

Role of QEC in Emerging Higher Education Institutions: A Rising Challenge, A Journey of QEC for the Improvement of Quality Education at University of Haripur

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Abstract

The Higher Education Commission is making tangible efforts to improve the quality of higher education and to move university education to meet international standards in the provision of high-quality teaching, learning, research and service. A focused and precise approach is being developed for the best results and for consistency in the process of the Quality Assurance & Enhancement in higher education of the country. It reflects an effort to sensitize higher education institutions to the changes taking place internationally and bring higher education in Pakistan into complete harmony with the shifting paradigms at leading institutions around the world. QEC has task to ensure quality educational process and developing criteria for assessment of learning teaching process according to the manuals provided by QAAC in this regards QEC has taken several initiatives, for this purpose, survey was conducted to get the opinions of the respondents. Hence the nature of the study was descriptive type. All the faculty members of UOH constituted the population of the study. A Questionnaire consisting of 29 items using five-point Likert scale after going through the related literature for the data collection. Data collected was analyzed and interpreted in the light of objectives of the study by applying statistical percentages through SPSS. Most of the faculty/teachers gave positive perceptions on the roles and effectiveness of QEC at UOH, the light of study researcher may suggest some recommendations as, during evaluation standards of performance indicators should be followed: Teachers should be consulted while developing evaluation criteria for teacher's assessment and evaluation. A proper, fair, and transparent evaluation procedure should be followed: The assessment mechanism should be based on the guidelines and manuals provided by QEC. Teacher's satisfaction towards assessment should be kept in view.

Key Words: Emerging Higher Education Institutions, Rising Challenge, Improvement, Quality Education

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Introduction

In 1990, the World Declaration on Education for All renowned that the poor quality of education is necessary to be enhanced and made it available across the world and more appropriate and significant. The Declaration also recognized quality is prerequisite for the realization of the fundamental goal of equity. Emphasis should be positioned accordingly on giving surety about the improvement in student's cognitive development which can be all the way through by improving the quality of their education system (EFA, 2010)

The quality and excellence in higher education has turned into the foremost concern in the European perspective especially with the Lisbon Strategy and the Bologna Declaration. The increased interest in quality and standards narrate to the public and private; insist for excellence and proficiency in the knowledge-based society and demand of universities to counter to the demand by bringing to light the means of assuring and demonstrating quality (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher education, 2005).

Some authors, however, consign to quality assurance in higher education as 'superfluous', or 'an elusive, undefined butterfly'. They disagree that the process of quality assurance focus more on assurance and less on quality and consequently is asking the wrong questions (Harvey, 2009).

Every country desires for more and better standard of educational institutions. There is an obvious utilitarian target at the rear because academia has become the engines of advancement for knowledge-driven economies in the age of rapid globalization. But higher education requires much more than just building structures and calling them universities or colleges. There is little to be gained from a department of English where the department's head cannot speak or write a grammatically correct nontrivial sentence of English; a physics department where the head is puzzled about the operation of an incandescent light bulb; a mathematics department where graduate students have problems with elementary surds and roots; or a biology department where evolution is thought to be new-fangled and quite unnecessary to teach as part of modern biology. Nor does putting a big signboard advertising a "centre of excellence" make it one. There are countless places in Pakistan where the above is not far from the truth. On the other hand, there are also some examples of high quality such as a world-class medical university and business school, some good quality engineering and fine-arts. Quality Enhancement Cell at University of Haripur has been established under the direction of HEC. The most important intention of the cell is to carry out the evaluative procedures to accomplish brilliance in presentation and management in all areas of excellence education. To represent Quality Assurance system at the institution of higher education

with standardized procedures and practices in Higher education. To introduce and fabricate the standards for quality and excellence in all the educational institutions and upgrading and enhancing the education up to the level, where they may be calculated with the international level and practices in higher education sector.

Objectives of the Study:

The study looked into the perceptions of faculty/teachers concerning initiatives taken by QEC at UOH, having objectives as follows

1. To study the effectiveness of QEC in quality assurance in educational set up at University level.
2. To study the perceptions of teachers/faculty regarding initiatives taken by QEC at UOH.
3. To study the functions and roles of QEC in an institute/university (UOH).

