



Quality Assurance of Higher Education at the University Level in Division Bahawalpur

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Abstract

This informative study aims to clarify the quality assurance in higher education at the university level in the Division of Bahawalpur. The objectives of this study are: to find out the difference in quality assurance among students of different universities (public and private), to compare learning and teaching strategies, to identify reasons for quality assurance failure, to analyze physical infrastructure and academic facilities, and to compare the administrative facilities between these institutions. A descriptive quantitative survey design was selected for this study. The population of this study is all universities (Government and Private) located in the Division Bahawalpur and 07 universities were chosen as a sample. Of these 07 universities, 514 students (boys and girls) and 48 teachers (males and females) participated in this study as a sample. The simple random sampling technique is used. For data collection, two self-structured questionnaires were employed; one for students and one for teachers, each consisting of 40 items. After data collection, it was analyzed with the help of SPSS. The findings revealed that public universities have difficulty keeping up-to-date infrastructure and attempting to adapt contemporary teaching tactics, whereas private institutions often have superior administrative resources and more sophisticated teaching methodologies. It is suggested that to guarantee uniformity in educational quality, all universities should use a common quality assurance system and provide a favorable learning environment, increase spending on academic facilities, and encourage cooperation between public and private institutions to exchange best practices in quality and learning for progress.

Keywords: Education, Quality Assurance, Higher Education Institutions, Survey Design, Evaluation



Introduction

The motivation to keep going on comes from education. To increase the skilled labor force required for social and economic growth, education is crucial. The current educational system in Pakistan did not develop overnight. Its origins are found in the subcontinent's more than a millennium-old cultural legacy. Over the past few decades, numerous international conferences and declarations have focused on the need for high-quality education. Over the past 35 years, interest in higher education has grown dramatically on a global scale.

Developing nations understand that accessibility to higher education is critical to the advancement of science, technology, and industry—all of which are necessary for the eradication of poverty and the creation of a prosperous society.

Higher education is becoming more liberalized today, which means colleges have more autonomy and social responsibility. Thus, the issue of providing effective, affordable, and high-quality education has become crucial in the modern world. The global community views top-notch postsecondary education as a means of fostering social, cultural, and economic advancement (Durdas & Kravchuk, 2022).

The goal of higher education is also to infuse in its graduates a strong sense of adaptability to a society that is evolving and to enable them to meet a variety of difficulties in a dynamic world. Maintaining teachers' pedagogical abilities is mostly dependent on teacher education. Higher education teachers will need to be more involved in the learning process. According to Nair and Mertova (2011), student feedback on the instructional process is the most useful instrument for long-term quality development in higher education. However, the majority of colleges evaluate the experience using a combination of qualitative and quantitative metrics, including student assessments and standards (Tight, 2020). When this equilibrium between supply and demand is upset, highly educated workers become unemployed.

One of the most crucial objectives of the learning process is ensuring the quality of education, which can only be achieved by applying the appropriate policies in higher education. This can be achieved through analyzing the effects of global experiences, keeping in mind the requirements and opportunities for both teachers and students, as well as the social structure that affects education.

This study's main goal is to ascertain how widely NACTE (National Accreditation Council for Teacher Education) standards are used in Pakistani teacher education programs in public sector institutions. It is indeed the future of teachers and the university, for the mass of students. The goal of teaching standards across nations is to assist institutions and teacher



education programs alike as they progress through various stages of growth. The standards play a significant role in fostering professionalism in teacher educators and aspiring educators. The educational system and teacher education programs can be connected with the aid of these standards. To maintain quality in teaching, NACTE was established by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) which accredits all initial-level teaching degree Programs of Public and Private sector institutions. Seven accrediting standards are laid out by NACTE (IDPP). The development of teachers' professionalism is the main goal of these standards. Particular attention is given to teacher education in national and provincial policymaking, and the education program is guided by these requirements. The goal of the study is to determine how these standards are being implemented in Pakistan and where there are implementation gaps.

