QUALITY ASSURANCE IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION: NECESSITIES AND CHALLENGES

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Abstract. This study is going to be qualitative analysis of the challenges to the implementation of quality assurances in higher education in Afghanistan. The study's theoretical framework will be used and the main objective of the study is to analyze the current challenges faced with quality assurance then provide solutions for overcoming the leading challenges in ensuring the quality of the higher education system in Afghanistan.

Most of the research's findings are showing that, in today's complex and rapidly changing world where, most of the government are equipping themselves with the digital technologies, and developed governing methods. The higher education systems also, need to adopt various changes such as, observing academic freedom, distance learning, adopting the social platforms to avoid missing lectures and classes, implementing globalization in the education field, and updating the teaching methods.

These wide-ranging advances and functions will enable the university lecturers, students, administrative staff, and graduates to acquire all kinds of academic abilities and skills, taking into account social, economic and cultural aspirations for realizing their responsibilities that will help them to face the existing challenges more easily and to achieve their goals and objective in a timely manner.

The challenges in terms of poor quality, changes in the satisfaction in the higher education, unemployed graduates, Lack of communication within the educational institutes and industries, and scientific research against quality assurance by 'key' higher education are located in Afghanistan. Challenges in higher education institutions' administrative and academic domains have been explored in the study for the adjustment of higher education in Afghanistan.

Keywords: quality, quality assurance, challenges, higher education, Afghanistan.
JEL codes: I21, I28

Аңдатпа. Зерттеуде Ауғанстандағы жоғары білім сапасына кепілдік енгізумен байланысты проблемаларға сапалы талдау жасалған. Зерттеудің басты мақсаты сапаны қамтамасыз етудегі ағымдағы проблемаларды талдау, содан кейін Ауғанстандағы жоғары білім беру жүйесінің сапасын қамсыздандырудағы негізгі мәселелерді еңсеру үшін шешімдер ұсыну болып табылады.

Зерттеу нәтижелерінің көпшілігі қазіргі күрделі және жылдам өзгермелі әлемде үкіметтердің көбі цифрлық технологиялармен жабдықталғанын және басқару әдістерін дамытатындығын көрсетеді. Жоғары білім беру жүйелері де академиялық еркіндікті сақтау, қашықтықтан оқыту, дәрістер мен сабақтарды өткізіп алмау үшін әлеуметтік платформаларды енгізу, білім беру саласындағы жаһандануды енгізу және оқыту әдістерін жаңарту сияқты түрлі өзгерістерді қабылдауы керек.

Бұл кең ауқымды жетістіктер мен мүмкіндіктер оқытушыларға, студенттерге, әкімшілік қызметкерлерге және университет түлектеріне өз міндеттерін орындауға әлеуметтік, экономикалық және мәдени ұмтылыстарды ескере отырып, академиялық қабілеттер мен дағдылардың барлық түрлерін алуға мүмкіндік береді, бұл оларға қазіргі қиындықтарға оңай қарсы тұруға және өз мақсаттары мен міндеттеріне уақтылы қол жеткізуге көмектеседі.

Ауғанстандағы проблемалар сапаның төмендігімен, жоғары білімге қанағаттанудың өзгеруімен, жұмыссыз түлектермен, оқу орындары мен өнеркәсіпте байланыстың болмауымен, сондай-ақ сапаны «негізгі» жоғары біліммен қамтамасыз етуге кедергі келтіретін ғылыми зерттеулермен байланысты. Ауғанстандағы жоғары білімнің бейімделуі туралы зерттеуде жоғары оқу орындарының әкімшілік және академиялық салаларындағы проблемалар қарастырылды.

Түйін сөздер: сапа, сапаны қамтамасыз ету, мәселелер, жоғары білім, Ауғанстан.
JEL кодтар: I21, I28

Аннотация. Исследование представляет качественный анализ проблем, связанных с внедрением гарантий качества в высшем образовании в Афганистане. Основной целью исследования является анализ текущих проблем, с которыми сталкивается обеспечение качества, а затем предоставление решений для преодоления основных проблем в обеспечении качества системы высшего образования в Афганистане.

Большинство результатов исследования показывают, что в современном сложном и быстро меняющемся мире, где большее количество правительств оснащаются цифровыми технологиями и разрабатывают методы

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управления. Системы высшего образования также должны принять различные изменения, такие как соблюдение академической свободы, дистанционное обучение, внедрение социальных платформ, чтобы избежать пропусков лекций и занятий, внедрение глобализации в сфере образования и обновление методов обучения.

