



Quality Enhancement of Higher Education in Cambodia

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ABSTRACT

Quality improvement is critical for both public and private colleges in Cambodia. The purpose of this study is to identify common quality management practices in Cambodian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), measure the relationships between quality management and quality assessments (internal and external), and evaluate the relationships between quality assessments and HE quality enhancement. A quantitative research approach was used in this study to evaluate the factors between quality enhancement and quality management for their significant implications. This study used simple and multivariate regressions to look at how quality assurance variables affect higher education quality. The study developed accurate questionnaires for 337 people from Cambodia's private and public higher education colleges and institutes, including academics and management staff. According to the findings, the majority of institutions regarded academic curriculum, facilities, educational management, academic staff and teaching methodologies, and student evaluation as critical quality management measures. However, they placed less emphasis on cooperation. The multiple regression analysis revealed that factors related to internal quality assessment (IQA), external quality assessment (EQA), and HE quality enhancement were consistent, indicating that academic curriculum, student assessment, facilities, support staff, and collaborations were potential factors for improving higher education quality. The emphasis on Internal Quality Assessment (IQA) and External Quality Assessment (EQA) resulted in dramatically enhanced higher education quality. Highly ranked institutions tended to have a better IQA and EQA system, and IQA and EQA played an important role in conducting frequent examinations of quality management methods.

Keywords: *Higher Education, Quality Enhancement, Quality Management*

INTRODUCTION

Client devotion and product quality have a substantial relationship with brand image, meaning that customer loyalty improves brand image perception (Saleem, Zahra, and Yaseen 2017).

Every corporation strives for business excellence by satisfying customer expectations, increasing business efficiency, demonstrating corporate social responsibility, and maintaining a high and consistent level of quality (Živko Čoćkalo 2015).

Quality helps to improve competitiveness, but it is impossible to advance in company without proper education and understanding of quality performance. If a firm wants to advance its competitiveness and improve its business, personnel must be trained in line with the quality program and have a developed understanding of quality attainment as a shared goal (Milena Cvjetkovic 2017).

To attain consumer happiness, firms must give exceptional products and services while also knowing how to differentiate themselves from competitors (Shamsudin 2020). Leadership and quality management strategies have been proved to improve corporate performance, particularly product and service quality and innovation performance (Shanmugapriya and Subramanian 2015).

Quality education serves as the foundation for any country's progress. Education is a vital and necessary prerequisite for the transfer of knowledge, skills, and capacities, as well as the formation of a civic conscience that contributes to individuals' full growth. Quality education is the most powerful tool for bringing about social change. The concept of quality in education has no clear meaning, and different academics interpret it differently. Differences exist not only in the nature of the definition of this idea, but also in the method used to measure quality. Although research activities have been performed globally to establish quality indicators in education and the measurement of educational outcomes, there is currently no unified and universally acknowledged vision (Papanthymou and Darra 2023).

Analytically, educational quality is linked to better learning outcomes. This improvement is the outcome of the application of proper teaching practices and procedures, from the design of a curriculum that matches the requirements of students to the enhancement of school services (Papanthymou and Darra 2023). Furthermore, according to Garira (2020), quality in education necessitates clear descriptions of all of its components in order to assess its implementation and plan for its improvement. This can help education stakeholders understand their duties by defining responsibilities so that everyone knows what part they play in achieving quality in school education. Nonetheless, education systems require assistance in designing and developing effective monitoring and evaluation methods for assessing quality. Furthermore, the proposed conceptual framework for quality in primary and secondary education can provide a more in-depth

understanding of the term 'quality' in school education and inspire research into the development of conceptual frameworks for quality in school education, which is currently limited.

Higher education is crucial in determining the quality and availability of the work force necessary to promote socioeconomic progress (Heng Kimkong 2023). Poor-quality educational institutions could result in an over-reliance on an imported workforce or local workers with low skills, as low-quality university graduates are frequently unable to meet the needs of a changing labor market. This circumstance necessitates that relevant parties, particularly the government, devise strategies to ensure that university graduates have the knowledge and skills required to contribute meaningfully to national development.