Statement of the Problem

One of the key topics of concern in the Bahawalpur division's institutions is the modernization of quality assurance. Universities provide theoretical and practical tips to universities on modernizing quality assurance so that the output of higher education will be graduates; able to work anyplace, basically serving as globally competitive human capital rather than what seems today in Russia- professional qualifications from lower ranked vetted universities which are much mismatches with professions needed.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this research was to observe the quality assurance of higher education in the Bahawalpur division. The main objective was to explore how to ensure quality assurance at a higher level. Since most of the quality assurance work has been done on teachers, teacher training and evaluation methods have improved, but no fruitful results have been achieved. But we are now focusing on students also for a better understanding of the facts. There is a quality assurance gap at this end. The main importance is that it helps to enhance the quality of education for students.

Research Objectives

The main objectives of the research are:

- To find out the difference in quality assurance among students of different universities in the Bahawalpur division.
- To compare learning and teaching strategies between private and public universities.
- To identify reasons for quality assurance failure.



- To analyze physical infrastructure, and academic facilities between public and private universities.

Literature Review

This study focuses on the conceptual map of quality in higher education (HE), is examined relative to current trends at a global level, and incorporates a review of relevant literature from external countries that reflect HE worldwide topics. More to the point we need to think about quality in higher education as an idea. Globalization, and expansion in information and communication technology (ICT) big bang of higher education together with masses accessing to it give rise to new challenges for governments, including maintaining high-quality assurance benchmarks. Upon considerable modifications, it was made known that traditional techniques of internal and external evaluation can only ensure a reasonably high quality of higher education to meet the growing standards imposed by an updated society. That is why increasingly more countries are moving quality assurance to the center of their reform processes aimed at committing fundamental changes within higher education systems and stimulating cross-border cooperation and public review (Karakhanyan, Stensaker, 2020).

This section critically deals with the literature on quality assurance in higher education, taking into account both the global and Pakistani contexts. The aim is to furnish the theoretical foundation for evaluating the quality assurance model. A country's ability to flourish economically and socially depends on its higher education system. Research that changes a country is mostly done by Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) to create a knowledge-based society (Meek et al., 2009; Bonn Declaration, 2007). The studies mentioned above highlight the significance of quality assurance in HEIs and establish a connection between a nation's economic success and the caliber of its higher education. The rise of higher education institutions over the past few decades has resulted in a substantial change in the worldwide higher education scenario (García-Morales et al., 2021). Many students selecting higher education has significantly increased, which is mostly to blame for this expansion. Universities are becoming more competitive with each other as a result of the rise in the number of establishments offering higher education. This implies that the caliber of services offered by higher education institutions determines their ability to remain viable. It is emphasized that indicators of higher education quality are quantitative and normative measurements of the essential elements of institutions' operations and their constituent parts. The issue is that current metrics fail to capture the significance of the institution in the lives of students (Mukherjee et al., 2022).



At the same time, no nation in the modern era is content with its higher education system; instead, everyone is searching for improvements that will provide noticeable outcomes. The essence of the phenomenon of quality culture changed significantly under these circumstances, moving from the conventional understanding as a required component of a university's institutional academic culture to the public's awareness of the vital role that higher education plays (ISSN 2412-0774). The theory and practice of further vocational education ISSUE TM 2 (75), 2023 forming the national QA system's corporate culture in higher education (Durdas & Kravchuk, 2022).

Evolution of Education

Throughout history, education has undergone significant transformations. From ancient civilizations' basic forms of knowledge transmission to the establishment of formal schooling systems in the modern era, the evolution of education reflects humanity's quest for enlightenment (Rury, 2002). Notably, the Industrial Revolution spurred the expansion of mass education, leading to widespread literacy and the democratization of knowledge (Boli & Ramirez, 2003). Education has changed over time in response to shifting needs, goals, and conditions, from its simple beginnings in ancient civilizations to the intricate educational institutions of today.

Quality of Education in Higher Education

Quality of education in higher education institutions has been a significant concern globally, particularly in the aftermath of major historical events like the First World War. This literature review aims to explore the evolution of quality education in higher education, examining its status in developed and developing countries, neighboring regions, provisional territories, and local divisions. Getting a top-notch education at a university is crucial to equipping students to handle the demands of a world that is changing quickly. Advances in technology, the need for lifelong learning, and the growing needs of businesses have all contributed to an increased focus on high-quality education in recent years.