Эти широкомасштабные достижения и функции позволят преподавателям, студентам, административному персоналу и выпускникам университета приобрести все виды академических способностей и навыков, принимая во внимание социальные, экономические и культурные стремления к выполнению своих обязанностей, что поможет им легче противостоять существующим вызовам и достигать своевременно своих целей и задач.

Проблемы в Афганистане связанны с низким качеством, изменениями в удовлетворенности высшим образованием, безработными выпускниками, отсутствием связи в учебных заведениях и промышленности, а также научными исследованиями, препятствующими обеспечению качества "ключевым" высшим образованием. Проблемы в административной и академической сферах высших учебных заведений были рассмотрены в исследовании по адаптации высшего образования в Афганистане.

Ключевые слова: качество, обеспечение качества, проблемы, высшее образование, Афганистан.

JEL коды: I21, I28

Introduction

During the previous two decades, global progress has led to trends in higher education systems in various countries that have not only affected their operational processes but also changed their objectives. These changes are caused fundamental to globalization of economic growth and as well as to information and communication technology *(World Bank, 2002)*.

The fast rise in the quality of higher education has become a worldwide concern *(Harvey & Newton, 2007; Williams & de Rassenfosse, 2016)*. Institutions of higher education are considered for best tools for social development which are the custodians and transmitters of socio-cultural values and on the contrary, the rapid knowledge and technology in keeping with the social needs and demands are the main causes for dissemination and expansion *(Fitzpatrick, Sanders, Worthon, 2004)*. Challenges of growth and development of higher education such as illiteracy, academic failure, academic dependence, lack of adequate opportunities, and so on, due to the quality of education deprive people of their right to education and Increase social discrimination.

In the past, the concept of quality was mainly used to achieve certain national and international standards such as raising the standard of education, maintaining it, financing, and so on, while in new ways the quality focus on the qualitative product and reliability on product sensing quality, creating a better management process and achieving goals, assessing graduates' ratios to work needs, providing market demands and the necessary information for participants as well. Therefore, the main difference between the concept of quality in traditional and modern methods is that in traditional practices quality is adhered to the same national and international information and standards, whereas in new methods, it is mainly Emphasis is placed on management processes, efficiency, optimal evaluation of outcomes, performance monitoring and how to meet student needs *(Harman, 2000)*.

However, the aim of this study is the need for quality assurance and solutions to the challenges in the system of higher education. We discuss quality in higher education after discussing the concept of quality in the current study, and then focus on quality assurance in higher education, the purpose and need for quality assurance in the higher education system, as well as the challenges that exist and a better solution at the end.

The Higher Education Quality Assurance

Since there is a special place for quality assurance in the system of higher education, therefore all public and private institutions and universities try to achieve their goals. The term "quality assurance" refers to the process of ensuring that something is fit for its intended purpose (Walsh, 1990; West-Burnham and Davies, 1994). It is also seen as a beginning point for scientifically qualified human resources to engage in the development of many aspects and to fight the negative effects of change engines by developing realistic solutions that will benefit communities. To accomplish this, the quality assurance process should work to apply advanced methods in order to improve higher education, activate existing practices with its development, and achieve the highest possible level of output from higher education institutions in order to meet local, regional, and global needs.

Belawati and Darojat's *(2014)* study illustrates that Quality Assurance is a framework that has focused on both improvements and on responsibility by regulating it. The ongoing process which evaluates the quality of the higher education system, institutions, and academic programs is quality assurance. The use of quality assurance standards can assist in reaching some advantages. For better understanding, quality assurance is used in higher education as the objective of empowerment, accountability, transparency, empowerment, guidance, and resource management, each of them requires specific conditions to impact as the best quality assurance activities.

Quality assurance or academic accreditation gives guarantees to the people and the state to gain trust in educational institutions in their activities and values. Quality assurance is a universal and standard system, thus every organization ensures the best performance of its operations and tries to eliminate the problems that hinder its progress. The means of ensuring that academic standards are defined and achieved in accordance with equivalent national and international standards and that learning opportunities, research, and community involvement of the quality is appropriate and meets the expectations of a diverse range of stakeholders, as guided by its mission *(NQAAC Handbook, 2004)*.

However, in order to improve higher education in Afghanistan, a new method called quality assurance has been implemented and there should be a clear quality assurance system and standards at the national and international levels *(Welch & Wahidyar, 2019)*. Quality Assurance Framework has been established for the advancements in higher education in Afghanistan, but the implementation of quality assurance faces some challenges because of the scarce experience.

