

**Systems and Mechanisms of Applying Quality
Assurance in Higher Education**

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Abstract:

This paper aims to examine the Systems and Mechanisms of Applying Quality Assurance in Higher Education , the results showed: The quality of education requires the establishment of institutions to ensure the quality of education, and it also requires the acquisition of skills to achieve quality. The concept of quality assurance lies in laying the foundations for continuous improvement as an important tool in raising the level of higher education activities, while not neglecting the ability that accelerated improvement provides to gain steps of success in a steady manner, which is consistent with Arab educational institutions that are trying to adopt the principle of competition based on the quality. The issue of quality assurance in higher education activities is gaining an important role that has begun to attract the attention of researchers and writers. Perhaps one of the reasons for this is the success of the concept and its role in raising the level of performance of the educational institution, towards building competitive advantages that enable the institution to continue and grow .Ensuring that approved academic activities and programs meet the requirements for academic accreditation and are consistent with international standards in university education, the requirements for specialization in various fields of education, as well as the needs of the university, students, and society. Preparing codified standards used to judge procedural applications of the quality of university work, such as a measure of the quality of a faculty member, the efficiency of department heads, college deans and the university president. The quality of education requires the establishment of institutions to ensure the quality of education, and it also requires the acquisition of

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skills to achieve quality. And its Recommendations .Follow the incentive policy for distinguished universities in the field of quality. Establishing a special complaints box for the Ministry of Higher Education in each university. Ensuring quality in higher education requires national institutions (institutional accreditation bodies) concerned with its guarantee and accreditation, and therefore requires legislation to create these institutions.

Keywords: Systems and Mechanisms -Applying Quality Assurance - Higher Education.

ملخص:

تهدف هذه الورقة إلى دراسة نظم وآليات تطبيق ضمان الجودة في التعليم العالي، وأظهرت النتائج: أن جودة التعليم تتطلب إنشاء مؤسسات لضمان جودة التعليم، كما أنها تتطلب اكتساب المهارات لتحقيق الجودة. كما يكمن مفهوم ضمان الجودة في وضع أسس التحسين المستمر كأداة مهمة في رفع مستوى أنشطة التعليم العالي، مع عدم إهمال القدرة التي يوفرها التحسين المتسارع على تحقيق خطوات النجاح بشكل ثابت، وهو ما يتوافق مع المعايير العربية. وأن المؤسسات التعليمية التي تحاول اعتماد مبدأ المنافسة على أساس الجودة. وتكتسب مسألة ضمان الجودة في أنشطة التعليم العالي دورا هاما بدأ يجذب اهتمام الباحثين والكتاب. ولعل أحد أسباب ذلك هو نجاح المفهوم ودوره في رفع مستوى أداء المؤسسة التعليمية، نحو بناء ميزات تنافسية تمكن المؤسسة من الاستمرار والنمو. والتأكد من استيفاء الأنشطة والبرامج الأكاديمية المعتمدة للمتطلبات للحصول على الاعتماد الأكاديمي، وتتوافق مع المعايير العالمية في التعليم الجامعي، ومتطلبات التخصص في مجالات التعليم المختلفة، واحتياجات الجامعة والطلبة والمجتمع. وإعداد معايير مقننة تستخدم للحكم على التطبيقات الإجرائية لجودة العمل الجامعي، كمقياس جودة عضو هيئة التدريس، وكفاءة رؤساء الأقسام، وعمداء الكليات، ورئيس الجامعة. وإن جودة التعليم تتطلب إنشاء مؤسسات لضمان جودة التعليم، كما تتطلب اكتساب المهارات اللازمة لتحقيق الجودة. وتوصياتها. إتباع سياسة الحوافز للجامعات المتميزة في مجال الجودة. وأن إنشاء صندوق خاص للشكاوى لوزارة التعليم العالي في كل جامعة. وأن ضمان الجودة في التعليم العالي يحتاج إلى مؤسسات وطنية (هيئات الاعتماد المؤسسي) تعنى بضمانه واعتماده، وبالتالي يحتاج إلى تشريع لإنشاء هذه المؤسسات.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الأنظمة والآليات - تطبيق ضمان الجودة - التعليم العالي.

Introduction:

Education today is no longer only a social issue, but also an economic one. The reality of the situation indicates an escalation in the intensity of competition based on quality in various fields, including higher education activities. The concept of quality assurance provides a vital means towards building foundations for the competitiveness of the educational institution. Therefore, it has become necessary to Higher education institutions apply the foundations of this system to be able to create added value from the elements of the educational system, including students, faculty, curricula, and the educational process. Accordingly, a number of axes can be identified as a theoretical summary.