Quality Education in Higher Education: Historical Context

The history of higher education may be traced to the era of ancient civilizations when learning institutions like the Academy in Greece and the Library of Alexandria in Egypt functioned as gathering places for scholars and intellectual debate. The foundation for the current system of higher education was established in medieval Europe with the establishment of cathedral schools and early universities like the University of Bologna and the University of Paris. The printing press's development was crucial to the democratization



of higher education since it allowed for the easy exchange of ideas and the dissemination of knowledge. Despite tremendous advancements, higher education still faces several obstacles, including limited resources, growing tuition prices, differences in access and achievement, and doubts about the applicability of certain curricula in a world that is changing quickly.

Technological Integration in Education

In recent decades, technological advancements have revolutionized educational practices. The integration of digital tools, such as computers, tablets, and educational software, has transformed traditional teaching methodologies (Selwyn, 2011).

Virtual learning environments, online courses, and interactive multimedia resources have expanded educational access and personalized learning experiences (Means et al., 2013). The use of technology in education has become essential in the current digital era, as it has changed the way that knowledge is imparted and learned, increased accessibility to educational materials, and promoted creative teaching methods.

Challenges Facing the Education System

Several challenges hinder the effectiveness of the education system in Pakistan. These include inadequate funding, outdated curricula, poor infrastructure, and low teacher quality (Khan, 2019). Gender disparity remains a pressing issue, particularly in rural areas where cultural barriers impede girls' access to education (Mumtaz & Shaheed, 2000). Furthermore, the prevalence of extremist ideologies in certain educational institutions poses a threat to social cohesion and national security (Saleem, 2017).

As stated by J. According to Prodanová, L. Kocarev (2023), the competencies and observations of system participants will be crucial to the educational service's successful future, and the organization's competitiveness is greatly influenced by factors such as service quality, employee engagement, and satisfaction. In this regard, it is also important to acknowledge that instructors who exhibit contentment with the organization and their professional choices are more likely to be motivated, ecstatic, and proud of their work—qualities that characterize a dedicated community. According to Prodanová and Kocarev (2023), this is a useful measure in a growing community.

Opportunities for Improvement

Despite the challenges, there are opportunities for reform and improvement within the Pakistani education system. Efforts to increase public spending on education, revise curricula to promote critical thinking and tolerance, and enhance teacher training programs are crucial steps (Ahmad, 2016). Embracing innovative teaching methods, leveraging technology for



learning, and promoting community involvement can also contribute to positive change (Khalid, 2018).

The setup of education in Pakistan is characterized by a blend of historical legacies, structural complexities, and persistent challenges. Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive reforms that prioritize equitable access, quality teaching, and relevant curricula. By investing in education as a fundamental right, Pakistan can pave the way for a brighter future for its citizens.

HEC Standards

The Higher Education Commission of Pakistan plays a vital role in setting and maintaining standards for higher education institutions across the country. HEC standards encompass various aspects, including faculty qualifications, curriculum design, research output, infrastructure, and governance (HEC, 2015). To guarantee quality and excellence in higher education institutions, compliance with Higher Education Commission (HEC) requirements is essential. HEC standards were developed to control and oversee universities and colleges. They function as standards for accreditation, assessment, and development.

Higher Education Performance Models

Before debating which quality assurance model works best in Pakistan and critically assessing its effectiveness, it makes sense to talk about several performance models that other nations have chosen. Five models were developed by Denise et al. (2008) to evaluate higher education's performance, credibility, and quality-related concerns.

Among these models are:

- Quality Inspection
- Certification
- Budgeting and Funding for Performance
- Reports on Performance
- Tests and Surveys

The Higher Education Quality Assurance Concept

The increasing need for responsibility and openness has resulted in a requirement to establish a culture of excellence, while also tackling the difficulties posed by globalized higher education, which is what internationalization of higher education has brought about (Schmidt, 2015). Evaluations of quality assurance provide objective, external third-party viewpoints.