This study explores the significance of quality assurance in higher education, emphasizing its complexity, stakeholders, and numerous perspectives. It investigates internal and external quality assurance strategies, such as faculty development, curriculum design, and self-assessment. The article also looks at international perspectives on quality assurance, with an emphasis on regional disparities and global initiatives. It also investigates the use of data analysis, assessment tools, and quality indicators in decision-making processes. The paper's goal is to equip scholars, policymakers, administrators, and practitioners with a sound basis in quality assurance principles and procedures, supporting quality in higher education globally (Kayyali 2023).

Higher education institutions in Europe and the United States have developed to meet changing demands, technological and social advances, and state regulations. The emphasis is increasingly on teaching and learning content through digital technologies, which are critical in preparing competitive and mobile graduates. To resolve this contradiction, it is critical to investigate the organizational and pedagogical circumstances of modernization in the context of digitization, as well as evaluate the significance of international studies in education quality assessment. Experts point to a dearth of conceptual research in new socioeconomic situations and methodological assistance for increasing education quality at all levels (Shirobokov and Lorents 2021).

Despite a growth in the number of HEIs and student enrollment, the quality of higher education remains a key concern, requiring both academic and policy attention. This review essay attempts to present a summary of important difficulties and make recommendations about the need to increase higher education quality in Cambodia. The paper also intends to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on higher education in Cambodia, notably recent works by (Heng Kimkong 2023) and (Leang UN 2022). To accomplish these goals, the article starts by defining the term 'quality of higher education.' It then analyzes the main difficulties to enhancing higher education quality in Cambodia. The paper finishes with proposals to improve the quality of Cambodian higher

education.

The research seeks to evaluate quality management and improvement in Cambodian higher education institutions (HEIs), both public and private. It will specifically investigate typical quality management techniques, analyze the linkages between quality management and both quality enhancement and quality assessment (internal and external), and investigate the relationship between quality assessment and higher education quality enhancement. Finally, the project will create and experimentally evaluate a model for improving higher education quality in Cambodia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Quality Assurance in Higher Education AU-QA Models

Excellence assurance (QA) in higher education encompasses more than simply one aspect of academic excellence. Given the different demands and expectations of a wide variety of stakeholders, quality in higher education might be regarded as multidimensional. The ASEAN University Network (AUN) acknowledges the value of quality in higher education and the need to establish a comprehensive quality assurance system to raise academic standards and improve education, research, and service delivery among its member universities. In 1998, it suggested the AUN-QA Network, which culminated in the AUN-QA assessment tools. Since then, the Network has promoted, developed, and implemented quality assurance systems using an empirical methodology. Quality assurance processes are tested, assessed, improved, and shared (AUN 2020).

Strategic quality assurance involves understanding stakeholders' needs and translating them into a university's vision, purpose, goals, and objectives. It involves implementing quality assurance systems and policies, conducting assessments, and improving internal systems. The third column highlights fundamental activities in education, including curriculum creation, teaching, learning, student services, research, and community engagement. The AUN-QA evaluation model at the institutional level (version 2.0) includes 25 criteria, as shown in Figure 1.