Research Methodology:

Excellence in education is the observable fact having wide range for discussion; this study may help in improving the quality enhancement cell in terms of performance. The quality assurance under the initiatives taken by QEC at UOH and the provided suggestions on the basis of teachers/faculty perception: Study may have significant contribution for the QEC administration to improve the educational processes as teaching learning and evaluation processes: Study may have significance for the university and faculty of universities to enhance the teaching learning processes at university level and make possible efforts to improve the quality education: Study may have significance for both students and teachers to understand the needs of assessment and evaluation in teaching learning processes Study is significant for future researchers interested to carry out research on the effectiveness of the QEC and its roles in Quality Assurance. Out of 108 faculty members forty-four faculty members were randomly selected for the sample of the study. A questionnaire was used for the data collection which comprised of twenty-nine items on five-point Likert scale.

Analysis and Findings:

Table 1: Teachers Evaluation by QEC

Frequency	SDA	DA	U	A	SA	Total
Count	11	8	8	11	6	44
%	25.0%	18.2%	18.2%	25.0%	13.6%	100.0%

The above table shows that 43.18% of the faculty members disagreed, 38.6% agreed while 18.2% gave no idea on the statement “QEC evaluate teachers on the standards of performance indicators” The table illustrates that most of the participants agreed while some of the participants disagreed.

Table 2: Teachers Satisfaction with the Evaluation Criteria

Frequency	SDA	DA	U	A	SA	Total
Count	8	14	8	10	4	44
%	18.2%	31.8%	18.2%	22.7%	9.1%	100.0%

The above table shows 50% of faculty members disagreed, 31.81% agreed and 18.2% have no opinion for the statement, Teachers are satisfied with the evaluation criteria “The table indicates that most of the faculty members agreed and some of the faculty members disagreed.

Table 3: Teachers involvement in developing evaluation criteria

Frequency	SDA	DA	U	A	SA	Total
Count	20	9	5	7	3	44
% of Total	45.5%	20.5%	11.4%	15.9%	6.8%	100.0%

The above table indicates that 69.59% of the faculty members disagreed 22.72% agreed whereas 11.5% have no opinion on the statement that Teachers are being consulted while developing evaluation criteria, the table

indicates that most of the faculty members disagreed while some of the faculty members agreed.

Table 4: Contributions of teachers in assessment

Frequency	SDA	DA	U	A	SA	Total
Count	10	12	11	7	4	44
% of Total	22.7%	27.3%	25.0%	15.9%	9.1%	100.0%

The above table shows that 50% of the participants disagreed, 25% agreed whereas 25% gave no idea about the statement “In teachers’ assessment, all aspects of the contribution of each teacher is being kept in view ‘the table indicates that most of the participants disagreed while some of the participants agreed.

Table 5: Proper Teacher’s evaluation procedure

Frequency	SDA	DA	U	A	SA	Total
Count	7	11	18	5	3	44
%	15.9%	25.0%	40.9%	11.4%	6.8%	100.0%

The above table points out that 40.9% of the faculty member’s disagrees, 18.18% agreed whereas 40.9% gave no opinion on the statement, “There is a proper procedure for the teacher evaluation ‘and some of the faculty members (18.18 %) have agreement with the statement.

Table 6: Uniformity in teacher evaluation procedure

Frequency	SDA	DA	U	A	SA	Total
Count	7	6	14	15	2	44
% of Total	15.9%	13.6%	31.8%	34.1%	4.5%	100.0%

The table indicates that 38.63% of the faculty members agreed, 29.54% disagreed whereas 13.6 gave no idea for the statement, “There is a uniform

procedure for the teacher evaluation, and the table indicates that most of the participants agreed whereas some of the participants disagreed.

Table 7: Fair Procedure for The Teacher Evaluation

Frequency	SDA	DA	U	A	SA	Total
Count	5	11	16	8	3	44
% of Total	11.4%	25.0%	36.4%	18.2%	6.8%	100.0%

The above table displays that 36.36% of the faculty members e disagreed, 25% agreed whereas 36.4% gave no idea on the statement, there is a fair procedure for the Teacher evaluation. The table indicates that most of the participants disagreed while some of the participants agreed.

Table 8: Transparent Procedure in teacher’s evaluation.