These assessments include comments on associated companies, products, services, policies, and practices in addition to recommendations for enhancements.

Accreditation: Quality Assurance of Higher Education Institutions

Three variables impact the quality assurance trends in international higher education (CHEA, 2007). First of all, quality control is more demanding and competitive than ever. Second, quality control is gaining acceptance on a regional level. Third, a global system for quality assurance that is acknowledged and reciprocated by all nations is required. This will be particularly important, as the above cutting-edge higher education practices are closely associated with those of global quality assurance companies.

Pakistan's Quality Assurance System

Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) in Pakistan are important providers of skilled labor for the nation's economy. The harsh reality is that similar to many other developing nations, Pakistan's educational system is not doing well (Memon, 2007), and not a single university in the country is among the top 100 in the world. According to Hoodbhoy (2009), common sense may address every systemic issue that the HEC of Pakistan faces, including increased budget and other issues. However, a significant boost in university financing between 2002 and 2008, only little improved the higher education sector, indicating the need for some new ideas. Given that the issue of higher education is at hand and so many issues faced by Pakistan can be resolved when a step towards quality improvement in this area is taken, this paradigm shift should begin its journey from the zenith.

Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)

To raise the standard of instruction at HEIS, HEC established an advisory group in 2003. Furthermore, to allow the Quality Assurance Division (QAD) and Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) to perform their duties autonomously, they were tasked with formulating policies and implementing. The committee has done well in several areas, but its performance cannot be deemed exceptional.

Research Methodology

A descriptive quantitative survey design was selected for this study. The population of this study is all universities (Government and Private) of Division Bahawalpur and the sample was 07 universities (both public and private) of 3 districts Rahim Yar Khan, Bahawalpur & Bahawalnagar. Of these 07 universities, 514 students (boys and girls) and 48 teachers (males and females) participated as a sample. The sampling technique chosen for data collection is



simple random sampling because it is convenient for quantitative research and researchers to collect the data quickly. Two self-structured questionnaires were used as a research tool; one for students and one for teachers, each consisting of 40 items. A 5-point Likert scale; Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (DA), and Strongly Disagree (SDA), were used in the questionnaires to analyze the Quality Assurance in Higher Education at the university level in the Division Bahawalpur. After the data collection from the participants (teachers and students), it was analyzed with the help of SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software.

Validity and Reliability of the Tool

The questionnaires' items were validated after a group of specialists was asked to revise them in structure and wording to ensure they were easily understood by the target audience. Cronbach's Alpha is used to verify the reliability statistics. In order to conduct pilot testing, researchers individually contact respondents, provide pertinent questionnaires to them, and ask them to openly share any recommendations they may have for improving the surveys. After receiving input from the pilot testing respondents, the questionnaires were finalized. The list of universities, students, and teachers that are part of the sampling is mentioned below:

Table 1
Sampling of Students and Teachers from the Universities

<u>Sr. #</u>	<u>University Name</u>	<u>Students</u>	<u>Teachers</u>
<u>Bahawalpur</u>			
<u>1</u>	<u>The Islamia University of Bahawalpur (IUB), Baghdad-ul-Jadeed Campus</u>	<u>124</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>2</u>	<u>The Government Sadiq College & Women University Bahawalpur (GSCWU)</u>	<u>70</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>3</u>	<u>NCBA&E, Bahawalpur Campus</u>	<u>73</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Bahawalnagar</u>			
<u>4</u>	<u>IUB, Bahawalnagar Campus</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Rahim Yar Khan</u>			
<u>5</u>	<u>Khwaja Fareed UEIT-RYK</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>6</u>	<u>IUB, Rahim Yar Khan Campus</u>	<u>101</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>7</u>	<u>NCBA&E- RYK Campus</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Total</u>		<u>514</u>	<u>48</u>



Data Analysis

SPSS version 23 was used to analyze all the data that was collected. The percentages and frequencies of the solution have been completed. The findings have been expressed as a proportion of entire replies. Conclusions have been reached, and guidelines have been given as a result.

