

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

The 2018 APQN Academic Conference (AAC) and AGM were held from March 22-25, 2018 in Nagpur, India. The Conference was hosted by Shri Shivaji Education Society Amravati's Science College and Dhanwate National College, Nagpur. The main theme of the Conference "Capacity Building for Next- Generation Quality Assurance in Higher Education" covered a wide range of important issues which were distributed under 4 sub-themes: (1) Internal Quality Assurance of Quality Assurance Agencies (QAAs); (2) Quality Assurance of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs); (3) Institutional and Professional Accreditation; (4) International, Regional and National Quality Assurance.

The conference was attended by 146 participants from 33 countries and territories who represented QAAs, HEIs and educational authorities of different countries.

This publication includes 18 research papers from 13 countries with representation from various regions. The conference theme of the conference was categorised into 3 main sub themes. The first sub theme "Excellence in Quality Assurance" has 5 papers, while second theme - Internal *Quality Assurance in HEIs* has 8 papers and third subtheme - *New Assessment Methodologies in Higher Education* has 5 papers.

Sub theme 1-Excellence in Quality Assurance

Jianxin Zhang and Xinna Zhang of China have authored the paper titled "**Capacity building of APQN QA Cooperation**". The paper highlights the activities and efforts of APQN on capacity building and cooperation in the area of QA since its existence. It suggests the basis of identifying its role, foster mutual trust and faith in QA community, collaboration opportunities by increasing the promotion of quality tasks; strengthen capacity building by enhancing substantive cooperation among members.

Manuel Corpus and Maria Glenda of Philippines have authored the paper "**Capacity building best practices and what else went wrong**". The paper intends to provide information about the capacity building activities of AACUP. The activities of AACUP specially referring to accreditors' training, retaining etc. The paper also intends to provide details on the paradigm shift of quality assurance from the traditional input-process-focused approach to outcome-based quality assurance and shares ideas on the lessons learned from accreditors' training, the best practices implemented and the problems faced.

Nora Skaburskienė has authored the paper "**Challenges for quality assurance in the European higher education area**". This paper draws attention to recent changes in the European Quality Assurance Area as well as presents challenges that are linked to adapting to the fast-changing environment, also to demonstrating the impact of the agencies' work, thus, justifying the benefits of external quality assurance.

Sam C. K. HO has authored the paper "**Capacity building of peer reviewers**". The paper outlines the experience of HKCAAVQ in providing training and support to peer reviewers. It proposes the directions of change that address the feedback and meet the needs of the peer reviewers in the ever-changing educational landscape. This paper is also a response to the need of strengthening capacity building among the quality assurance bodies and networks from around the world.

Sid Nair has authored the paper "**Capacity building: the changing landscape of higher education - a need to change**". The paper highlights the current changes in higher education sector such as rapid expansion, changing landscape, evolving new ways of delivery etc. It also advises the need to think on the way of quality, quality measurement and / or monitoring.

Sub theme 2- Internal Quality Assurance in HEIs

D. K. Burghate and D. W. Deshkar have authored the paper **“Higher Education in India: issues and concerns”**. The paper addresses the issues and concerns emerged in Indian Higher education due to the rapid changes in the world. The paper calls for the all round development of body, mind and spirit, through the educational processes in the institutions of higher education in India.

Deepthi C. Bandara has authored the paper **“An insight into the conduct of successful program reviews – the Sri Lankan experience”**. The paper addresses the significance of reviewers in the review process since selection, training and capacity building of persons to serve as reviewers.

Dewi Irrawaddy has authored the paper **“Indonesia accreditation agency for higher education in health (IAAHEH) support of the inter-professional clinical practice”**. The paper mainly highlights the developmental activities of IAAHEH, established recently to maintain quality of health professional practice and educational issues in Indonesia. It also stresses building awareness, motivation, and concrete actions that will lead to the institutionalization of culture of continuous quality improvement.

Fabrizio Trifiro has authored the paper **“The Quality Assurance of Transnational Education: a UK perspective”**. The paper outlines QAA's approach to quality assuring transnational education (TNE) – and hints at the key challenges for the quality assurance of TNE from a provider's perspective, offering advice on how best these challenges can be addressed based on QAA's experience of quality assuring TNE.

