**The Effect of Planning in Quality Assurance of Educational Institute: A Study on Al-Isra University, Jordan**

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**Abstract**

The paper examined the necessity for quality assurance institutionalization planning in the Al-Isra university institution, and provided it as an indicators and concepts presented to the new public policy makers in new Jordan. The indicators of quality planning, the production function of the university and the strategies universities can adopt, in the Al-Isra University system, to assure quality of their products.

In this regard, university institution is the appropriate theater to play such role in administering and planning the quality assurance institutionalization in the higher educational sector, as thoughtful accomplishments. In this direction, University institution should be the first to apply the meanings and its importance in administering and planning its input and output of science and knowledge. This paper will demonstrate how a proper institutionalization of quality assurance in the Al-Isra University must have a policy of planning of Quality Assurance Institutionalization Politics in regard the Al-Isra University Development Policy Case.

**Keywords**: Quality Assurance, Planning of Quality Assurance, Institutionalization, Education and Development,

**Introduction**

Now in modern days it has become clear that universities have heavy responsibility in quality regard. A task must be done because a system that does not assure quality of its products in a global market that is competitive will eventually become unsustainable. We must however realize that many if not all the strategies discussed here have funding implications. Those whose responsibility it is to fund universities should take those it is to manage these funds should take even more note actions so that the university institution in new Jordan can truly begin to fulfill its mission toward a brighter University future.

In addition, university education as a place of creating science and knowledge has many duties to do toward the reality of how administering and planning the knowledge capital.

In this regard, university institution is the appropriate theater to play such role in administering and planning the quality assurance institutionalization in the higher educational sector, as thoughtful accomplishments. In this direction, University institution should be the first to apply the meanings and its importance in administering and planning its input and output of science and knowledge.

**Objective & Methodology**

The aim of this paper is to lay down some indicators for establishing new educational Planning national development policy in the University system, after the political changes in Jordan in 12-4-2009 uprising and demolishing the old mechanism of controlling the higher education system in Jordan. Its attempt will be based on rediscovering ways of achieving quality and sustaining it in the Al-Isra University system. This therefore, is the task of this paper. It will examine the concept of quality assurance, as has to be planned during the transformation period, and apply it to an Al-Isra University Institute. However, the major problem which faces the improvement of the Al-Isra higher educational sector its ignorance to planning quality assurance institutionalization, not in theory, but in practice.

A method has been designed to meet the objectives of research. For this purpose a questionnaire has been adapted from three different research studies [1.Salman Khalid et al (2011), 2.Uma Shankar et, al (2010) and 3.Khaled Al-Hashash et, al (2008)] and circulated in 4 different Faculties of Al-Isra University. This questionnaire consists of two different parts. The first part is showing respondents personal data such as gender, university type, income, age, qualification and the second part asked respondent to rate their satisfaction level to their bank from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree” on such variables which lead to build strong relationship with customers such as prices, reliability, technology, customer service, location and infrastructure etc. This questionnaire was given to 500 different respondents out of which 351 questionnaires were returned. Most of these responses were conducted ourselves and rest through the help of friends and family.

 **Institutionalization Instruments Analysis**

**(1) Quality Assurance Concept:**

Quality assurance is a holistic term, which directed toward education as an entity. It entails the supplier and consumer and the various activities put in place to produce quality products and services. For further examine this concept meaningfully; three approaches to the definition of quality will be used. These are "*the reputational approach, the outcomes approach and the total quality approach”.*

* The Reputational Approach:

This approach sees quality as exceptional, it seen as exclusive. It is something that "some have at the exclusion of others". It is distinctive and intuitively recognizable. This approach regards quality as excellence, it is a standard attained in our context by exceptional universities and or their products.

* The Outcomes Approach:

This regards quality as efficient production. Here, there are no absolute standards but specifications. The quality of a product measured by the extent to which it meets customer’s specifications. This approach is more related to practices in industry.

* Total Quality Approach

 Here quality is seen as value added. How much value has been added to the abilities of students for instance, who have passed through the system regardless of their ability levels? These are different views of quality when put together. However, we can accept that quality with regard to the output of university education is ‘the level of excellence in performance on the strength of the quality of the context, inputs, process transaction and output”... This shows that to attain or assure quality in output a lot quality inputs and processes would have made. Quality in output does not come by chance. It requires carefully planned and deliberate efforts.