Frequency	SDA	DA	U	A	SA	Total
Count	3	11	17	11	2	44
%	6.8%	25.0%	38.6%	25.0%	4.5%	100.0%

The table illustrates that 31.81% of the faculty members disagreed, 29.5% agreed whereas 38.6% gave no opinion for the statement. There is a transparent procedure for The Teachers evaluation, the table indicates most of the participants disagreed while some of the participants agreed.

Table 9: Proper Documentation.

Frequency	SDA	DA	U	A	SA	Total
Count	6	6	13	16	3	44
% of Total	13.6%	13.6%	29.5%	36.4%	6.8%	100.0%

The table displays that 43.18% of the faculty members agreed 27.27% disagreed and 9.5% gave no opinion on the statement, QEC keep information with proper documentation of information and share with teachers, the table indicates that most of the participants disagreed whereas some of the participants agreed.

Table10: Self-Assessment Report

Frequency	SDA	DA	U	A	SA	Total
Count	2	6	12	15	9	44
% of Total	4.5%	13.6%	27.3%	34.1%	20.5%	100.0%

The table demonstrates that 54.54% of the faculty members disagreed, 18.18% agreed and 27.3% gave no response to the statement, SelfAssessment Report of each program of different departments is a good initiative of QEC, it indicates that most of the faculty members agreed whereas some of the faculty members disagreed.

Table 11: Steps taken by QEC for Plagiarism Policy

Frequency	SDA	DA	U	A	SA	Total
Count	2	1	17	17	7	44
% of Total	4.5%	2.3%	38.6%	38.6%	15.9%	100.0%

The above table shows that 54.54% of the faculty members' agreed6.81% disagreed whereas 38.6% gave no idea for the statement, Steps taken by QEC for Plagiarism Policy are appreciate able, it indicates that most of the faculty members agreed, whereas some of the faculty members disagreed.

Table 12: Promoting research culture

Frequency	SDA	DA	U	A	SA	Total
Count	1	6	10	20	7	44
% of Total	2.3%	13.6%	22.7%	45.5%	15.9%	100.0%

The above table shows that61.36% of the faculty members disagreed, 15.90% agreed while 22.7% gave no idea for the statement, Research Record maintained by QEC will promote research culture in the university, it indicates that most of the faculty members disagreed whereas some of the faculty members agreed.

Table13: Incentives for research dissemination

Frequency	SDA	DA	U	A	SA	Total
Count	3	12	12	7	10	44
% of Total	6.8%	27.3%	27.3%	15.9%	22.7%	100.0%

The above table expresses that 36.36% of the faculty members agreed,34.08 disagreed whereas 27.3% gave no opinion on the statement, Incentives for research dissemination encourage teachers to conduct more research the participants disagreed.

Table 14: Time table

Frequency	SDA	DA	U	A	SA	Total
Count	7	9	9	12	7	44
% of Total	15.9%	20.5%	20.5%	27.3%	15.9%	100.0%

The above table shows that 43.18% of the faculty members agreed, 36.36% disagreed while 20.5% gave no idea on the statement, Time Table taken & checked by QEC in each semester facilitates smooth teaching learning process. It indicates that most of the faculty members agreed while some of the faculty members disagreed.

Table15: Course outline distribution

Frequency	SDA	DA	U	A	SA	Total
Count	6	8	9	15	6	44
% of Total	13.6%	18.2%	20.5%	34.1%	13.6%	100.0%

The above table shows that 47.72% of the faculty members agreed, 31.81% disagreed whereas 20.5% gave no opinions to the statement, Course outline with weekly distribution of each course taken by QEC in every semester help teachers, HODs and QEC in implementation of courses. It indicates that most of the faculty members agreed whereas some of the faculty members disagreed.

Table 16: Monitoring of the Course

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Frequency	SDA	DA	U	A	SA	Total
Count	5	10	13	13	3	44
% of Total	11.4%	22.7%	29.5%	29.5%	6.8%	100.0%

The above table confirms that 36.36% of the participants agreed, 34.09% disagreed whereas 29.7% have no opinion on the statement, Monitoring by QEC for the implementation of the course is a good effort, it indicates that most of the participants agreed whereas some of the participants disagreed.