The higher education sector is witnessing great interest in most countries of the world and at all levels, and the reform processes in this important sector have received special care, due to its great importance in terms of its fundamental role in the development of society and its advancement for the better to keep pace with the renewed needs that appear in societies. Humanity by providing it with scientifically and practically qualified technical personnel and by preparing leaders for the future in various fields. Higher education institutions in Arab countries face extremely serious challenges and threats, arising from variables that played a major role in changing the shape of the world and created a new global system that relies on science and accelerated technological development as its basis, and is based on highly advanced and superior technologies, which leaves no room for hesitation in starting programs. Comprehensive development and modernization ensures that these institutions are able to overcome their problems and points of failure Huff in it (Al-Sarayrah and Al-Assaf, 2008: 3).

It is worth noting the increasing national and international interest in the field of quality assurance in higher education. For example, the Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education ((Quality Assurance Agency For Higher Education (QAA) in Britain is an agency responsible for ensuring the quality of study programs and standards for higher education and is directly linked to the Higher

Education Funding Council. The primary purpose of the evaluations conducted by this agency is to increase international competitiveness and the degree of reliability when making comparisons. Reference to the education system in Britain (Elain, 1998: 5-9)

The study Problem:

Most studies after research and academic surveys confirm that most Arab higher education institutions face a state of ambiguity and limitations in dealing with contemporary quality concepts such as quality assurance, which has been reflected on the field in the internal or external problems they face compared to higher education institutions in developed countries, and thus it can be summarized: The research problem is based on the following main question:

What are the systems and mechanisms for implementing and ensuring quality in higher education?

Research questions:

The following sub-questions branch out from the main research question:

- 1- What is the concept of quality in higher education?
- 2- Can higher education institutions introduce specific quality concepts, and what is the framework for this?
- 3- How do the theoretical foundations of the concept of applying and ensuring quality contribute to increasing the level of achievement of the goals of higher education institutions?
- 4- What are the mechanisms for implementing and ensuring quality in higher education?

Research aims:

The current research seeks to reach the following goals:

- 1- Shedding light on the concept of quality and the systems and mechanisms for its application in higher education.
- 2- Providing those interested in and those responsible for the higher education sector with quality assurance principles that can be applied with the aim of working to enhance and develop it.
- 3- Identify some of the necessary requirements for systems and mechanisms for implementing and ensuring quality in higher education.

- 4- Providing a proposed theoretical framework for systems, mechanisms and application of quality assurance in higher education.

Research importance:

The importance of the research stems from the fact that it is a research attempt that focuses on studying the systems and mechanisms for implementing and ensuring quality in higher education, which is one of the relatively recent topics at the global level in general and the Arab level in particular, and thus reaching recommendations for decision makers in senior management in these institutions, from its being An attempt to link administrative theories with applied practical reality. Many countries have paid attention to quality and have created a specialized center to monitor quality, by setting standards to be applied in higher education institutions and following up on their results.

The importance of my research lies in the fact that it deals with the subject of systems and mechanisms for implementing quality assurance in higher education, which is one of the sectors that has not previously been studied extensively, as Arab libraries lack - within the limits of the effort expended by the researcher - such studies that focus on the systems and mechanisms for implementing quality assurance in Higher Education.

Search methodology:

The research methodology is based on building a theoretical framework that supports the research study in the field of systems and mechanisms for implementing and ensuring quality in higher education, relying on previous curricula and studies that confirm the deepening and achievement of quality in various fields. Accordingly, the research will address its topic according to the following axes:

First: previous models and experiences.

Second: The concept of quality.

Third: The concept of quality in education.

Fourth: Quality control in higher education.

Fifth: The importance of applying the quality system in higher education.

Sixth: The necessary requirements for implementing and ensuring quality in higher education.

Seventh: Systems and mechanisms for implementing and ensuring quality in higher education.

Eighth: Results and recommendations.

First: previous models and experiences

1- The experience of European coordination in the field of higher education (1998).

The European Union carefully developed a plan to ensure quality in the European university system, and it was recommended that university systems should be evaluated based on common principles, in addition to the establishment of the Incas. EUROPEAN NETWORK OF QUALIT ASSURING IN HIGHER EDUCATION (ENQA), which is the European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, which consists of (40) educational agencies in order to stimulate expertise among member states associated with and nominated to join the European Union. This led to the establishment of a program for mutual recognition to evaluate accredited agents. As well as the recognition of educational curricula, and despite the slowness in procedural aspects, the Incas carried out their work in harmony and solidarity, and coordination included three projects: Owais, 2007: 21)

- Synth project
- Quality culture project.
- Multinational Evaluation Project.

