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Pioneering experiences in quality assurance in Arab universities

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Abstract

The concept of quality has become a major concern at the international level, where institutions of various kinds are concerned with quality, and among the institutions that are now attaching great importance to this concept of higher education institutions, where international universities attach great importance to quality, and the Arab countries are now seeking to adopt this concept At the level of their universities. This study aims to showcase some of the leading Arab experiences in quality assurance in higher education institutions, in addition to some Arab initiatives to ensure quality in higher education.

Keywords: Quality, Higher Education, Universities, Arab Countries.

1.0 Introduction

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Today, the concept of quality is gaining the attention of all countries without exception, where developed countries have attached great importance to this concept in all sectors, such as the sector of higher education, which has become one of the most important concerns to ensure quality.

The Arab countries also highlighted this concept at the level of their university institutions, due to its great importance in achieving progress and scientific prosperity and the advancement of the higher education sector, which is the basic building block of peoples, and the production of qualified and efficient labor contributing to economic development and the advancement of the economy.

Based on the above, the following problems are raised:-

* What are the most important Arab experiences in the field of quality assurance?

This problem arises from the following questions:-

- 1- What is the reality of quality assurance in higher education in the Arab countries?
- 2- What are the most important Arab initiatives to ensure quality in higher education?

To answer the main question and sub-questions, the following hypotheses have been formulated:-

- 1- The absence of a national/regional quality assurance system and the superficiality of the quality assurance culture reflect realistic reasons for the lack of quality assurance in many universities in Arab countries.

2- Jordan and the UNITED Arab Emirates are among the countries that have placed the utmost importance and work to ensure quality in higher education by adopting a range of measures and procedures.

2.0 Study objectives

This study seeks to achieve the following objectives:-

- 1- To learn about the concept of quality assurance, the most important of which is higher education.
- 2- To learn about the reality of quality assurance in higher education in the Arab countries.
- 3- Knowledge of the most important Arab initiatives to ensure quality in higher education.
- 4- Highlighting the experience of Jordan and the United Arab Emirates.

3.0 What is quality assurance

3.1 Definition of quality assurance

Quality in education is defined as a set of characteristics that accurately reflect the essence and state of education, including its dimensions of inputs, processes, outputs, and feedback to achieve the desired goals(Juma & Somaya 2017).

The concept of quality assurance refers to the planning of processes and procedures in an appropriate systematic manner in order to ensure that the product or service provided conforms to the predetermined quality standards.

Quality is guaranteed before and during the educational process and not after, in which quality is an integral part of the products or outputs themselves, and here the specifications can be applied, and seek

to prevent any defects or defects, but it is difficult to apply this model or this premise to the educational process, and given that achieving some Educational objectives do not depend on the educational institution alone, but there are many variables and circumstances whose effects can interfere with the educational process.

3.2 Quality standards in higher education

Some of the most important quality standards in higher education include:-

3.2.1 The quality standards of the faculty member

The quality standard here is the practical, behavioral and cultural qualification of teachers in order to enrich the process in accordance with the educational process, and the size of the faculty, their competence and contribution to the service of society and their respect for the learners must be taken into account(Ajami & Hakim 2016).

3.2.2 The student quality standard

The scientific, social and cultural qualification of students so that knowledge minutes can be absorbed, taking into account the proportion of students and the average cost of the student and the services provided to him, their motivation and their preparations for learning(Al-Zubai & Al-Taie 2018).

3.2.3 Standards of curriculum quality

Based on the fact that the student is at the center of the educational process, the quality of the curriculum enables the student to guide himself in his studies and researches, to form his personality and to strengthen or change their attitudes and to create new skills to enrich their skills and educational achievement. The quality of the curriculum is measured in its level, content, style, method and the possibility of

expressing reality, and is in line with technological changes and cognitive developments(Khadija & Murad 2016).

3.2.4 Standards of quality of educational programs

Programs must be inclusive, integrated, complex, flexible to accommodate today's rapid developments in all areas, the abolition of traditional methods of education such as indoctrination, information-gathering and student thinking and work to make classes more exciting. The enthusiasm and making the learner the focus of the educational process, and involving him in the presentation of lessons to motivate him to seek and provide information(Belhadeh & Farahi 2013).

3.2.5 The criteria for the quality of teaching methods

The need to integrate the theoretical and practical teaching process and link it to reality (environmental problems), so that the student can understand, understand and apply them in his life experiences(Arab Regional Conference on Higher Education 2009).

Student calendar quality standard: Teachers should be diversified in the use of student performance evaluation methods, with a commitment to objectivity, transparency, justice and continuous training on evaluation and commitment.

3.2.6 Student calendar quality standard

Teachers should vary in the use of student performance evaluation methods, with a commitment to objectivity, transparency, justice, continuous training on the calendar and commitment to diversity in the choice of methods, choosing the best method that determines the true level of students and measuring outcomes. Learning, such as developing an effective system for evaluating their performance(Badis 2016).

