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University Teachers' Perceptions on the Application of Quality Assurance Practices in Public Universities of Pakistan

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Abstract: Exploring the teachers' perception regarding implementation of quality assurance practices at university level was the aim of the in-hand research. The main objective was knowing about teachers' awareness regarding components of quality assurance and their implementation at departments level in university of the Punjab. It was descriptive research based on cross-sectional survey design in nature. Population for the present study comprised all public universities which were situated in Pakistan. Data was gathered from purposive selected 300 teachers who were working in 36 departments of Punjab University via self-developed questionnaire. The gathered data was analyzed by using inferential and descriptive statistics with the help of SPSS (V.22) software. It was found that majority of the teachers were aware about written mission statement, quality assurance offices at department and in university but minority of them were not aware about quality assurance policy, manual, and holding self-assessment periodically. Moreover, majority of them said that quality assurance ineffectively being practiced in university. Although every department had written mission statement, quality assurance offices and there is quality assurance cell in their university yet due to not clarity about quality assurance policy and manual, self-assessment for quality assurance purpose is not being held properly in their university.

Introduction

The significance of advanced education and examination in the entire world with the progression following into quality training has turned into a worry of first concern. In 1950, as per Bounds, (2010) quality confirmation turned into a significant apparatus in business and industry in western countries for the executives. Karaim (2011) stated that by 2025, the extended worldwide interest for advanced education could arrive at 263 million understudies, which is an increment from somewhat less than 100 million scholars in 2000. Further he said that within more than two decades, this could address an increment of 163 million scholars. As the interest in quality education builds, there is a developing interest for quality Assurance (QA) for worldwide

colleges where there is expanded portability of understudies, staff, programs, and advanced education establishments in worldwide organizations (Varonism, 2014; Hou, 2012). Quality confirmation can be a driver for organizations to accomplish greatness in advanced education. In any case, guaranteeing that the nature of instructive projects satisfies neighborhood and global guidelines at the same time has turned into an extraordinary test in numerous nations (OECD and World Bank, 2007). Dale, (2011) expressed that quality schooling additionally centers around the suitable preparation of personnel and staff with the reason to improve their exhibition inside the

business and modern area too (Joubish and Khurram, 2016).

Batool and Qureshi, (2007), stated that quality education giving establishment generally ends up being a model for current common society. Materu (2007) stated that one of the critical elements in deciding the place of a country in the whole globe is nature of advanced education. Establishment can see to due to quality with certainty and conviction that the principles of its instructive arrangement are being kept up with and improved (Quality Affirmation Organization UK, 2019); Quality has turned into an inexpendible piece of increase plan of Advanced education embraced by the Advanced education Commission. Meade and Woodhouse, (2012) satiated that quality confirmation involves educational program plan, advancement of workers, and the utilization of criticism from understudies and businesses (Haider, and Husnain, 2018).

According to COL and NAAC, (2007) quality assurance can be defined its four components:

1. Everyone in the institute has an obligation regarding improving the nature of the item or administrations.
2. Everyone in the department has an obligation regarding keeping up with the nature of the item or administrations.
3. Everyone in the institution gets it, uses and feels responsibility for frameworks which are set up; for keeping up with and improving quality; and
4. The board routinely looks at the legitimacy of the framework for looking at quality (Batool and Qureshi, 2012).

In the ongoing example the arising countries, similar to Pakistan, a large portion of the HEIs are bad organized to handle up things as per the speed of changes in mechanical and logical field and are not skilled to do their piece of correspondences and making the suitable information to adapt up to these difficulties. Azam (2007), and Rauf (2006), stated that this trouble of the HEIs allures for moment defensive

estimates in the advanced education area of Pakistan of the Quality Affirmation (QA). By the greater part of the emerging nations of Asia and Africa, it has been recognized that top-notch high-level training is pivotal for each country to bring the assumptions for the country into reality in this immediately fluctuating world. Haywurd (2006), Brennan, and Shah (2000), described that for advanced education in these states this can be seen by the arrangement of huge number of quality affirmation organizations (Ameen, 2017).