The quality assurance necessity in Higher Education

The rapid changes of the 21st century have led to many advances in the world's higher education system, such as; implementing technology in knowledge building, focusing on sustainable development, efficiency, and effectiveness in the system higher education, but on the contrary, the increasing number of technologies has led to an undesirable trend that has affected and challenged universities and institutions of higher learning.

Higher education institutions' attempts to ensure the quality of higher education through evaluation methodologies and accountability mechanisms have increased as global higher education continues to rise. The higher education ministry in Afghanistan is also working to produce graduates to meet national development needs and to strengthen its faculties to conduct research to serve economic growth and the well-being of the people *(Naimi, 2020)*.

Universities can also contribute to a country's development, the quality of higher education is the most essential and fundamental factor for its growth. As a result, the country's growth and development plans confront significant difficulties *(Babury, Hayward, 2014)*. With the growth of higher education in the country and the growing demand for it, particularly in light of economic development, there is a growing emphasis on quality assurance in various academic institutions in order to increase higher education. Extensive work can be done and limitations can be removed. The ever-increasing demand for knowledge, especially in the context of knowledge economics, has created a situation to ensure partners are on-demand and customer-oriented. Accordingly, academic institutions are of central importance in the universities of both developed and developing countries in terms of economics *(World Bank, 2013)*.

Challenges of Higher Education in terms of Quality Assurance

The major challenges facing the country's higher education system in terms of quality assurance are as follows:

Poor quality of academic courses

Higher education has a special significance and status in the various courses of the higher education system as it provides services in strengthening and enhancing human resources as they are responsible for training, In particular, in the fields of education, research, and services. The number of graduates has increased in recent years in higher education in the country has been increasing, however, quality development has received little

attention. Researches show that if educational courses continue to be developed without regard to quality improvement, the country will face irreparable loss of knowledge in terms of low quality and even professionalism, as well the country's higher education system is unsatisfactory in terms of low quality, especially in the field of graduate courses.

However, Afghanistan's education system is in a state of disarray. As of 2015, the country's adult literacy rate was reported to be 28 percent, significantly lower than its neighboring countries, where Pakistan's rate was 37 percent and Iran's rate was 80 percent. Afghanistan's infrastructure has been harmed by more than three decades of conflict and infighting, and higher education has suffered as a result *(Vega, 2015)*. Poor quality of education leads to low quality of the workforce in the country, low quality of workforce leads to low quality of services in public administration, lack of proper services hinders progress. Therefore, it can be said that the quality of services in the education sector is very important to get Afghanistan's higher education system out of the current crisis *(Atif, 2018)*.

The review of the country's higher education development programs also underlines the fact that the main goals of these programs are higher education system development and national development coordination, as well as higher education system diversity, curriculum revision, development of systematic knowledge, development of international cooperation and so on have not been achieved (World Bank, 2013). It is vibrant that to uphold and improve the quality of services provided, universities must regularly review the quality of services to ensure that the quality of services is a priority.

Changes in the form and content of higher education

The problem facing higher education in a rapidly growing world is the fundamental changes in the form and content of universities and other higher education institutes. Although higher education institutions have been able to adjust content and organization, the instruments for assessing higher education quality are still insufficient.

There are some discrepancies that call into question the credibility of universities such as the concerns over product quality. To overcome this problem there is a serious need to improve quality and update criteria in order to achieve significant results in considering short term and long term goals in quality improvement processes, which can be used to improve quality (Atif, 2018). Evaluating, updating, and matching the curriculum of universities of Afghanistan with the education systems of other countries of the world is a serious need for curriculum revisions to be tailored to the demands of the bazaar *(CSRS, 2017)*.

The quality of higher education in the country is worrisome as our graduates are still not being trained as required. The main reason for this is the current curriculum, the problem with the curriculum is that it is not in tune with the demands and needs of the time. In other words, our curriculum is not responsive to the demands of the labor market *(Mohmand, 2017)*.

Unemployment of graduates

Today, the unemployment of university graduates is a major challenge to the management of higher education in the country. This challenge is not only the most important social problem in the country today, but considering the level of population growth in the last two decades, it can be considered as the most important social challenge in the next few decades. Although the unemployment rate in the country is high, there is a dire need for qualified personnel, which can only be met with the proper attention of graduates. In recent years, there has been a substantial expansion in the number of higher education institutions, but neglect of quality and efficiency is seriously damaging the higher education system *(World Bank, 2005)*.