2- Study by Ahmed (1998).

Ahmed's study is one of the first studies at the Iraqi level that sought to begin the process of improving the quality of the educational process inputs to reach scientific quality outputs in the management departments of the faculties of administration and economics in Iraqi universities by addressing the difficulties and proposing methods for treating and confronting them.

3- Study Bishop (2006)

The study aims at the possibility of transforming the outputs of the educational process at the local level into outputs with international specifications subject to the principle of mobile labor

(international labor) by conducting a comparison between the quality system applied in Australian universities with the quality assurance system applied in European universities and using the simulation method. The study sought to strengthening the strengths and confronting the weaknesses of the two systems to achieve the required state of integration (Bishop, 2006: 17)

Second: The concept of quality:

The concept of quality (Quality) goes back to the Latin word (Qualities), which refers to the nature of a person or thing and the degree of its suitability. In ancient times, it referred to accuracy and mastery. While the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) defines quality as the degree of satisfaction of apparent and implicit needs and expectations through a set of key pre-determined characteristics (Abdul Wahab, 2002: 19).

As defined by the American Standards Institute (Merican National Standards Institute) as a set of attributes and characteristics that accurately and comprehensively express the essence and condition of education, including its dimensions of inputs, outputs, feedback, and continuous interactions that lead to achieving the desired goals that are appropriate for everyone (Al-Hajj et al., 2009: 9)

Quality may mean a characteristic or degree of superiority possessed by someone or something, just as it means a degree of excellence or a high degree of quality or value.

Quality, as a linguistic concept, expresses an inherent characteristic linked to what is described as good, and it generally means some degrees or indicators through which a thing can be identified or its structure understood (Al-Sarayrah, 2009: 4).

Although the idea of quality appeared in America, it was applied in Japan after its defeat in World War II, and many people interested in educational thought believe that the American statistician "Deming" He was the first to analyze and propose a comprehensive program for the concept of quality and its management in the forties of the last century, and the principles he proposed remained a basis upon which many researchers relied on the subject of quality and its

management. These principles also became included during the design of any proposed quality management program, and when he was asked “Deming” On the reason for the success of quality management in Japan to a greater degree than in the United States, he said that the difference is in the implementation process, that is, embodying the concept of quality and its application. The Japanese created an award in the name of “Deming” In 1951, it was introduced for the first time in Japan to companies that were successful in their quality programs (Dreeb, 2014:88).

Third: The concept of quality in education:

The concept of quality in education has two interconnected meanings, one realistic and the other sensory. Quality, in its protective sense, means the educational institution’s commitment to achieving real, recognized indicators and standards, such as promotion rates, internal efficiency rates, and education cost rates. As for the sensory meaning of quality, it focuses on the feelings or sentiments of the recipients of the educational service, such as students. And their guardians (Shafi, 1425 AH: 12).

The British Standards Institution (British Standards Institute)BSI) quality assurance system according to the specification as " All activities and functions related to achieving and achieving quality (Ahmed and Mohamed, 2007: 59), as Juran "" It is the activity to provide the necessary evidence and for both stakeholders to build confidence that quality functions are being exercised appropriately. Some assert that this system is nothing but oversight of quality control. It is also known as a system of activities whose purpose is to provide certain assurance that comprehensive quality control is being exercised effectively. (www.Jurean.com/articless.qualityassurance)

Diab (2004) believes that the quality of higher education means the ability of the total characteristics and features of the educational product to meet the requirements of students, the labor market, and all internal and external beneficiaries, as achieving quality in education requires directing all human resources, policies, systems, curricula, processes and infrastructure in order to create Favorable conditions for innovation and creativity in ensuring that the educational product

meets the requirements that prepare the student to achieve the level that we all strive to achieve (Abdel-Haman et al., 2012: 4)

From here, it can be said that the quality of education stems from a set of features and characteristics provided by the educational institution, which fulfill or exceed the students' implicit and expected desires and aspirations, which qualifies him to obtain the job that is compatible with his aspirations, on the one hand, and to fulfill all the education and qualification requirements of employers in a way that suits their needs, as it should. It provides the learner with a high capacity for rehabilitation, commensurate with changes in the global labor market.

Fourth: Quality control in higher education:

Quality control in education means reviewing the direct educational product, which is the student, reviewing the indirect educational product, discovering various types of waste episodes, and developing education through evaluating the educational system and diagnosing input deficiencies so that the evaluation turns into real development and actual control of the quality of educational service (Al-Yamani, 2005). : 15).