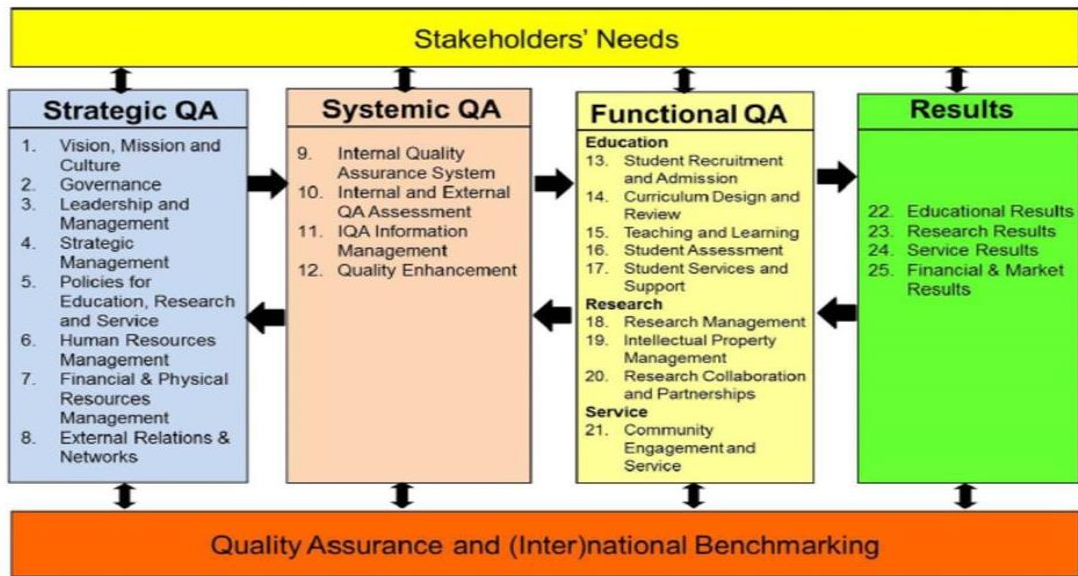


Figure 1. AUN-QA

Source: ASEAN University Network (2020)

AUN-QA Model for Internal Quality Assurance Organizations

The AUN-QA Model for an Internally Quality Assurance (IQA) System has the Following Components

Figure 2 presents a framework for Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) in education. It outlines various aspects of quality monitoring and evaluation, including student progress, pass rates, curriculum assessment, research performance, and service quality. Specific instruments and processes are suggested for each area, such as student evaluations, SWOT analysis, and inter-collegiate audits. The overarching goal is to ensure the quality of education through comprehensive monitoring and evaluation.

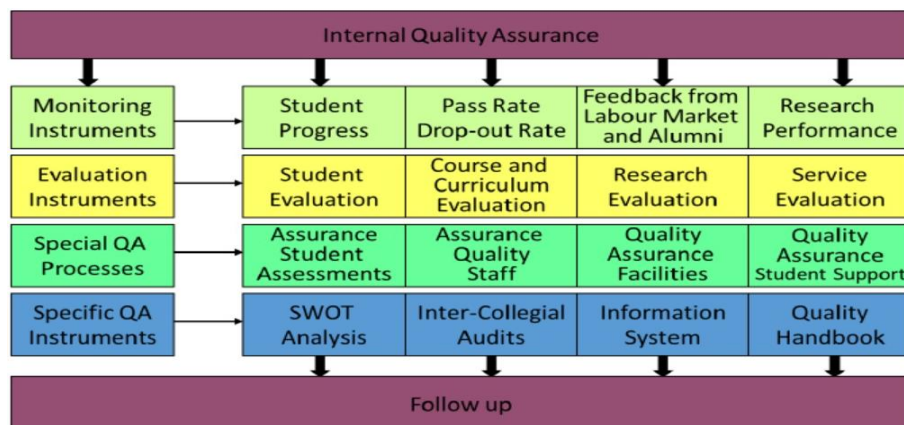


Figure 2. AUN-Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)

Source: ASEAN University Network (2020)

Figure 3 depicts how the approach focuses on understanding the demands of an academic programme's internal and external stakeholders when developing intended learning outcomes. It has three rows: program structure and content, resources required to run the program, and output. The methodology also includes addressing stakeholder demands, continuously improving the quality assurance system, and benchmarking best practices. Version 4.0 incorporates quality enhancement standards into the criteria, ensuring that students attain the required learning outcomes by graduation and that the curriculum is relevant to industry demands. Quality enhancement requirements track progress through a cycle of planning, performing, reviewing results, and revising criteria for improvement.