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Scientific research problem

Another important challenge facing the

management of the higher education system in achieving quality assurance is the problem-oriented investigation of scientific research. In today's advanced world, the lack of resources, budgets, opportunities, time, and facilities on the one hand and the speed of progress and the difficulty of competition, on the other hand, is so great that no one does research for personal or organizational interests or tastes. But any research in any field, including humanities and social sciences, must necessarily respond to the research question and raise the issue and the problem of inventory, otherwise the research will be irrelevant. The central issue should be a fully applied, policy-making and implementation approach based on the international needs of the country, as well as national, provincial, and local needs, whether the research is fundamental, developmental, or applied *(Alikhani, 2010).*

Writing anxiety causes learners to do poorly in class because it obstructs their ability to write. However, a statistically significant difference was discovered amongst students from various origins who had varying degrees of English ability (beginner, intermediate, high-intermediate, and advanced). Furthermore, linguistic issues, time constraints, the pressure to be perfect, and the fear of negative teacher evaluations were discovered to be the leading causes of writing anxiety, and the findings may have a number of implications for practitioners who want to be more aware of authors' writing anxiety in English *(Quvanch & Si Na, 2022).*

Lack of communication between university and industry

The university's collaboration with industry is considered as critical to the development of strong economies in the twenty-first century. The growing interest of industry in academic research is viewed as a positive rather than a negative development. The university, as a center for publishing and applying scientific and industrial findings as one of the major and influential sectors in economic activities, plays an effective role in the relationship between the university and industry.

Attracting and employing graduates of universities and higher education centers in the labor market depends on having the characteristics and abilities that a large part

of them must be created during their studies at the university. This is thought to be because, in the global field of photo catalytic study, public-funded organizations such as universities carry out the majority of the research, with business research contributing comparatively little to that academic research *(Shichijo, Yasunori, 2007).*

Among the main obstacles between the university and industry in the country can be considered as; Weak systematic planning and principles in the management of the industrial and research system, lack of consulting to industries as a task in building the university, purchasing industries from abroad without considering the capacity of research and domestic production, lack of information from The capabilities of the university and the needs of the industry, the lack of a suitable competitive environment for products and the need to improve quality and lack of training of human resources in university institutions in accordance with the needs of executive bodies. Universities and corporations appear to have built enduring partnerships in the biological sciences after more than a decade of sustained contact, however the collaborations may represent greater challenges to scientific communication openness than universities normally accept (David, Nancyanne, Eric, Karen, 1996).

Conclusion

In the current era, higher education and academic institutions are increasing the demand for consumer attitudes, the need to communicate with the international community, meeting the needs of the labor market, adapting products and adapting to offerings as well as their Changes in financial resources are creating more and more problems. The challenges of managing higher education in terms of quality can be considered in two ways; first society and in exchange for funding, the state wants responsibility, transparency, and openness in the sector of higher education, funding, and investment and second, it is expected that the quality of education and research of academic institutions will not only be maintained but also improved. Accordingly, in a complex and rapidly changing world, the foundations of higher education are able to meet the challenges and needs of different

social, economic, and economic sectors in order to meet the challenges and needs of reconstruction and broad-based change.

Also, strengthen the boards of academic institutions to establish international relations in the higher education system by recognizing the independence, academic freedom, and innovation of academic institutions in planning education, research and services in line with the needs of the labor market. However, strategic planning such as; Sending students abroad, attracting scientific and technical services can lead to the advancement of higher education. In addition to achieving international experience, improving the quality of management, improving the level of education and training, expanding research activities, and providing services, and the active participation of faculties in learning in academic gatherings, creating conducive economic, social and cultural conditions, so that their intellectual power can be used in the development of the country.

As quality assurance is much important, therefore the article gives some recommendation to enhance the higher education. In order to improve higher education, there must be a clear and understandable quality assurance system and standards at the national and international levels. The Ministry of Higher Education should establish contracts with international universities to enhance quality assurance to share their experiences and reduce the risk of challenges.

The government should pay attention to the poor quality of academic courses, changes in the format and content of higher education, unemployment of graduates, problem of scientific research and improving the relationship between universities and industry and apply international experience to solve it. To address the current problems of quality assurance, the need for understanding between universities and businesses must be understood and trust established through a mechanism to enhance the quality of academic courses and enable Afghanistan to enjoy an advanced higher education.

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ЖОҒАРЫ БІЛІМ САПАСЫН ҚАМТАМАСЫЗ ЕТУ: ҚАЖЕТТІЛІКТЕРІ МЕН МӘСЕЛЕЛЕРІ
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