In the field of education, educational quality stems from considering the student as the target by meeting his current and future needs, and since these needs are necessary in his view as they reflect the labor market's need for skills that he can acquire through the teaching and learning process that enable him to rehabilitate and enable him to occupy other jobs. The quality assurance process in education also refers to the fulfillment of quality for all elements of the educational process, which includes curricula, institutions, students, faculty members, and various activities that are related to the educational process (Al-Hajj et al., 2011: 13).

The concept of guarantee is also related to ensuring the validity of the educational process, as an application of methodological instructions, in order to generate interest and improve and develop ability and capacity, towards a specific topic in transforming higher education inputs into outputs of targeted quality. Accordingly, the

quality of the education process is linked to a number of dimensions, including (Ahmed and Muhammad, 2007: 59):

- 1- Developing capabilities that help the educational institution implement its activities.
- 2- Continuous improvement of the cognitive aspect in terms of increasing the value of knowledge or adding new knowledge.
- 3- Continuous improvement of the skill aspect in performing tasks correctly and at any level.
- 4- Continuous improvement of the overall university performance specifications.

Ensuring the quality of higher education activities is linked to controlling all variables that affect the low level of performance, and thus expresses a huge amount of efforts made by those concerned, including stakeholders, in order to raise the level of the educational institution's outcomes.

According to the UNESCO Standards for Education held in Paris in October 1998, it was stated that quality in higher education should include all education functions and activities such as: curricula, educational programmers, scientific research, students, buildings, facilities and tools, provision of services to the local community, and Internal self-education, and setting internationally recognized comparative standards of quality (Al-Sarayrah and Al-Assaf, 2008: 38).

Due to the importance of quality assurance at the present time, many efforts have been made in this regard at the global and regional levels. At the global level, UNESCO organized a global conference on quality assurance, a global conference on quality assurance in higher education, and on October 9, 1998, the focus was on quality assurance. The panel of the declaration issued by this conference stressed the importance of qualitative evaluation that addresses all functions and activities in higher education, and the establishment of independent national bodies, and international standards and levels for quality assurance, taking into account national and regional specificities when setting standards. At the regional level, UNESCO organized the Arab Regional Conference on Higher education. This conference stressed the importance of ensuring quality in higher

education, and establishing a mechanism to evaluate the quality of higher education at all organizational and institutional levels, programs, personnel, and outcomes. In December 2003, UNESCO, in cooperation with the Association of Arab Universities, supervised a conference held in Damascus. Among his recommendations, he emphasized the necessity of establishing quality assurance and spreading the culture of evaluation and accreditation in Arab universities (Darib, 2014: 94).

In the Arab world, attempts to address the issue of ensuring the quality of higher education activities began with accreditation strategies in a number of Arab universities, which implicitly stressed the necessity of spreading the quality assurance system by calling for the establishment of an independent body for accreditation and ensuring the quality of higher education (Ahmed and Muhammad, 2007: 60).

Fifth: The importance of applying the quality system in higher education.

The twenty-first century is the century of quality, according to its American pioneer, Joseph Juran (Joseph M. Juran). Statistical studies indicate that the consumer has become more aware and interested in quality. The percentage of those looking for quality has increased from (30% - 40%) in 1979 to (80% - 90%) in 1988. There are many reasons that Higher education institutions called for adopting quality as an approach and method of work, most notably: the diversity and multiplicity of goals of these institutions (profitable and non-profitable), the increasing demand for higher education, the emergence of new types of higher education institutions (cooperating organizations or companies, multinational institutions), and the multiplicity of learning environments (Colleges, universities, learning centers, libraries, home), the diversity of levels of degrees and academic qualifications granted, the reduction in government funding and the expansion of private higher education, the increased demand for faculty members and students to transfer between institutions, the increasing pressure to achieve recognition and the increased demand for faculty members and students to Transfer between institutions, and

increasing pressure to achieve mutual recognition (Middlehurst, 2001).

The importance of quality in higher education is through the efforts of these institutions to adopt modern administrative systems and philosophies to develop their work and modernize their methods to keep pace with the movement of change and development in the era of globalization in which the world has become a small village and so that they can withstand the competition between institutions in light of global markets that seek excellence and quality.

Sixth: The necessary requirements for implementing and ensuring quality in higher education.

