

Assuring Quality in Global Higher Education: A Review

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Abstract: This paper presents a general idea and a literature review of the main aspects related to quality assurance in global higher education. It provides an overview of accreditation as a mechanism to ensure quality in higher education, examines models of QA, and explores the concept of quality. In addition, the paper provides a review of research on the effectiveness of quality assurance practices, with a particular focus on student involvement with quality assurance. Furthermore, although quality is the significant concern for accrediting bodies, accreditation structures are decentralized and complex at both the regional and international level. Another challenge identified revolves around the concerns of faculty members and other stakeholders, such as students, about the QA process. Given that students are at the center of higher education, and invest time and money in the system, so, involving the students could improve QA processes.

Keywords: Quality Assurance, Accreditation, Continuous Improvement, Higher Education, Accountability, Involving Students In Quality Assurance

I. INTRODUCTION

As the demand for quality education increases, there is a growing demand for quality assurance (QA) for international universities where there is increased mobility of students, faculty, programs, and higher education institutions in global networks. Quality assurance can be a driver for institutions to achieve excellence in higher education. However, ensuring that quality of educational programs meets local and international standards simultaneously has become a great challenge in many countries (OECD & World Bank, 2007). Hence, a need emerges for cooperation of quality assurance agencies and acceptance of quality assurance review decisions. Academic Performance Indicator is also the one of the major components of the career advance scheme for the faculty of colleges and universities in India. As a result, it is also a measure of quality of higher education.

As to address this emerging need, a common framework for a quality assurance model would provide consistent assessment of learning design, content, and pedagogy (Puzziferro & Shelton, 2008). As shown in Figure (a), a conceptual model of quality assurance (QA) in higher education comprises several areas. As such, the aim of this paper is to examine the literature surrounding quality assurance in global higher education.

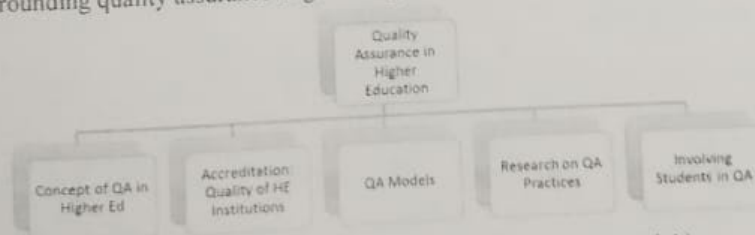


Figure a: Quality assurance in higher education conceptual model.)

The Concept of Quality Assurance in Higher Education:

Internationally the higher education has resulted in "a growing demand for accountability and transparency, which has in turn led to a need to develop a quality culture, while addressing the challenges of globalized higher education" (Smidt, 2015, p. 626). In a practical sense, quality assurance reviews provide external, third party, independent, objective insights. Such reviews offer observations about partner institutions, products, programs, services, and processes.