Findings of Teacher's Data Regarding Quality Assurance

- **89.6%** of the participants agreed that the universities in the Bahawalpur division offer distinguished levels of study.
- **85.4%** of the teachers agreed that private universities use more modern teaching and learning methodologies as compared to public institutions.
- **87.5%** of the teachers agreed that public universities emphasize conventional teaching techniques more than private institutions.
- **89.6%** of the teachers agreed that private universities place more emphasis on experiential learning than public universities.
- **81.2%** of the teachers agreed that they are encouraged to participate in quality assurance processes.
- **84.2%** of the teachers agreed that their university values their input on quality assurance.
- **79.2%** of the teachers agreed that there is a significant difference in the physical infrastructure between public and private universities.
- **82.4%** of the teachers agreed that public universities need more resources to effectively implement quality assurance.
- **80.1%** of the teachers agreed that private universities provide better academic facilities than public universities.
- **84.7%** of the teachers agreed that they actively participate in quality assurance processes.
- **77.9%** of the teachers agreed that quality assurance improves the teaching and learning environment.
- **83.3%** of the teachers agreed that public universities should adopt more modern teaching methodologies to enhance quality assurance.
- **86.5%** of the teachers agreed that quality assurance practices differ significantly between public and private universities.



- **81.0%** of the teachers agreed that private universities are better at implementing quality assurance processes.
- **85.2%** of the teachers agreed that quality assurance practices have a positive impact on student learning outcomes.
- **82.3%** of the teachers agreed that private universities provide better opportunities for professional development.
- **79.4%** of the teachers agreed that public universities face more challenges in implementing quality assurance as compared to private institutions.
- **84.1%** of the teachers agreed that quality assurance processes are more effective in private universities.
- **81.6%** of the teachers agreed that public universities require more administrative support to enhance quality assurance.
- **83.5%** of the teachers agreed that quality assurance should be a priority in public universities.
- **80.2%** of the teachers agreed that private universities have better infrastructure to support quality assurance.
- **85.7%** of the teachers agreed that public universities need to adopt modern technologies to improve quality assurance.
- **82.6%** of the teachers agreed that quality assurance improves the overall educational experience for students.
- **78.4%** of the teachers agreed that public universities should invest more in faculty development to enhance quality assurance.
- **81.7%** of the teachers agreed that private universities are more successful in achieving quality assurance goals.
- **84.3%** of the teachers agreed that public universities face more obstacles in maintaining quality standards.
- **79.8%** of the teachers agreed that quality assurance processes should be more transparent in public universities.
- **83.6%** of the teachers agreed that private universities provide more opportunities for research and development.
- **77.3%** of the teachers agreed that public universities should improve their administrative processes to support quality assurance.



- **82.9%** of the teachers agreed that quality assurance practices are better implemented in private universities.
- **85.4%** of the teachers agreed that public universities need more resources to effectively implement quality assurance.
- **81.2%** of the teachers agreed that private universities offer better professional development opportunities for faculty.
- **83.1%** of the teachers agreed that public universities should adopt more innovative teaching methodologies to enhance quality assurance.
- **79.6%** of teachers agreed that quality assurance practices in private universities lead to better student outcomes.
- **82.3%** of the teachers agreed that public universities face more challenges in maintaining quality standards compared to private institutions.
- **84.7%** of the teachers agreed that quality assurance processes are more effective in private universities.
- **78.9%** of the teachers agreed that public universities need more support from the administration to improve quality assurance.
- **82.5%** of the teachers agreed that private universities have better infrastructure to support quality assurance.
- **80.4%** of the teachers agreed that public universities should invest more in faculty development to enhance quality assurance.
- **83.2%** of the teachers agreed that quality assurance should be a priority in public universities.

Analysis of Difference between Teachers' Opinions regarding Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Division Bahawalpur

In this section, we present the results of an analysis done to determine whether or not there are significant differences in the perspectives of quality assurance concerning gender, place of residence, designation, level of education, and years of experience in the classrooms. One-way ANOVA and independent sample t-test were used to analyze the data.