In the past ten years, the nature of the board is more dynamic and demonstrating the best administrations to the framework. Albeit not only quality affirmation organizations are working at countrywide level yet various frameworks of value confirmation offices have additionally been created. One notable framework, The Worldwide Organization for Quality Affirmation Organizations in Advanced education (INQAAHE) was laid out in 1991 by just 18 establishing members however inside in short time of 15 years the cooperation has ascended to 150 from 100 distinct states (Kristofferson and Woodhouse, 2006). This brief escalation in the quality confirmation organizations round the world resembled the fundamental and importance of the quality affirmation in advanced education. According to World Bank (2007), report in Asia and Africa pacific, for advanced and local education from one side of the planet to the other, quality and quality confirmation of advanced education noticeably have become essential issues (Jurand and Nielsen, 2018).

HEC, (2008) in 2002, there were 26 universities in Pakistan. later, the quantity of universities increased and there were 124 (67 governmental and 57 others than governmental) universities working all over Pakistan when HEC traded College Awards Commission (UGC). HEIs dealing with beneath the two blackmails and potential of training progress in that existence where there is quick correspondence framework and most of them are new HEIs. To vow the nature

of their instructive projects with lacking tool, their opportunity for presence stays slight and could be irritate assuming that they reprimand or dodge the opposition. For their foundations a quality confirmation model must be created and applied to have the option to get by on the lookout, be serious for other people and to be assurance to their own customers quality schooling cross country and around the world, (Hayword, 2008; Bhatti and Tauqir, 2006) (Rauf, 2016).

In Pakistan, recently various quality assurance techniques have been used by kind of open and confidential establishments. 85 billion rupees has allocated by HEC for advanced education area upgrades (Osama et al.; Gilani and Ruler, 2009). This colossal amount and total measure of HEIs guarantee a framework to affirm that public advantages are being secured and advanced education is moving in the picked pathway. Those objectives must be achieved by a technique for quality confirmation. In this way, the current review intended to investigate the view of educators regarding execution of value confirmation rehearses at college level in Pakistan (Haider, and Husnain, 2015).

Literature Review

To make fully usefulness QAA, HEC is providing logistical and fund support. While the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC), which is made up of renowned educators, acts as its advisory board, QAA handles matters in conjunction with the Quality Assurance Division of HEC. By upholding ethical teaching methods and promoting ongoing quality enhancement in higher education, QAA works to protect the public interest (Batool, & Qureshi, 2012).

QAA's Function and Goals

The Higher Education Commission's expansion strategy for higher education now cannot do without quality. In this respect, QAA's objectives and functions are as follows:

Goals

- Developing policy and actual quality assurance standards for programmes leading to higher degrees.
- Creating policies for the creation of Quality Enhancement Cells and their Evaluation & Monitoring.
- Development of capacity to raise national standards for quality assurance in higher education.
- To oversee and control HEIs to ensure that policies are implemented that will raise the bar for higher education in Pakistan (Batool, & Qureshi, 2012).

Function

- Creating workable rules and regulations for the installation of Quality Enhancement Cells at public institutions in order to integrate quality assurance into the higher education system.
- Monitoring, assessing, and building capacity for all quality enhancement cells.
- Building the capacity of chosen expert staff members of Quality Enhancement Cells to act as Master Trainers following training in quality assurance, to raise the standards of international interoperability through skill improvement in the relevant area.
- Utilizing the expertise of local and international specialists with experience in academic quality assurance to lead workshops, seminars, and training sessions aimed at enhancing the QAA and QEC staff's capability (Batool, & Qureshi, 2012).

Presence of HEIs' Quality Enhancement Cells

All Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) in Pakistan that have been accredited by the Higher Education Commission have created their Directorates for Quality Enhancement and have attained a World standard Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) system. The division is responsible for managing the actions related to creating new QEC and IQA mechanisms in HEIs.

IQA conducts surveillance trips and holds periodic Progress review sessions to reaffirm its goal. On an annual basis, a score card is used to numerically evaluate the effectiveness of the IQA process in a HEI. Every year, on July 1st, the assessment session begins and concludes on June 30th of the following year. The evaluation is given a number rating and is represented by the standard levels/grades W, X, Y, and Z. The main result, an HEI that is prepared for exterior assessments by QAA-HEC (or any other third party) as well as by accreditation councils is the main result of an effective IQA system (Batool, & Qureshi, 2012).