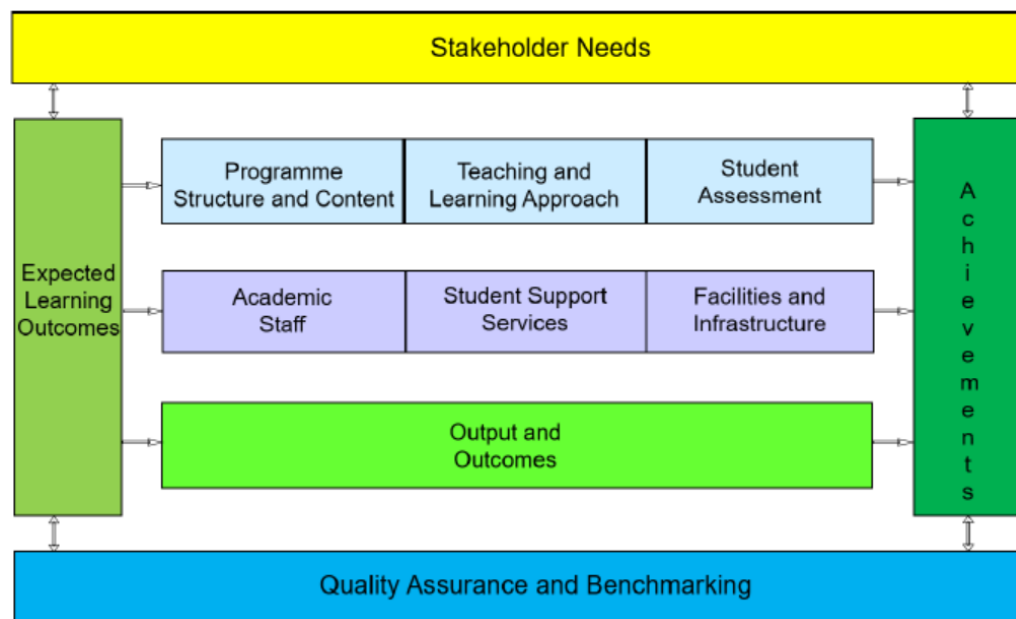


Figure 3. AUN-Quality Assurance and Benchmarking
Source: ASEAN University Network (2020)

ACC Nine Quality Assurance Standards

Reth (2024) conducted a study on quality assurance in Cambodia, and the findings indicated that leadership, academic staff, physical facilities, student evaluation, and teamwork all had a beneficial impact on quality improvement. The mission strategy and curriculum had no major effect.

Cambodia's Accreditation Committee developed nine dimensions of educational excellence for institutional accreditation: Table 1 outlines the university's mission, governmental structure, management, educational programs, staff quality, students, learning services, physical facilities, financial strategy, and information distribution (Chan and Kanjanawasee 2016).

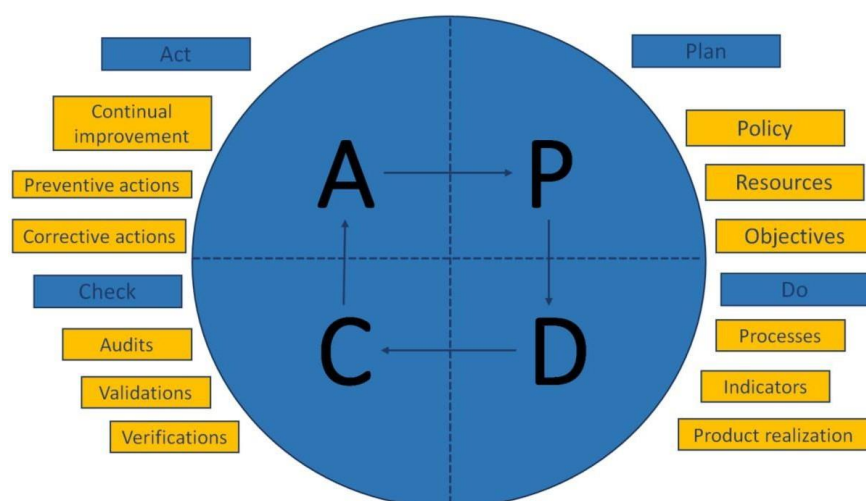
Table 1. Nine Quality Assurance Standards

Original Standards	Revised Standards in 2015
Mission	Vision, Mission, and Goals
Governance Structure, Management, and Planning	Government and Management
Academic Program	Academic Staff
Academic Staff	Academic Program
Student and Student Services	Student Services
Learning Resources	Learning Resources
Physical Facilities	Physical resources
Financial Management and Planning	Financial resources
Dissemination of Information	Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)

Source: Chan and Kanjanawasee (2016)

Deming's Philosophy of TQM

Deming believes that management or planning issues account for 85% of educational difficulties, with human resource concerns accounting for 15%. Unprofessional planning, resulting from ineffective leadership and policy execution, contributes to poor quality. Deming's concept of educational quality management, Total Quality Control (TQC), was introduced to Japan in the 1920s. Three theories, Juran's and Crosby's, have been developed to address planning challenges in a variety of areas, including education. Japan is a great example of applying Deming's planning technique, having effectively marketed large quantities of products at reasonable prices. The goal of this research is to investigate the use of Deming's planning model, particularly in the sector of education, in order to gain a deeper understanding of its efficacy and efficiency as shown in Figure 4 (Mayangsari, Ulwiyah, and Qoyyimah 2023).