Table 17: Teachers satisfaction on monitoring

Frequency	SDA	DA	U	A	SA	Total
Count	13	9	8	9	5	44
% of Total	29.5%	20.5%	18.2%	20.5%	11.4%	100.0%

The above table shows that 50% of the faculty members disagreed, 31.81% agreed, whereas 18.2% gave no idea on the statement, the statement; I am satisfied by the monitoring process of QEC, it indicates that most of the faculty members disagreed while some of the faculty members agreed.

Table 18: Course evaluation in semesters

Frequency	SDA	DA	U	A	SA	Total
Count	2	7	10	18	7	44
% of Total	4.5%	15.9%	22.7%	40.9%	15.9%	100.0%

The table shows that 56.81% of the faculty members agreed, 20.45% disagreed, whereas 22.7% gave no idea on the statement, Course evaluation is done by QEC in every semester it indicates that most of the faculty members agreed, whereas some of the faculty members disagreed.

Table 19: Role of students in teachers' evaluation

Frequency	SDA	DA	U	A	SA	Total
Count	9	7	11	10	7	44
% of Total	20.5%	15.9%	25.0%	22.7%	15.9%	100.0%

The table shows that 38.6% of the faculty members agreed, 36.36% disagreed whereas 25% gave no response to the statement, Students have key role in teacher's evaluation process which identifies the strengths and weaknesses of teachers in different areas. It indicates that most of the respondents agreed whereas some of the respondents disagreed

Conclusions

For the sake of easy understanding the conclusions have been divided into two sections describing the agreed and disagreed opinions respectively, Most of the participants agreed that QEC at UOH is playing vital role in developing a viable and sustainable mechanism of quality assurance, partnership with faculty for conducting effective evaluation process, and a dedication to the management's commitment to the quality assurance,

There is a uniform procedure for the teacher evaluation, Initiatives taken by QEC are helpful in continuous improvement of academic and administrative activities, QEC keep information with proper documentation of information and share with teachers, Steps taken by QEC for Plagiarism Policy are appreciating, Incentives for research dissemination encourage teachers to conduct more research, Time Table taken & checked by QEC in each semester facilitates smooth teaching learning process, Course outline with weekly distribution of each course taken by QEC in every semester help teachers, HoDs and QEC in implementation of courses, Monitoring by QEC for the implementation of the course is a good effort, Course evaluation is done by QEC in every semester, Initiatives taken by QEC are helpful in creating conducive learning environment, QEC at University of Haripur is doing its best efforts to find out the ways which are helping Teachers' in their professional development, QEC has been established at UOH for effective management and implementation of the quality assurance required by HEC, Students have key role in teacher's evaluation process which identifies the strengths and weaknesses of teachers in different areas. The results of the study regarding performance of the QECs are coincide with (Ali, M. I., Ishfaq, U., & Ahmed, R., 2018)

Most of the participants disagreed that QEC evaluate teachers on the standards of performance indicators, Teachers are satisfied with the evaluation criteria, Teachers are being consulted while developing evaluation criteria. In teachers' assessment, all aspects of the contribution of each teacher is being kept in view, there is a proper procedure for the teacher evaluation, there is a fair procedure for The Teacher evaluation, there is a transparent procedure for The Teachers evaluation. QEC made it sure that the programs running in various departments are good enough in quality, procedures, Self-Assessment Report of each program of different departments is a good initiative of QEC, Research Record maintained by QEC will promote research culture in the university.

Recommendations

In the light of the study findings and conclusions it was suggested that teachers, students and Director QEC can be accelerated by thinking the following steps i.e. provision of sufficient resources, add latest software's, latest researches, better assessment system and recruitment of trained staff etc. The assessment mechanism should be based on the guidelines and manuals provided by QEC and teachers should be consulted while developing evaluation criteria following the fair procedure for it.

Teacher's satisfaction towards assessment should be kept in view as it will help in maintaining an appropriate system with quality standards leading towards the best results. Teachers and students should be educated and trained about their role in achievement, maintain and improvement of quality of education at the institution because the collected information are useful for making meaningful decisions for the status of quality of education.

Although QEC at University of Haripur is doing its best efforts to find out the ways which are helping Teachers' in their professional development but it should be more realistic to provide opportunities for teachers to explore new roles, develop and improve instructional techniques, refine their practice, and broaden themselves both as teachers and as individuals. There may be PhD / MPhil research student progress review form for follow up which will help ensure the students' progress is regularly monitored and benchmarked against the HEC quality criteria for PhD/ MPhil studies.

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