Meaning of Quality Assurance:

The general meaning of quality assurance is very applicable to the production function of universities. It is the management of goods, services and activities from the input stage, through processes, to the output stage of production, Quality assurance aims at preventing quality problems and ensuring that only conforming products reach the customer. Moreover, the characteristics of an effective quality assurance mechanism are an effective quality management system Periodic audit of the operation of the system, Periodic review of the system to ensure it meets changing requirements.

It is clear therefore that an assurance process recognizes the need for a university to accept responsibility for its own management processes. This is the difference between quality assurance and inspection or evaluation. Quality assurance is a total, holistic process concerned with ensuring the integrity of outcomes. This places the responsibility for quality with the factory (university) itself, and thus expressed through its relationship with its customers.

Quality assurance recognizes the autonomy of organizations and seeks to enhance their capacity to operate in a responsive way. We can see here that individual universities have a responsibility of assuring the quality of their product and that is why our focus here is on quality assurance mechanism of the Al-Isra University Institution, in general.

Quality in Higher Education Meaning:

According to the author, it is possible to identify at least five definitions (Harvey and Green, 1993). First, is to see it as "producing perfection through continuous improvement by adopting Total Quality Management (TQM) to create a philosophy about work, people and human relationship built around shared values". This is a definition that points to the ideal, against which all other achievements are measured.

The second and less formidable definition is to see quality as" performance that is exceptional, attainable only limited circumstances and only when very able students are admitted ".

The third is to see it as the "ability to transform students on an ongoing basis and add value to their knowledge and personal development".

The fourth definition is to see it as" the ability to provide value for money and to be publicly accountable ".

The fifth definition sees "quality as something which fits the purpose of the product or service, once the purpose has been decided" (Bogue and Saunders, 1992)

Quality Assurance Requirements:

The experiences of the most developed countries suggest that the adoption of an instrumental approach to quality assurance in higher education can only work if a number of conditions are met.

The first condition is that academic staff members are qualified. Research and teaching up to an acceptable level and the valuable nexus between them can only be produced two three when basic knowledge of the subject and the methodologies for research and teaching is present. Without this, research will be poorly formulated and executed, teaching, lacking in breadth, depth and effectiveness, and the introduction of quality assurance not do much to increase standards to the desired level.

The second condition is that academics need only to be employed in one full-time job in one institution to live comfortably with their families.

They can earn extra income by doing short-term consultancy work for industry, government or international organizations as part of their direct community service function.

The third condition is the presence of adequate physical, electronic and administrative support services, such as well equal.

**(2) Indicators of Quality in Higher Education:**

There are indicators that are associated with quality education: These indicators are crucial to quality. They include:

* The students:

 In industry, product quality to a certain extent depends on the quality of raw materials input. Quality leather, all other variables being favorable would invariably lead to quality shoes. Quality grapes to quality drink. In university education, the quality of student input is crucial to their eventual outcome what knowledge and abilities do they already possess? Some assumptions are made regarding those when students are admitted to universities.

We assume that they had learned what they were supposed to learn at the lower levels of educational structure. If they did not and somehow cheated their way into the universities, the deficiencies will persist and eventually manifest in them as low quality products. The university does not perform miracles. If the society offers defective raw materials, it can only at best ameliorate the effects at the output end of the processes. To assure quality in student output by the universities, the primary and secondary levels of the system must also ensure quality in their productivity.

* University Professors:

The public policy on higher Education recognizes that no education system may rise above the quality of its teachers). The quality of lectures in the universities determines largely, *the quality of those that they produce and the quality of their research output*. During the forty two years of the development of university education in Jordan, there was a lack of orderly and prosperous growth, especially during the "People's Committee Rule of the education sector in Jordan. The lecturers in the universities at the time were less world class. They had not integrity both personal and intellectual. The system was always not improving them through training and retraining in the best universities in the world.

* Context:

If the university has well, quality learners and professors but run irrelevant programs that do not relate to the needs of the society nor with the “specifications” of the stakeholders and consumers, and then does quality in this context suffer. The national policy on education enjoins the universities to design course content that will reflect our national requirements.

It there is a continuing mismatch between what is offered in the university and what society needs, then regardless of the nature of what is offered, it would still in this quality context be of poor quality. Context here must also be aligned with adequate and appropriate materials, and equipment for teaching and learning. Workshops, laboratories, libraries and modern technology like ICT go as required with the context[[1]](#footnote-1).

* Teaching:

 Teaching separated here from teachers as a quality indicator because not much teaching goes on in the universities even with highly qualified academic staff in the department. Quality teaching involves not only possession of knowledge but also the ability to transfer knowledge, skills and attitudes to the learners. This is why the Educational public Policy envisages that all teachers in our educational institutions shall be required to undergo training in the methods and techniques of teaching these calls for training in methods and techniques in teaching.