Through Quality Enhancement Cells (QEC), which have been created in colleges and Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) in Pakistan, the IQA division carries out its policies. The origin of Quality Enhancement Cells can be found in the founding of the Quality Assurance Agency. (May 2005). DDWP initially authorized the PC-I of QECs in August 2006, and they began to be implemented in September 2006.

All these QECs apply the Self-evaluation Process, a quality evaluation method for academic programs, in addition to many other measures for improving academic quality in HEIs. This procedure produces a Self-Assessment Report. (SAR). The primary goals of SAR preparation are:

- To make academic programmes better and guarantee high academic standards by giving faculty and administration input so they can start an action plan for development.
- To equip students with the fundamental abilities they need to succeed in the workplace, including problem-solving skills, testing and data analysis methods, teamwork experience, interpersonal skills, and basic and advanced IT knowledge (Retrieved from hec.gov.pk on 8/03/2023).

Evaluation of Institutional Performance

The HEC Medium Term Development Framework's five-year (2002-2007) change plan is being methodically carried out by the Higher Education Commission. (MTDF). The MTDF has defined Access, Quality, and Relevance as its three main components. To overcome these obstacles, a thorough plan was presented, outlining the key reform objectives as Faculty Improvement, developing Access, perfection in skill and Investigation, and Relevance to National Priorities. (Retrieved from www.hec.gov.pk on 8/03/2023)

HEC has taken the initial step of defining the standards for performance evaluation for the HEIs to be used for the purpose in order to enhance the performance of HEIs. This document defines a total of eleven standards, all of which must be met by HEIs in order to receive the desired certification for high-quality higher education delivery, global visibility, and a significant ranking in regional and global HEI rankings. The following list of performance assessment standards outlines the key areas on which HEIs should concentrate for the purposes of gauging their efficacy and potential for growth:

- Mission and objectives are standard one.
- Evaluation and planning standard number two,
- Governance and organization standard number three,
- Integrity standard number four
- Faculty standard number five,
- Students' Standard six
- Institutional Resources standard seven
- Academic Curricula and Programs Standard eight
- Public Transparency and Disclosure standard nine
- Quality Assurance and Assessment Standard number ten
- Service for Student Support standard No. eleven (Retrieved from www.hec.gov.pk on 8/03/2023).

Problem Statement

Exploring teachers' perception regarding implementation of quality assurance practices at university level in Pakistan was the aim of the present research.

Objectives of the Study

Researcher formulated given below objectives of the present study:

1. To know about teachers' awareness regarding quality assurance's components in departments in Punjab university.
2. To explore teachers' perception about, how quality assurance in being practiced in their institutes/ departments.

Research Hypotheses

- H1:** Demographic variable wise no significant difference exist among the opinion of teachers regarding presence position of the quality assurance practices in their institutes/ departments in university of the Punjab.
- H2:** Demographic variable wise no significant difference exist in the teachers' perception regarding quality assurance practices in their institutes/ departments.

Research Questions

1. What extent teachers had awareness regarding components of quality assurance in their departments?
2. How quality assurance in being practiced in their institutes/ departments?

Research Methodology

Present study was descriptive research based on cross-sectional survey design in nature by applying quantitative research approach. Population for the present study was comprised all public universities which were situated in Pakistan. Data was collected from 300 teachers who were working in 36 departments of University of the Punjab which was selected by applying purposive sampling technique via self-developed questionnaire. Questionnaire was pilot tested by 20 teachers of the different designation who were included in the sample. Inter items technique was used to compute questionnaire's internal consistency of the items. The computed Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient value of the administered questionnaire was 0.91 which showed items in the questionnaire were highly co-related. The gathered data was arranged and coded. After that it was entered into computer for analysis. Data was analyzed with the help of SPSS (V 22) software by applying inferential and descriptive statistics.

Results and Findings

Table 1

Demographic variable wise analysis to find the differences in the teachers' awareness regarding quality assurance's components.