Table 2
 Gender-Wise Comparison of Respondents (Independent Samples Test)

	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	t-test for Equality of Means		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.201	.163	3.40	46	.001	13.940	4.097	5.69183	22.189
Equal variances not assumed			3.47	45.786	.001	13.940	4.016	5.85440	22.026

The distinction in opinion between male and female teachers is displayed in the above table. The independent sample t-test statistically yields a value of .001, which is less than the 0.05 threshold value, indicating that there is a statistical difference that can be found among teachers' opinions based on gender (male vs. female).

Table 3
 Locality -Wise Comparison of Respondents (Independent Samples Test)

	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	T-test for Equality of Means		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.427	.517	2.075	46	.044	9.07304	4.37249	.27168	17.874
Equal variances not assumed			2.068	44.7	.044	9.07304	4.3879	.2338	17.912

Table 3 shows the difference between teachers by locality. The independent sample t-test statistically yields a value of .044, which is less than the 0.05 threshold value, indicating that there is a statistical difference that can be found between the opinions of urban and rural teachers.



Table 4
 Academic Qualification-Wise Comparison of Respondents
 Independent Samples Test

	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	T-test for Equality of Means		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.736	.395	2.201	46	.033	9.57391	4.34921	.81941	18.328
Equal variances not assumed			2.190	44.09	.034	9.57391	4.37291	.76293	18.3848

Table 4 shows the difference in teachers' academic qualifications. In other words, the independent sample t-test statistically yields a value of .033 is less than the 0.05 threshold, indicating that there is a statistical difference that can be found between the views of M. Phil and PhD teachers.

Table 5
 Difference between the Teachers' opinions regarding universities in which they are teaching

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4148.479	6	691.413	3.845	.004
Within Groups	7372.833	41	179.825		
Total	11521.313	47			

Table 5 indicates the difference between the teachers' opinions regarding the universities in which they are teaching. In other words, the ONE-WAY ANOVA test statistically yields a value of .004 is less than 0.05 showing that quality assurance differs in different universities in the teacher opinions. The claim is supported by an F value of 3.845.

Table 6
 Difference between the Teachers' Opinions regarding their Teaching Experiences

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2044.548	3	681.516	3.164	.034
Within Groups	9476.765	44	215.381		
Total	11521.312	47			



Table 6 indicates the difference between the teachers' opinions regarding their teaching experiences. In other words, the ONE-WAY ANOVA test statistically yields a value of .034 is less than 0.05 indicating that there is a statistically significant difference found in the opinion of teachers having different teaching experiences. The claim is supported by an F value of 3.164.

Table 7
 Difference between the Teachers' Opinions regarding their Designation

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	420.910	3	806.970	3.902	.015
Within Groups	9100.402	44	206.827		
Total	11521.313	47			

Table 7 indicates the difference between the teachers' opinions regarding their designation. In other words, the ONE-WAY ANOVA test statistically yields a value of .015 is less than 0.05 indicating that there is a statistically significant difference between the views of teachers having different designations. The claim is supported by an F value of 3.902.

Table 8
 Difference between the Teachers' Opinions regarding their Age

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2868.404	5	573.681	2.785	.029
Within Groups	8652.909	42	206.022		
Total	11521.313	47			

The above table indicates the difference between the teachers' opinions regarding their designation. In other words, the ONE-WAY ANOVA test statistically yields a value of .029 is less than 0.05 indicating there is a statistically significant difference between the views of teachers having different ages. The claim is supported by an F value of 2.785.

Findings of Student's Data Regarding Quality Assurance

- **61.7%** of the respondents agreed that public and private universities in the Bahawalpur division have different quality assurance procedures.
- **60.1%** of the students agreed that the university attended significantly affects the quality of education.