* Teaching/Learning Environment:

Good learning environment promotes quality higher education. Environment here goes beyond the physical structures and beautiful aesthetic landscaping. Important though these are to quality learning, it includes adequate policies and practices, which prohibit students and teacher, harassment, examination malpractice, cultism and attendant violence. It connotes good academic culture. At the early stages of University development policy in Jordan there was adequate classrooms, offices hostel accommodation for students, large auditoriums for universities wide activities. The campuses were student friendly. With the radical increase in students enrolment that were not matched with corresponding improvement in facilities and funding, the existing facilities were overstretched and ill maintained. They can no longer support the programs of the universities leading to improvisation that have affected quality:

* Measurement and Evaluation:

 Quality must be measurable and clearly defined. In other words, there should be clearly defined learning outcomes such as knowledge, attitudes and skills expected of anyone who has gone through any course of study in the university. There must be suitable ways of assessing these at university and national levels. From our discussion of indicator of quality education, we can identify possible assurance mechanism in the university. These are:

1. Students admission policy
2. Recruitment and selection policy of academic staff
3. Circular policy (academic programs)
4. Supervision of instruction and teaching effectiveness.

We here discuss how these mechanisms can be put in place if they are not already being used and or strengthened if they are:

* Student Admission policy:

 Students are the raw materials that are taken into the university, processed and turned out on graduation as finished products to employers and society as customers. Admission standards in excellent universities are very high indeed. Only the finest candidates meet the requirements. The position of this presentation is that this move be strengthened to recover the autonomy of universities in determining their raw materials. In short, policy enrollment and admission to the university level requirements are well requested.

* Recruitment and Selection of Academic Staff:

The universities have autonomy in this regard. They recruit and select their staff. The only limitation here is that they cannot fix their remuneration outside the authority approved structure which unfortunately cannot attract desired teaching personnel from anywhere in the world. Even at the present level of enhancement, the remuneration package of the Al-Isra university teacher is still lower than the average in the Arab world and this becomes an impediment to attracting lectures in relevant areas from some Arab countries, Europe, America, Japan and other key Asian countries.

The concept of the university requires that its academic staff disposition is universal in profile. That is why some culture specific programs like foreign languages and high technologies, modern studies, Institutions of American and European Studies etc should for purposes of universal relevance and comparison have on their teaching staff, specialists from those cultures. Since quality has to do with relevance this obviously has a quality assurance implication.

* Circular policy:

 This is a quality context. Quality assurance in the university must have to do with the relevance of the programs. There must be societal justification for every programmed on the curriculum. It must be social, economic, political, cultural, environmental or some or all of these. This sees quality as relevance. It must have utility. It must not be an abstraction. Any Al-Isra University in the following areas can assure these:

* 1. Periodic review of existing programs to check on flaws breakdowns. This can be done every two years or by one year.

* 1. Review of objective in the light of society's changing needs and demands.

* 1. Ensure that the procedure for modifying programs (deletion and addition of courses) is not Cumbersome.
	2. This way, outdated and irrelevant courses are quickly removed and new ones added.

* Supervision of Instruction and Teaching Effectiveness:

 The quality of teaching has considerably declined in the Al-Isra universities. This may well be the reason why the National Policy on higher Education provides that all teachers in our national institutions shall be required of undergo training in the methods and techniques of teaching. Possession of knowledge is one thing; ability to transfer it to others is another. That is why university professor is discipline and teaching a profession.

In his inaugural lecture on the improvement of instruction and teacher effectiveness in our higher educational institutions, recommended among other things that student ratings of lecturers teaching at the end of courses) should be augmented by other approaches in making promotion decision on lecturers. That is why one cannot publish at the expanse of teaching and expect a favorable appraisal. They should complement each other.