Demo Variables		SS	df	MD	F	sig
Departments	Among Groups	43.672	36	1.213		
	Within Groups	172.408	263	.656	1.851	.003
	Total	216.080	299			
Faculty	Between Groups	15.528	9	1.725		
	Within Groups	200.552	290	.692	2.495	.009
	Total	216.080	299			
Designation	Between Groups	69.991	3	23.330		
	Within Groups	146.089	296	.494	11.271	.000
	Total	216.080	299			

Demo Variables			SS	df	MD	F	sig
Gender	Male	N(162)	M(7.02)	Std (.932)	df 298	t (2.328)	.009
	Female	N(138)	M(6.80)	Std (.727)	295.75		

Department: $F=1.851 > 1.46$ (36), $P > .003$, Faculty: $F=2.495 > 1.91$ (9), $P > .009$

Designation: $F=11.271 > 2.63$ (3), Gender: $t=2.238 < 3.323$ (300), $P > .009$

Whereas $P=0.05$

Computed statistics in the above table 1, shows that demographic variable wise significant difference in the means of the teachers' awareness regarding quality assurance's components was found. Therefore, rejected the null hypothesis and concluded that demographic variable wise teachers had different awareness regarding status of the quality assurance components in their departments in university of the Punjab.

Question 1: What extent teachers had awareness regarding element of quality assurance in their departments?

The responses about components of quality assurance of the research questions one, for computing mean and std. Deviation was summed up. Total responses mean score for aware is range 1.51 to 2, and total responses mean score for not aware is range 1 to 1.50 which is revealed in table 2:

Table 2

Components of Quality Assurance wise Awareness Mean Scores of the Responses of the Respondents, N (300)

S#	Components	Mean	Std.
01	Written Mission Statement	1.64	.428
02	Quality Assurance Office	1.72	.333
03	Quality Assurance office/cell	1.82	.329
04	Quality Assurance Policy	1.31	.488
05	Quality Manual	1.22	.388
06	Frequency of Administering Self-assessment for quality assurance purpose	1.12	.337

Table 2 revealed that components of quality assurance awareness mean scores (written mission statement, quality assurance office at department level, and quality assurance office at university) is 1.64 to 1.82 respectively, which indicates that teachers were aware about written mission statement, quality assurance office at department level, and quality assurance office at

university elements. The awareness means scores of the elements of quality commitment (quality assurance policy, quality manual, and hold of self-assessment) is 1.12 to 1.31 respectively, which indicates that teachers were not aware about quality assurance policy, quality manual, and hold of self-assessment periodically.

Table 3

Demographic variable wise analysis to find difference in the teachers' perception regarding quality assurance practices in their department.

Demo Variables			SS	df	MD	F	sig
Departments	Among Groups		34378.117	36	954.948	6.085	.000
	Within Groups		41271.013	263	156.924		
	Total		75649.130	299			
Faculty	Between Groups		15898.838	9	1766.538	8.574	.000
	Within Groups		59750.292	290	206.035		
	Total		75649.130	299			
Designation	Between Groups		470.368	3	156.789	.617	.604
	Within Groups		75178.762	296	253.982		
	Total		75649.130	299			
Gender	Male	N(162)	M(63.86)	Std(15.88)	df 298	t (.151)	.880
	Female	N(138)	M(63.58)	Std(15.20)	289.79		

Department: $F=6.085 > 1.46$ (36), $P > .000$, Faculty: $F=8.574 > 1.91$ (9), $P > .000$

Designation: $.617 < 2.63$ (3), $P < .604$, Gender: $t=.151 < 3.323$ (300), $P < .880$

Whereas $P=0.05$

Computed statistics in the above table 3 shows that statistically significant department and faculty wise difference exist among the perception of teachers regarding quality assurance practices in their departments in university. Therefore, rejected the null hypothesis and concluded that department and faculty wise teachers perceive differently to the quality assurance practices in their departments but computed statistics in the above table 3 shows that statistically significant designation and gender wise no difference exist among the perception of teachers regarding quality assurance practices in their departments in university. Therefore, accepted that designation

and gender wise teachers perceive equally to the quality assurance practices in their departments.

Research Question 2: How quality assurance in being practiced in their departments?