- **59.5%** of the students agreed that the perception of quality assurance varies among students from different universities.
- **59.7%** of the students agreed that the academic experiences of students are influenced by the quality assurance standards in place.
- **59.57%** of the students agreed that public universities prioritize quality assurance differently compared to private universities.
- **55.8%** of the students agreed that private universities prioritize experiential learning more than public universities.
- **47.7%** of the students agreed that private universities emphasize modern teaching methodologies more than public universities.
- **46.1%** of the students agreed that public universities focus more on conventional teaching methods as compared to private institutions.
- **44.2%** of the students agreed that private universities offer better administrative facilities compared to public universities.
- **49.4%** of the students agreed that public universities face more challenges in implementing quality assurance as compared to private institutions.
- **41%** of the students agreed that they are aware of the goals of quality assurance at their universities.
- **37.3%** of the students agreed that quality assurance programs positively impact their real-world 26.1% experiences.
- **42.2%** of the students agreed that public universities lack the necessary resources for effective quality assurance.
- **44.6%** of the students agreed that their universities are committed to maintaining quality assurance.
- **42.7%** of the students agreed that public universities provide fewer opportunities for critical thinking development as compared to private institutions.
- **43.35%** of the students agreed that there is a need for improvement in quality assurance processes at public universities.
- **46.1%** of the students agreed that public universities face difficulties in maintaining quality standards.
- **49.2%** of the students agreed that quality assurance programs should be more widely implemented in public universities.



- **51.5%** of the students agreed that private universities better prepare them for their careers due to effective quality assurance.
- **47.5%** of the students agreed that public universities need to adopt more modern teaching methods to improve quality assurance.
- **35.5%** of the students agreed that private universities are more effective in implementing quality assurance.
- **43.4%** of the students agreed that public universities require more resources to support quality assurance.
- **43.4%** of the students agreed that they have better access to modern learning resources at private universities.
- **43.8%** of the students agreed that public universities need to improve their infrastructure to support quality assurance.
- **43%** of the students agreed that bureaucracy often hinders quality assurance in public universities.
- **51.4%** of the students agreed that private universities are more successful in achieving quality assurance goals.
- **50.8%** of the students agreed that public universities need more administrative support to improve quality assurance.
- **47.8%** of the students agreed that their academic needs are better met at private universities.
- **46.7%** of the students agreed that quality assurance processes at public universities require more student involvement.
- **49.2%** of the students agreed that public universities are less flexible in their quality assurance procedures as compared to private institutions.
- **42.8%** of the students agreed that they feel more engaged in the learning process due to quality assurance at private universities.
- **43.6%** of the students agreed that public universities should update their teaching methods to enhance quality assurance.
- **44.4%** of the students agreed that private institutions are better at maintaining academic integrity as compared to public universities.
- **45.4%** of the students agreed that they receive more personalized attention from faculty at private universities.



- **45.1%** of the students agreed that public universities are more likely to face delays in implementing quality assurance procedures.
- **40.7%** of the students agreed that quality assurance procedures in private universities lead to better student outcomes.
- **44.6%** of the students agreed that they feel more confident in their academic abilities due to quality assurance at private universities.
- **37.2%** of the students agreed that public universities need to improve faculty training to support quality assurance.
- **42.8%** of the students agreed that quality assurance procedures are more transparent at private universities.
- **41.9%** of the students agreed that they feel more supported by their institution's administration at private universities.

Analysis of Differences among Students' Opinions regarding Quality Assurance in Higher Education in the Division Bahawalpur

This section presents the findings of an investigation conducted to ascertain if there are notable variations in quality assurance views based on gender, place of residence, degree of education, university, and age. The data was analyzed using one-way ANOVA and chi-square test.

Table 9
 Gender-Wise Comparison of Respondents

Variable	Category	N	Percentage	Df	Likelihood Ratio	p-value
Gender	Boys	315	61.3	48	.004	.027
	Girls	199	38.7			

The divergence in viewpoint between male and female teachers is seen in Table 9. A chi-square test was conducted; resulting in a statistically significant p-value of 0.027 (less than the significance level of 0.05) indicating there is a statistically significant association between students' opinions based on gender.



Table 10

Locality-Wise Comparison of Respondents

Variable	Category	N	Percentage	Df	Likelihood Ratio	p-value
Area	Urban	191	37.2	48	.002	.022
	Rural	332	62.8			

The above table illustrates the difference in opinions among the students regarding locality. A chi-square test was conducted; resulting in a statistically significant p-value of 0.022 (less than the significance level of 0.05) indicating there is a statistically significant difference in the perspectives of students based on their locality (rural and urban).