**Mean Std. Deviation of Each Question**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Question** | **N** | **Minimum** | **Maximum** | **Mean** | **Std. Deviation** |
| There are sufficient number of equipment in the labs of my university | 350 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 1.8195 | 1.10592 |
| Course fees of my university is competitive. | 351 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.0514 | 0.93188 |
| My university has a rich library. | 348 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.1519 | 1.06262 |
| There are enough hostel seats available in my university. | 348 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.2000 | 1.07325 |
| Hostel seats are easy to obtain in my university. | 350 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.2659 | 1.19120 |
| Modern teaching tools (multimedia and overhead projectors) are frequently used in our classes. | 349 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.3642 | 1.19917 |
| My university provides various opportunities for co and extra-curricular activities. | 344 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 1.8971 | 1.05480 |
| My university has sufficient number of teaching stuff. | 345 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.1810 | 1.05415 |
| Educational background of the teachers are of good quality in my university. | 350 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.1821 | 1.12357 |
| Teachers in my university are knowledgeable. | 350 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.1368 | 1.14072 |
| It is easy to communicate with the teachers in my university. | 351 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 1.9484 | 1.00440 |
| Academic background of my classmates are good in my university. | 348 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2,1686 | 1.11473 |
| Teachers in my university understand my specific needs. | 347 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.2486 | 1.25921 |
| Teachers in my university are always willing to help. | 349 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.0460 | 1.14543 |
| Teachers in my university give me individual attention. | 347 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.0259 | 1.14169 |
| My university curriculum is relevant to my future jobs. | 347 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.1326 | 1.09751 |
| Infrastructure of my university is attractive and friendliness. | 351 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.2393 | 1.19718 |
| My university education helps me to develop good communication skills. | 350 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.0543 | 1.19511 |
| My university education helps me to develop team-working capabilities. | 345 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.0812 | 0.98496 |
| My teacher use highly effective presentation techniques in class. | 347 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.1729 | 1.06660 |
| My teachers are available when needed. | 350 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.2000 | 1.13552 |
| Exams in my university are fair. | 347 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.1441 | 1.09491 |
| Teachers show sincere interest in solving my problems. | 348 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.1810 | 1.12810 |
| My university ensures internship programs. | 345 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.1710 | 1.08493 |
| My degree ensures better prospects of getting a job. | 348 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.3247 | 1.14170 |

**(3) Higher Education Development Strategies in Jordan up to 2025**

The development policy of higher education is considered one of priority, in order to reach the projected goals of higher education development policy in Jordan up to 2025. Education and training development strategies in Jordan up to 2025 are aimed at building up a system of modern higher education with the ability of satisfying the knowledge-based needs of labor. Tertiary education contributes to the development of science-technology, culture-art, production, business and service, simultaneously helping improve knowledge, which promotes healthy lifestyle among people.

In parallel to the consolidation of a university network, a number of universities with quality higher training are being built and facilities, training conditions and scales are being developed and intensified. It is intended that the ratio of students per 10,000 should be about 300 in 2025. To implement development goals, the higher education system in Jordan needs to be continuously innovated and perfected. The following are the main solutions are being considered and desired:

To intensify effective management of agencies responsible for higher education from central to universities, to build perfect legal system of higher education to control training quality at universities by agreed criteria;

To innovate curricula, instructional methods at universities, to modernize training content by providing more scientific and applied technological knowledge and overcoming one-way instructional methods so that students' creativeness and self-study will be promoted.

 To develop a contingent of administrators and academics with a view to standardizing academic titles at university level, the objective being to increase by 20-30 per cent the numbers of professors with masters degrees. Attention should be paid to the development of the best-qualified experts involved in instructional, scientific research activities, technology transfer and other production-services.

To diversify and intensify financial resources for higher education from government budget, scientific research contracts, production services, and support from socio-economic organizations.

To expand and intensify international co-operation in higher education, to make full use of funding and technical support from other nations and international organizations thereby serving high quality training programs. Foreign cultural and training institutions should be encouraged to open in Jordan. Universities will be encouraged to participate in organizations like the Arab Association of Universities, UNESCO. Excellent undergraduate and post-graduate students should to be sent to study priority subjects in countries have advanced science and technology. By gradually preparing higher education integration, recognition of equivalent qualifications with developed nations.

**Conclusion**

Again, this is a draft research in Jordan about quality assurance in higher education development policy planning which will be implemented in the near future. I do hope through this Conference, we can learn more from this conference and experts

This presentation examined the necessity for quality assurance institutionalization planning in the Al-Isra university institution, and provided it as an indicators and concepts presented to the new public policy makers in new Jordan. The indicators of quality planning, the production function of the university and the strategies universities can adopt, in the Al-Isra University system, to assure quality of their products.

It has become clear that universities have heavy responsibility in this regard. A task must be done because a system that does not assure quality of its products in a global market that is competitive will eventually become unsustainable. We must however realize that many if not all the strategies discussed here have funding implications. Those whose responsibility it is to fund universities should take those it is to manage these funds should take even more note actions so that the university institution in new Jordan can truly begin to fulfill its mission toward a brighter University future.

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1. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)