**Figure 4.** PDCA in TQM

Source: Mayangsari, Ulwiyah, and Qoyyimah (2023)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used a quantitative design to measure the implementation of quality management in Cambodian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and its impact on HE quality enhancement. The research examined the relationship between quality management variables and quality assessment (IQA and EQA) and between quality assessment and HE quality enhancement indicators. The study was the first of its kind to examine the current practices of quality management in both public and private universities in Cambodia and its correlational impact on HE quality enhancement. A survey questionnaire with developed measures from quality assurance and management literature and models was used to collect data (Sean Gyll Shelley Ragland 2017); (Rawle et al. 2017).

The study examined quality management in higher education management, focusing on university lecturers and management staff. The sample included 337 participants, with a total of 10 core variables. The questionnaire included three sections: background characteristics, quality management level, and evaluation of internal and external quality assessment and HE quality enhancement indicators. The AUN QA and ACC A framework provided a detailed picture of quality management practices in Cambodian higher education, allowing for comprehensive documentation of progress and challenges. The study's dependability was guaranteed by conducting a pilot test. All variables have Cronbach's alpha values over 0.7, which is deemed acceptable (Bonett and Wright 2015).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents findings from a study on quality management practices in Cambodian higher education, focusing on the increasing competition among HEIs. It examines the relationship between quality management and HE quality enhancement, and tests the relationship between quality management variables and mediating variables, IQA and EQA, before testing against the dependent variable, HE quality enhancement. The chapter also discusses the quality and assumption checks of the multiple regression models.

Table 2 provides a detailed description of the research participants' characteristics. As can be observed, the characteristics of participants were fairly distributed by gender, age, HEI type, education level, education experience, and position. The statistics revealed that 70% of the participants were males, 70% were between the ages of 30 and 49, 62% were from private higher education institutions, around 80% held a Master's degree, more than 60% had more than 5 years of teaching and education experience, and 90% were teaching faculty members. In social science research, diverse sample characteristics are crucial for

ensuring diverse insights and experiences. This distribution accurately reflects the sample's features. This type of data was advantageous in this investigation since it allowed for high dependability in data processing.

Table 2. Demographic Information

Participant Characteristics		N	%
General	Male	234	69.51%
	Female	103	30.49%
Age	30-39	78	23.17%
	40-49	158	46.83%
	50-59	101	30.00%
HEIs	Public (including fee-pay system)	129	38.29%
	Private	208	61.71%
Education Levels	Bachelor's	40	11.95%
	Master's	275	81.46%
	PhD	22	6.59%
Educational Experience	Below 5 Years	119	35.37%
	5-10 years	127	37.80%
	More than 10 years	90	26.83%
Position	Rectors	2	0.49%
	Vice-Rectors	5	1.46%
	Deans	3	0.98%
	Vice-deans	3	0.98%
	Head of Academic Office	2	0.49%
	Lecturers	305	90.49%
	Others	17	5.125

Source: Processed Data by Researcher

The study tested a multiple regression model to identify quality management variables related to HE quality enhancement. Key assumption checks were performed, including Casewise Diagnosis, Multicollinearity, and Cook's Distance, to ensure data accuracy and avoid confounding problems. The results confirmed that all assumptions were met, indicating the model's reliability. Outliers were not detected in the regression results, and the average Cook's Distance value was smaller than 1, indicating no bias. Multicollinearity was also confirmed, with tolerance statistics larger than 0.2 and the Variance Inflation Factor smaller than 10. The model fit was tested using the model summary table and the model fit table, with a strong relationship between independent and dependent variables. The model summary Table 3 showed a large explained variance of 62.9% in the dependent variable, indicating the potential of the regression model's variables compared to population-based estimation.