There are necessary and important requirements that must be met in order to successfully implement and ensure quality in higher education. In contrast, it is considered a failed process and does not achieve the goal for which it was applied. These requirements can be highlighted as follows (Majid, 2007: 11):

- 1- Creating a suitable work environment in a gradual manner for the purpose of implementing the system through:
 - Sensing the importance of pre- and in-service training for the teaching staff.
 - The importance of investing in available practical human minds.
 - The importance of building and forming work teams that implement and evaluate quality.
 - The importance of developing methods and techniques to motivate workers to implement and evaluate quality.
- 2- Providing and distributing scientific guidelines for all work within the higher education sector.
- 3- Establishing a database of information and statistical data within the higher education sector.
- 4- Coordination between educational agencies within one educational institution and among themselves as a single system.
- 5- Establishing evaluation standards before, during and after performing any work within the higher education sector.
- 6- Approving work on studies based on thorough scientific research.

7- Studying the experiences of others and benefiting from them in a way that suits our reality.

Seventh: Systems and mechanisms for implementing and ensuring quality in higher education.

The systems and mechanisms for implementing and ensuring quality in higher education are represented in (Majeed, 2007: 11-12):

- 1- Senior management adopts the implementation of this system.
- 2- Raising awareness and spreading the concept of quality in higher education.
- 3- Studying employees' attitudes towards implementing this system.
- 4- Assess and diagnose the current situation of higher education.
- 5- Preparation and preparation within higher education institutions.
- 6- Building and forming work teams and determining their work methodology.
- 7- List all existing operations and determine their procedural steps.
- 8- Comprehensive quality system planning and timing.
- 9- Implementation of quality system implementation.

Salles explained (Sallis (1993) The requirements of the British Standard and its national framework for quality have been translated into the educational field as follows:

- 1- Departmental commitment to quality.
- 2- Admission and selection policy.
- 3- Recording the student's progress.
- 4- Curriculum development and educational strategies.
- 5- Consistency of evaluation methods.
- 6- Identifying low achievements, working to correct them, and dealing with areas of weakness.
- 7- Continuity of internal quality procedures and checks.
- 8- Developing and training the Authority (this includes identifying training needs, evaluating the effectiveness of training, monitoring and evaluating).

As for Alimat (2004), he summarized it with a number of requirements, the most important of which are: forming a quality council, a team for quality design and development, a quality

guidance committee, and a quality measurement and evaluation committee.

The researcher believes that the steps of systems and mechanisms for implementing and ensuring quality in higher education can be determined by the following:

- 1- The introduction, in which the concept of quality, its basis and components is clarified, employees are encouraged to participate, the needs and standards for quality and work steps are determined, the necessary financial resources are monitored, and the required information and data are provided.
- 2- Implementation: In which tasks and responsibilities are distributed, authorities are determined, and all employees undergo the necessary training.
- 3- Evaluation: It includes a permanent and continuous review of performance, comparing it to the specified quality standards, evaluating it according to the principles, and then redirecting the work.

From this standpoint, it is not possible to guarantee the application of quality in higher education, without examining the extent to which several requirements are provided, some of which are material, and some of which are related to the human resources working therein in terms of health, the degree of their education and qualification, and the skills and skills they possess, which are necessary and basic requirements in accrediting and ensuring quality in Higher Education.

Eighth: Results and recommendations:

First: the results

- 1- The quality of education requires the establishment of institutions to ensure the quality of education, and it also requires the acquisition of skills to achieve quality.
- 2- The concept of quality assurance lies in laying the foundations for continuous improvement as an important tool in raising the level of higher education activities, while not neglecting the ability that accelerated improvement provides to gain steps of success in a steady manner, which is consistent with Arab educational

institutions that are trying to adopt the principle of competition based on the quality.

- 3- The issue of quality assurance in higher education activities is gaining an important role that has begun to attract the attention of researchers and writers. Perhaps one of the reasons for this is the success of the concept and its role in raising the level of performance of the educational institution, towards building competitive advantages that enable the institution to continue and grow.
- 4- Ensuring that approved academic activities and programs meet the requirements for academic accreditation and are consistent with international standards in university education, the requirements for specialization in various fields of education, as well as the needs of the university, students, and society.
- 5- Preparing codified standards used to judge procedural applications of the quality of university work, such as a measure of the quality of a faculty member, the efficiency of department heads, college deans and the university president.
- 6- The quality of education requires the establishment of institutions to ensure the quality of education, and it also requires the acquisition of skills to achieve quality.

Second: Recommendations.

- 1- Follow the incentive policy for distinguished universities in the field of quality.
- 2- Establishing a special complaints box for the Ministry of Higher Education in each university.
- 3- Ensuring quality in higher education requires national institutions (institutional accreditation bodies) concerned with its guarantee and accreditation, and therefore requires legislation to create these institutions.

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