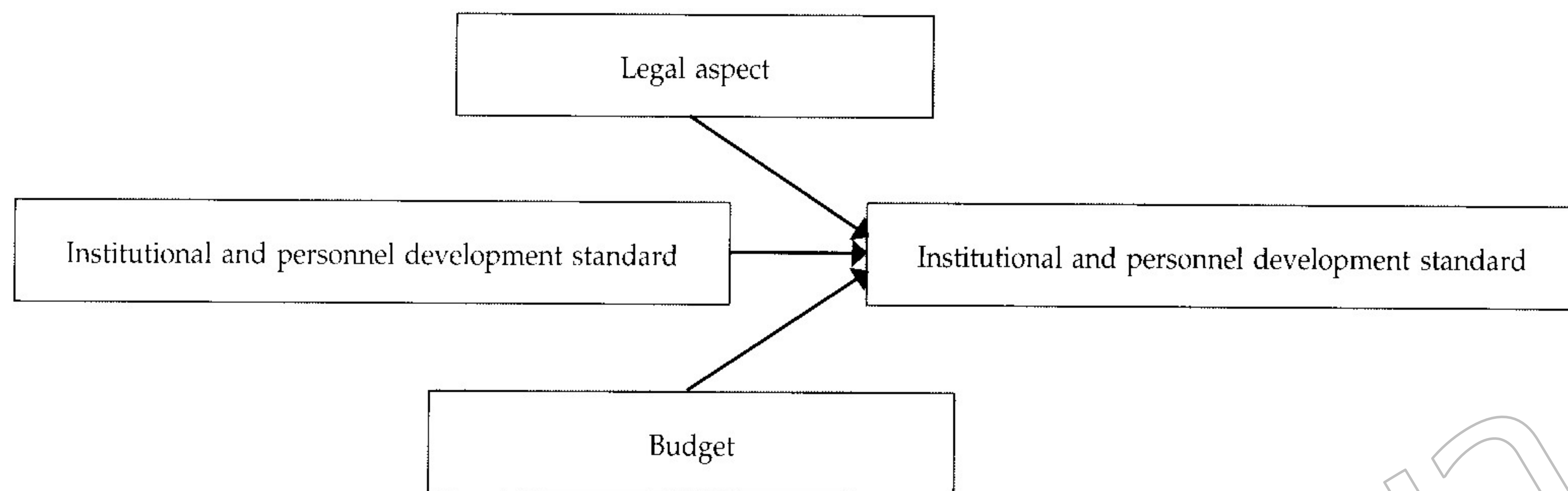


The figure shows cultural promotion standard through increase in educational quality administration in terms of administrative process. (3) To raise educational quality in terms of academic service, appropriate actions should be as below:



The figure shows academic service standard through increase in educational quality administration in terms of organizational structure and environment for development administration, and general administration management. (4) To raise educational quality in terms of institutional and personnel development standard, appropriate actions should be as below:





The figure shows institutional and personnel development standard through increase in educational quality administration in terms of legal aspect and budget.

Other influences of educational quality administration did not show significant impacts on increase of external educational quality assessment results.

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