Table 3. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1		.629	.622	.32216
a. Predictors: (Constant), COL, Acu, SSF, Emgt, AST, Sas				
b. Dependent Variable: HQE				

Source: Processed Data by Researcher

The ANOVA result in Table 4 showed that the model was statistically significant, with F value of 93.197 and p value less than 0.001, which are all greater than the cutoff score of F of 3.78 for the

0.001 significant level (see Table 3). This suggests that there were significant relationships between independent and dependent variables being tested and that the regression model could be valid for the estimation of the relationships that could be observed in the population. In other words, results with such a good model fit ($p < .001$) showed that the quality management variables were significantly related to quality enhancement and that relationship was also evident in the study population. The chance of getting results beyond what can be found in this sample is less than 5 percent.

Table 4. ANOVA Result

ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	58.037	6	9.673	93.197	.000
	Residual	34.251	330			
	Total	92.288	336			

Source: Processed Data by Researcher

The study's multiple regression analysis reveals a significant relationship between quality management and higher education quality enhancement. Higher levels of quality enhancement are attributed to improved academic curriculum, adequate learning facilities, strong student assessment culture, and active collaboration with universities and partners. The importance of quality

management software suggests that top-performing universities can improve student quality through more attention and commitment as indicated in Table 5.

Table 5. Research Hypotheses Result

Research Hypotheses		Summary of Hypothesis Testing
H ₁	H _{1.1} : Educational management positively affects HE quality enhancement.	Partially Supported
	H _{1.2} : Academic curriculum positively affects HE quality enhancement	Supported
	H _{1.3} : Academic staff and teaching strategies positively affect HE quality enhancement.	Partially Supported
	H _{1.4} : Facilities and supporting staff positively affect HE quality enhancement.	Supported
	H _{1.5} : Student assessment positively affects HE quality enhancement.	Supported
	H _{1.6} : Collaboration positively affects HE quality enhancement.	Supported

Source: Processed Data by Researcher

Table 6. Multiple Regression Result

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		T (>±1.96)	Sig. (p <.05)	Status
		B	Std. Error			
H ₁	H _{1.1} : Educational Management	.072	.040	1.798	.073	Partially Significant & Positive
	H _{1.2} : Academic Curriculum	.227	.047	4.852	.000	Significant & Positive
	H _{1.3} : Acad. Staff and Teaching Strategies	.089	.054	1.659	.098	Partially Significant & Positive
	H _{1.4} : Facilities and Supporting Staff	.158	.046	3.446	.001	Significant & Positive
	H _{1.5} : Student Assessment	.182	.053	3.456	.001	Significant & Positive

H _{1.6} : Collaborations	.149	.044	3.406	.001	Significant & Positive
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Note: Significant relationships were based on $p < .05$, $p < .01$ and $p < .001$.

Partially significant relationships were based on $p < .10$.

Source: Processed Data by Researcher

The study tested a multiple regression model to identify quality management variables significantly related to IQA, a core mediating variable in the quality assessment process. The model was tested with key assumption checks such as Casewise Diagnosis, Multicollinearity, and Cook's Distance to ensure data accuracy and avoid confounding problems. Results confirmed that all assumptions were met, indicating the model could be reliable. Outliers were not a problem, and multicollinearity was not a problem. The model fit was tested using the model summary table and the model fit table. The summary table showed a strong relationship between independent and dependent variables, with a large explained variance of 74% in the dependent variable (IQA). The Adjusted R-square of 73.6% suggested high potential in terms of power and representativeness compared to population-based model estimation. The ANOVA result showed a statistically significant model, indicating significant relationships between independent and dependent variables and valid estimation of population relationships. This relationship was evident in the study population.

Table 7. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1		.629	.622	
a. Predictors: (Constant), COL, Acu, SSF, Emgt, AST, Sas				
b. Dependent Variable: HQE				

Source: Processed Data by Researcher

Table 8. ANOVA Result

ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
2	Regression	76.098	6	12.683	156.805	.000
	Residual	26.692	330	.081		

	Total	102.79	336			
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Source: Processed Data by Researcher

The study found that educational management, academic curriculum, facilities, staff, student assessment, and collaboration are crucial factors for improving Quality Assurance (QA) in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). These factors, while not necessarily related to IQA, were found to significantly influence IQA. The findings support the 9 standards of quality assurance by the ACC and the AUN-QA for program-level IQA in Cambodia, suggesting that a strong IQA requires constant control of these factors.