On the response of research question 2, responses about how quality assurance in being practiced in their departments were summed up and analyzed. The total teachers' perception response mean score for implemented is range 3.10 to 5, and total teachers' perception responses mean score for not implemented is range 3.0 to 1.00 which is revealed in table 4:

Table 4

Quality Assurance Components Average Implementation Mean Scores, N (300)

S#	Elements of Quality Assurance Practices	Mean	Std.D
01	Written Mission Statement	4.06	.925
02	Quality Assurance Office	4.60	.733

S#	Elements of Quality Assurance Practices	Mean	Std.D
03	Quality Assurance office/cell	3.91	1.025
04	Quality Assurance Policy	2.86	1.058
05	Quality Manual	2.45	1.426
06	Frequency of Administering Self-assessment for quality assurance purpose	2.26	1.433

Table 4 reveals quality assurance components practices mean scores in department. The total teachers' perception regarding quality assurance first three components practice mean scores is range 4.60 to 3.91, which shows that majority of the teachers agreed that quality assurance is being properly practices in their departments and quality assurance components are effectively practiced in university level because every department in the university had written mission statement and had quality assurance offices. Moreover, university had quality assurance cell. The total teachers' perception regarding quality assurance last three components practices mean scores is range 2.26 to 2.86, which shows that majority of the teachers disagreed and said that quality assurance is not being properly practices in their departments because quality assurance components e.g., quality assurance policy, quality manual, and holding self-assessment for quality assurance are ineffectively practiced in university level. It is concluded that according to majority of the teacher's quality assurance ineffectively being practiced in their university because every department had written mission statement, quality assurance offices and there is quality assurance cell in their university due to not clarity about quality assurance policy and manual, self-assessment for quality assurance purpose is not being held properly in their university.

Conclusion and Discussion

Exploring the teachers' perception regarding implementation of quality assurance practices at university level was the aim of the in-hand research. The main objective was knowing about teachers' awareness regarding components of

quality assurance and their implementation at departments level in university of the Punjab. Data collected from 300 faculty members/teachers of 36 department of university of the Punjab Lahore, Pakistan. Among them, majority respondents were male assistant professors who were enjoying Ph. D their qualification with 5-to-10-year teaching experience at university level. Based on analysis, conclusion was drawn from findings. It is concluded that statistically important variation in the means of the department, faculty, designation, and gender wise teachers' awareness about the status of the quality assurance components in their institutes/ departments in university was found. Department, faculty, designation, and gender wise teachers know differently about the status of the quality assurance components in their university. Majority of the teachers were aware about written mission statement, quality assurance office at department level, and quality assurance office at university components but minority of them were not aware about quality assurance policy, quality manual, and hold of self-assessment periodically. So, for as the concern of execution of quality assurance practices, statistically important deviation in the means of the department and faculty wise teachers' perception was found but in means of the designation and gender wise teachers' perception regarding quality assurance practices no statistically significant difference was found. Department and faculty wise teachers had different perception regarding quality assurance practices in their departments, but designation and gender wise they had same perception

regarding quality assurance practices in their departments.

According to majority of the teacher's quality assurance ineffectively being practiced in their university because every department had written mission statement, quality assurance offices and there is quality assurance cell in their university but due to not clarity about quality assurance policy and manual, self-assessment for quality assurance purpose is not being held properly in their university. Adeyemi, (2020) found in his study that majority of the respondents were aware of 4 out of 11 quality assurance components which is unfortunate finding because it simply indicated that quality assurance is not being complimented in their institutes. Okpalanze and Onuma, (2017) reported that recruitment of qualified teachers, infrastructural facilities, implementation of curriculum and effective management and leadership are quality sureness parametric quantity in secondary schools in Enugu State, but majority of teachers said that such components are being implemented in their school to enhanced quality assurance. An opposite finding was reported by Nwosu (2013). In his research it was found that quality assurance' elements were fully implemented in their universities level. On the bases of research finding the following recommendation were made: First, quality assurance is more competency and stringent than ever before. In the present research it was found that teachers implement few quality assurance components due to lack of aware. Keeping view these innovative approaches to higher education it may recommended that QAA need more consciousness of the dimension and necessity of quality assurance components. Secondly, quality sureness is becoming acknowledged regionally and internationally, but it was also found in the present research that teachers were not aware about quality assurance policy and manual. It may recommend that QAA should make sure the existence of quality assurance policy and manual in all the HEIs so that these can be practiced at institution level.

Thirdly it was found in the present research that teacher was little bit aware about administering self-assessment periodically, it may recommend that activate to quality assurance cell to aware the importance of holding self-assessment periodically for quality assurance purposes. Moreover, agencies should have centralized their attraction on evaluating internal or external academic programs to enhance quality education.

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