Galina Motova and Oksana Matveeva have authored the paper **“The Development Of Institutional And Professional Accreditation In Russia”**. The article outlines the recent development of higher education quality processes in Russia with a special focus on different types of accreditation. It covers the changes and development of institutional, programme and professional accreditation in Russia.

Jagannath Patil has authored the paper **“Paradigm Shift In Indian Higher Education Accreditation”**. This paper presents a summary of accreditation process of Indian higher education system along with salient features of the revised accreditation framework of NAAC. Paper concludes by suggesting that the revised accreditation framework is a step in the right direction which is likely to usher in a new era of digital accreditation with quality indicators as a base for benchmarking-led quality improvement process in Indian higher education.

Li Yaogang, Chen Jiani and Zhang Lingfei have authored the paper **“Quality Assurance of Postgraduate Education BASED on the Third Party Sampling Inspection OF Theses in Shanghai”**. The paper outlines the inspection process developed by SEEI. The inspection process introduced improves the efficiency of evaluation process, promotes the scientificity and fairness of theses evaluation, and ensures the quality of postgraduate education.

Sun Ying and Li Yan have authored the paper **“The Utilization of Information Technology in Higher Education Quality Assurance in China”**. The paper highlights the importance of ICT and its utilization in higher education QA in China and provides details about the background, process, system design and efficiency of the national data platform.

Ye-Jin Oh has authored the paper **“Quality Assurance of Higher Education Institutions in Korea”**. The paper explains KUAI's main role focusing on accreditation process, evaluation contents and QA of higher education in Korea. The paper provides statistical data on enrollment and completion rates of students in higher education in South Korea, which are higher as compared to other OECD countries.

Sub theme 3- New Assessment Methodologies in Higher Education

Jasmina Havranek, Vesna Dodiković-Jurković and Emita Blagdan have authored the paper **“Agency for Science and Higher Education Internal QA System”**. The paper mainly outlines the functioning of ASHE as an independent national agency for external evaluation in higher education and science in the Republic of Croatia. The results of evaluation procedures encourage objective consideration of advantages and deficiencies, as well as joint implementation of agreed improvements in Croatia.

Junping Qiu, Jing Tian and Xilu Dong have authored the paper **“World-Class Universities And Disciplines Evaluation: Methods And Results Based On The Evaluation Practice Of Chinese Academy Of Science And Education Evaluation”**. The paper is based on the study of building up of world class universities and disciplines evaluation in China and results are explained in detail.

Malini Nair has authored the paper **“Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) Realizing Its Educational Goals”**. The study reviews the dimension of educational, institutional effectiveness consecutively with institutional goals. It concludes that a planned assessment linked to institutional goals to ensure the students or learners achieve the program's key learning outcomes.

Vera Silaeva, Aleksandra Zvezdova, Arkady Vladimirtsev and Irina Dolgikh have authored the paper **“Independent Assessment of Qualifications as an Element of the National System for External Education Quality Assurance”**. The article describes the system of activities on independent education quality assessment of quality concept “system quality – processes quality – results quality”. It reviews the procedure for assessment as an element of the system for external education quality assurance and as part of the complex approach towards education quality assessment.

In conclusion:

The varieties of issues discussed in the papers from different countries indicate that research in external quality assurance is now gaining high attention by quality professionals. We hope that new dimensions and practices shared in this publication will be useful to all stakeholders.

We gratefully acknowledge efforts of the conference hosts Dr. D.K. Burghate and Dr. D.W. Deshkar in organizing this international event successfully and thereby providing a platform for exchange of issues and good practices.

All the events: plenary meetings, keynotes, panel discussions, parallel sessions, workshop, APQN Quality Award Ceremony – made a great and lasting impression on the conference participants and inspired them to extend collaboration for capacity building and quality assurance in Higher Education.

We sincerely appreciate the efforts taken by all the authors who agreed to revise their original manuscripts as per template provided by the editors. We place on record our sincere thanks to APQN President, Board and also to the publishers for bringing out this new volume in APQN series of conference publications.

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