Table 9. Multiple Regression Result

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		T ($>\pm 1.96$)	Sig. (p <.05)	Status
		B	Std. Error			
H ₂	H _{2.1} : Educational Management	.138	.035	3.938	.000	Partially Significant & Positive
	H _{2.2} : Academic Curriculum	.174	.041	4.226	.000	Significant & Positive
	H _{2.3} : Acad. Staff and Teaching Strategies	.081	.047	1.716	.087	Partially Significant & Positive
	H _{2.4} : Facilities and supporting Staff	.124	.040	3.057	.002	Significant & Positive
	H _{2.5} : Student Assessment	.132	.047	2.83	.005	Significant & Positive
	H _{2.6} : Collaborations	.307	.039	7.941	.000	Significant & Positive

Note: Significant relationships were based on $p < .05$, $p < .01$ and $p < .001$.
Partially significant relationships were based on $p < .10$.

Source: Processed Data by Researcher

The study found that academic staff and teaching strategies only partially affect the quality of IQA across universities. The effect of these factors was not

significantly different from other significant factors like educational management, academic curriculum, facilities, student assessment, and collaboration. The null hypothesis was not fully supported.

Table 10. Research Hypotheses Result

Research Hypotheses		Summary of Hypothesis Testing
H ₂	H _{2.1} : Educational management positively affects IQA.	Supported
	H _{2.2} : Academic curriculum positively affects IQA	Supported
	H _{2.3} : Academic staff and teaching strategies positively affect IQA.	Partially Supported
	H _{2.4} : Facilities and supporting staff positively affect IQA.	Supported
	H _{2.5} : Student assessment positively affects IQA.	Supported
	H _{2.6} : Collaboration positively affects IQA.	Supported

Source: Processed Data by Researcher

The study tested quality management with EQA to identify key factors enhancing EQA quality. The regression model was tested with assumptions such as Casewise Diagnosis, Multicollinearity, and Cook's Distance to ensure data appropriateness. Results confirmed that all assumptions were met, indicating reliability. Outliers were not detected in the model, and multicollinearity was not a problem. The model fit was tested with R, and Adjusted R' being highly consistent. The model summary table showed a strong relationship between independent and dependent variables, with an explained variance of 63.4% in the dependent variable. The Adjusted R-square of 62.7% indicated high potential in terms of power and representativeness. However, the effect of quality management on IQA was smaller, suggesting EQA was not directly related to quality management measures. The ANOVA result showed a statistically significant relationship between independent and dependent variables, indicating the validity of the regression model for estimating relationships observed in the population.

Table 11. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
3		.634	.627	.31726
a. Predictors: (Constant), COL, ACu, SSF, EMgt, AST, SAs				
b. Dependent Variable: EQA				
Notes:				
- Independent variables: EMgt = Educational Management; Acu = Academic Curriculum; AST = Academic Staff and Teaching Strategies; SSF = Facilities and Supporting Staff; SAs = Student Assessment; COL = Collaboration - Dependent variable: EQA = Internal quality assessment				

Source: Processed Data by Researcher

Table 12. ANOVA Result

ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
3	Regression	57.565	6	9.594	95.316	.000
	Residual	33.217	330	.101		
	Total	90.782	336			

Source: Processed Data by Researcher

The study found that factors such as educational management, academic curriculum, facilities, student assessment, and collaboration significantly improve EQA. This supports the validity of the IQA and EQA relationship in ACC's quality assurance, highlighting the interrelated nature of quality assessment and the importance of strong control systems.