3.2.7 The quality of the relationship between the educational institution and society

The educational institution must be interactive with society in all its productive and service sectors, meet its needs and be able to solve its problems, by developing specialties that serve the labour market.

The quality of material potential is based on the provision of buildings, halls, terraces and equipment, its ability to achieve objectives and the extent to which students benefit from information banks, offices and internet space, as this affects the quality of education in terms of the implementation of the plans that have been developed or the programmes that have been prepared (Salameh 2011).

3.2.8 Performance evaluation quality standard

Achieved by evaluating all previous criteria, to ensure the quality of education and achieve progress and excellence.

4.0 The experiences of some Arab countries in the field of quality assurance in higher education

4.1 The reality of quality assurance in higher education in the Arab countries

The Arab countries have had some efforts in ensuring the quality of higher education, and during their regional conference on higher education in Beirut in 1998, arab ministers reached a resolution calling for the establishment of a regional mechanism to guarantee quality and accreditation under the auspices of the Union of Arab Universities, and similar efforts were made through Subsequent Arab conferences, such as the 10th Conference in Yemen in 2005, as a result, some Arab countries established councils and bodies to ensure quality and accreditation, and the Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE) was launched in 2007 as an independent non-

governmental non-governmental organization in cooperation with The International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education, which works in collaboration with the Federation of Arab Universities to serve as a platform for the exchange of information, dissemination of knowledge and improved professional experience of national quality assurance agencies, with the aim of enhancing cooperation between similar quality assurance organizations in countries. In addition to developing cooperation with other quality assurance networks in the region and in the world. The Arab Network for Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Education (ARQAANE) was established in Belgium in July 2007 as an independent non-profit organization aimed at improving the quality of higher education in the Arab world and cooperation between Arab bodies and networks to ensure quality and accreditation. These networks seek to complete national quality assurance frameworks for the recognition of qualifications (nationally and internationally), institutions, courses and curricula and to help establish national records of institutions, courses and quality assurance agencies.

It is important to note the experience of the GCC in terms of quality assurance as one of the leading models at the Arab level, where it has established various forms of quality assurance and accreditation boards, some of which are linked to international accreditation boards, as well as the association of most of its private universities with universities. The possibility of establishing a quality assurance network in higher education in the GCC countries is currently being discussed as the adoption of a quality assurance approach in higher education in gcc countries enables to reduce national costs and improve local competitiveness. Both regional and international market, which is

believed to be achievable through the exchange of experts as in the international network of quality assurance agencies in higher education (INQAAHE). There is no doubt that most Arab countries, particularly the GCC countries, have made fundamental and tangible achievements, and no one can deny that a new generation of Arab academics who have been educated at prestigious American and European universities have joined the academic team at several universities in the Arab world, and The curriculum has been updated even in form, and everyone has become calling for the importance of scientific research, and the programs for graduate studies that lead to doctoral degrees, while meditating on the results of those efforts and the conclusions of initiatives, treaties and charters, and the extent to which they reach the desired goals, will discover that it is not easy to judge them in the absence of Documentation, especially with regard to the lack of research and studies assessing the actual application of the agreements, the lack of comprehensive data on educational systems, curricula, and how to make decision-making in most Arab countries. The basic constraints and limitations to quality assurance such as the scarcity of funds and resources, the absence of a national/regional quality assurance system, the superficial quality assurance culture in several Arab universities and countries, and the lack of distinguished expertise in the field of professional quality assurance cannot be ignored. International specialists such as the World Bank and UNESCO noted that Arab countries still face difficult challenges to develop high-quality education systems at all levels, as well as promote learning and training to meet the needs of the labour market, although some have invested in higher education. A higher proportion of its GDP than other regions of the world.

4.2 Arab initiatives to ensure quality in higher education

There are ten countries where bodies or committees have been established to ensure quality and quality control:-

4.2.1 Jordan

In 1990, the Accreditation Board was established to oversee quality control, setting standards for the accreditation, modification, development and implementation of private institutions, and in 2007, a law was passed, replacing the Accreditation Board and giving financial and administrative autonomy. The relevant standards, regulations and instructions remained in force until they were amended or changed, while their scope was expanded to include all private and government higher education institutions.

4.2.2 United Arab Emirates

Established in 2000, the Authority has focused its work on assessing the status of private higher education institutions based on licensing and accreditation criteria, as a result of which 16 private educational institutions were closed from 2001 to 2003, as they did not meet the conditions and requirements stipulated. It has to be licensed. All private educational institutions are periodically reviewed on an annual basis and their academic programs are re-accredited every five years.

4.2.3 Tunisia

A ministerial decision was issued on 29/06/1993 to organize the work of the National Evaluation Committee, and in 2006 and 2007 the Committee launched internal evaluation activities in all 190 institutions of higher education belonging to 13 public universities. After internal evaluation, each institution underwent an external evaluation by two or

three experts in the evaluation programme. This committee is the nucleus and preliminary work of the work of the national body to be established, where the National Assessment, Quality Assurance and Accreditation Authority will ensure the security of the assessment, quality assurance and accreditation mechanisms.