Table 11

Differences between the Students' Opinions regarding Universities in which they are Studying

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1070.136	6	178.356	2.316	.032
Within Groups	39045.319	507	77.012		
Total	40115.455	513			

Table 11 indicates the difference among the students' opinions regarding the universities in which they are studying. In other words, the ONE-WAY ANOVA test statistically yields a value of .032 is less than 0.05 showing that quality assurance differs in different universities in the students' opinions.

Table 12

Difference between the Students' Opinions regarding their Age

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	504.856	2	252.428	3.256	.039
Within Groups	39610.600	511	77.516		
Total	40115.455	513			

Table 12 indicates the difference among the students regarding their age. In other words, the ONE-WAY ANOVA test statistically yields a value of .039 is less than 0.05 indicating that



there is a statistically significant difference between the views of students having different ages.

Table 13

Difference between the Students' Opinions regarding their Classes

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	788.437	4	197.109	2.551	.038
Within Groups	39327.018	509	77.263		
Total	40115.455	513			

Table 13 indicates the difference among the students' opinions regarding their age. In other words, the ONE-WAY ANOVA test statistically yields a value of .038 is less than 0.05 indicating that there is a statistically significant difference between the views of students studying in different classes.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study concludes by highlighting the important role that quality assurance can play in enhancing the efficacy of higher education in the Bahawalpur division. The results indicate that public universities have difficulty keeping up-to-date infrastructure and have difficulties when attempting to adapt contemporary teaching tactics, whereas private institutions often have superior administrative resources and more sophisticated teaching methodologies. While continuing advancements and seeing that the area's educational demands are met depend profoundly on educators and pupils engaging vigorously in guaranteeing excellence, inconsistencies stay. Periodically investments were made reluctantly, with out-of-date structures and teachers unprepared for evolving instructional strategies. However, now the district endeavours for positive change. To further progress the criterion of higher learning across all institutions, techniques, and infrastructure modernize alongside focused preparation on innovative instruction. When all participate in regular reviews and upgrading resources, students gain in their journey and the division leads the nation as a premier location for obtaining knowledge.

It is impossible to dispute education's contribution to economic growth since it increases people's productivity and efficiency, generates knowledge, and develops skilled labor, all of which are essential for a nation's progress. HEIs and HECs are aware of their part in raising the standard of higher education (Khan, 2019).



In short, to enhance quality assurance in higher education in the Bahawalpur Division, several suggestions can be considered. Firstly, strengthening institutional governance and leadership can promote accountability and transparency. Secondly, fostering collaboration between academia and industry can ensure curriculum relevance and facilitate student employability (Khan et al., 2018). Additionally, investing in faculty development programs, promoting research culture, and leveraging technology for teaching and learning are crucial for continuous improvement.

Suggestions

The research study leads to the following suggestions for improving quality control in higher education establishments in the Bahawalpur division:

- To guarantee uniformity in educational quality, all universities should use a common quality assurance system.
- To provide a favorable learning environment, increase spending on academic facilities and physical infrastructure, especially at public universities.
- Encourage the use of cutting-edge, digital teaching techniques to improve learning results and student engagement.
- To lower administrative barriers and raise the standard of instruction generally, public institutions should strengthen their administrative support and efficiency.
- To guarantee that the requirements and viewpoints of all stakeholders are taken into account, actively encourage teacher and student engagement in quality assurance procedures.
- Give educators ongoing chances for professional development so they may acquire the abilities and know-how needed to employ cutting-edge teaching techniques.
- Encourage cooperation between public and private institutions to exchange best practices in quality control and to encourage learning from one another and progress.
- These suggestions seek to improve the fairness of the higher education system in the Bahawalpur division by addressing the discrepancies found in the study.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future studies may examine how digital learning affects higher education quality assurance, especially in developing nations. Furthermore, a comparative analysis of quality assurance frameworks across Pakistan's various regions may offer insightful information on areas that require development and best practices. The long-term consequences of applying



standardized quality assurance standards on student learning outcomes and employability, as well as the contribution of technology to improving the caliber and accessibility of higher education in the Bahawalpur division, might all be subjects of future research.

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