4.2.4 Libya

Established in 2006, the Center for Quality and Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions seeks to design, develop and implement a comprehensive system of evaluation, quality assurance and accreditation in national higher education institutions in order to develop the educational process to reach the highest standards of quality, efficiency and excellence.

4.2.5 Egypt

The decision was made to establish the National Authority for The Guarantee of Quality of Education and Accreditation as an independent body under the Prime Minister in 2006.

4.3 Jordan's experience in ensuring the quality of higher education

The development of higher education in the Kingdom of Jordan led to the draft law of the Authority for the Accreditation and Guarantee of the Quality of Higher Education Institutions, and under the Higher Education and Scientific Research Act No. 4 of 2005, the adoption of higher education institutions was established, but the ambition to improve the quality of education and ensure its quality has transformed The Council to a accreditation body independent of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. A bill has been drafted to adopt and ensure the quality of higher education institutions to achieve the following:

Achieving the objectives of the Authority through a council of 11 faculty members.

4.4 Setting accreditation and quality standards in their various forms

The adoption of higher education institutions in the Kingdom, the adoption of their academic programmes and the evaluation of these institutions and the quality of their programmes.

Involve higher education institutions in achieving the authority's objectives for the development of higher education in the Kingdom.

5.0 The quality management strategy in higher education has several main themes

- 1- Develop training programmes for senior management and use the expertise in the infrastructure necessary to develop comprehensive quality management systems.
- 2- Develop university admissions policies and standards with justice and equal opportunities.
- 3- Develop and update study plans and programmes in accordance with national development requirements, taking into account scientific and technological developments at the highest level.
- 4- The development of medium-sized higher education colleges and institutes to graduate highly qualified professionals, technicians and craftsmen commensurate with national and regional development plans.
- 5- Improving the level of qualification, competence and experience of human resources working in higher education institutions.
- 6- Improving the level, support and upgrading of scientific and postgraduate research.

7- Developing university management to ensure its ability to manage change and raise performance through the adoption of the principle of decentralization in management.

8- Ensuring the performance of higher education institutions through quality and quality control standards in all components of the university system.

9- The committee sits in the public sector, which is the first to be established in the country.

10- Developing higher education legislation and laws in accordance with all aspects of the strategy.

6.0 United Arab Emirates Experience

The UAE Academic Accreditation Authority was established in 1999 to ensure that private higher education institutions and academic programs comply with international standards, and the Authority prepares and implements quality standards on which private higher education institutions and programs are evaluated. Scientific for licensing and approval. The University of the United Arab Emirates is the leading university in the Arab region in its drive to achieve quality and obtain academic accreditation despite its recent inception, it is a government university established at the initiative of Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan - May God rest his soul - in 1976 in Al Ain, and since its inception, since its inception, since its inception. The University has given the highest priority to the development of its programs and study plans in accordance with the needs and requirements of the society while adhering to international academic standards and preserving the values, policies and strategies of the uae, and the University of the United Arab Emirates has been able to be a leading and distinguished

institution in The university is offering more than 70 bachelor's programs for undergraduate students as well as some other programs in the postgraduate curriculum. Emirates University is keen to have the degrees it gives in line with international standards, there is a bachelor's degree in medicine and surgery, which received international academic accreditation from the General Medical Council of the United Kingdom in 1994, and the Faculty of Engineering obtained academic accreditation. In 1999, the Faculty of Management and Economics received academic accreditation during 2004, and all other programs and study plans offered by the various colleges of the university are evaluated and reviewed externally. Periodically by international academic experts to ensure that these programs keep pace with international standards.

7.0 Conclusion

The Arab countries have paid great attention to ensuring the quality of higher education through the initiatives and efforts of these countries to establish this concept, which has become the cornerstone of higher education institutions.

There are many Arab countries that have undertaken quality assurance initiatives in higher education, and one of the most successful experiences in this field is Jordan and the United Arab Emirates.

Despite the initiatives adopted by the Arab countries in the field of the quality of higher education, there are many obstacles to quality in higher education, the most important of which is bureaucracy and widespread corruption in The Arab countries.

8.0 Recommendations

Through this research we list a number of recommendations as follows:-

- 1- To ensure quality in higher education, a number of measures must be respected and provided, the most important of which are summarized as follows.
- 2- The training of teachers in practice, behavioural and cultural in order to be able to enrich the process in accordance with the educational process.
- 3- Comprehensiveness in programmes, integration, depth, flexibility to accommodate today's rapid developments in all areas, and the elimination of traditional teaching methods.
- 4- The curriculum should focus on the student's focus on the student's focus on the educational process and the possibility of expressing reality, and in line with technological changes and cognitive developments.

The educational institution must be interactive with society in all its productive and service sectors, meet its needs and be able to solve its problems, by developing specialties that serve the labour market.

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