Table 13. Multiple Regression Result

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		T (>±1.96)	Sig. (p <.05)	Status
	B	Std. Error			

H ₃	H _{3.1} : Educational Management	.077	.146	1.973	.049	Significant & Positive
	H _{3.2} : Academic Curriculum	.134	.039	2.911	.004	Significant & Positive
	H _{3.3} : Acad.Staff and Teaching Strategies	.100	.046	1.89	.060	Partially Significant & Positive
	H _{3.4} : Facilities and Supporting Staff	.096	0.53	2.117	0.35	Significant & Positive
	H _{3.5} : Student Assessment	.158	0.45	3.053	.002	Significant & Positive
	H _{3.6} : Collaborations	.275	.052	6.376	.000	Significant & Positive

Source: Processed Data by Researcher

Table 14. Research Hypothesis Result

Research Hypotheses		Summary of Hypothesis Testing
H ₃	H _{3.1} : Educational management positively affects EQA.	Supported
	H _{3.2} : Academic curriculum positively affects EQA	Supported
	H _{3.3} : Academic staff and teaching strategies positively affect EQA.	Partially Supported
	H _{3.4} : Facilities and supporting staff positively affect EQA.	Supported
	H _{3.5} : Student assessment positively affects EQA	Supported
	H _{3.6} : Collaboration positively affects EQA.	Supported

Source: Processed Data by Researcher

This section analyzes the relationship between IQA and HE quality enhancement and EQA and HE quality enhancement using a regression model.

The model was tested with assumptions such as Casewise Diagnosis, Multicollinearity, and Cook's Distance to ensure data was appropriate. Results confirmed that all assumptions were met, indicating reliability. Outliers were not detected in the model, and multicollinearity was not a problem. The model fit was tested using the model summary table and fit table, with a strong relationship between independent and dependent variables. The model summary table showed a strong R of 0.743, indicating a strong relationship between independent and dependent variables. The variables used in the regression model were highly potential in terms of power and representativeness compared to population-based estimation.

Table 15. Research Model Result

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
4		.552	.550	.35174
a. Predictors: (Constant), EQA, IQA				
b. Dependent Variable: HQE				
Notes:				
- Independent variables: IQA = Internal Quality Assessment; EQA = External Quality Assessment - Dependent variable: HQE = Higher Education Quality Enhancement				

Source: Processed Data by Researcher

Table 16. ANOVA Result

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
4	Regression	50.966	2	25.483	205.975	.000
	Residual	41.322	334	.124		
	Total	92.288	336			

Source: Processed Data by Researcher

The study found a significant linear relationship between independent and dependent variables, indicating that Quality Assurance (QA) and External Quality Assurance (EQA) play a major role in improving Higher Education (HE) quality. Both IQA and EQA were significantly related to HE quality enhancement, with EQA having a stronger effect. These findings support the importance of the AUN Quality Assurance model and the link between Cambodian QA and AUN QA, which is crucial for improving QA practices and advancing them to regional and international levels.

Table 17. Multiple Regression Result

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		T (>±1.96)	Sig. (p <.05)	Status
		B	Std. Error			
4	H ₄ : IQA	.326	.070	4.682	.000	Significant & Positive
	H ₅ : EQA	.428	.074	5.768	.000	Significant & Positive

Note:

- Significant relationships were based on $p < .05$, $p < .01$ and $p < .001$.
- Partially significant relationships were based on $p < .10$.

Source: Processed Data by Researcher

Table 18. Research Hypotheses Result

Research Hypotheses		Summary of Hypothesis Testing
H ₄	IQA positively affects HE quality enhancement.	Supported
H ₅	EQA positively affects HE quality enhancement.	Supported

Source: Processed Data by Researcher

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion

This study aimed to identify quality management practices at Cambodian universities and examine their relationships with IQA, EQA, and HE quality enhancement. Survey data from 337 faculty members and management staff from 8 universities revealed that quality management has not been widely practiced internationally. Universities focus more on educational management, academic curriculum, facilities, and student assessment to improve student learning quality.

However, the impact of these strategies remains to be seen. Factors related to 10A and EQA and HE quality enhancement were consistent, with academic curriculum, student assessment, facilities, and collaborations being key factors. Educational management had a positive effect on HE quality enhancement, but its effect was not direct. The mediating roles of IQA and EQA were evident, with highly rated universities having stronger IQA and EQA systems.

Recommendation

This study suggests that Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Cambodia should enhance quality management practices through collaboration, both academic and social, and partnerships with NGOs and private firms. It also recommends building a strong Quality Assurance (QA) system (IQA and EQA) that prioritize software over hardware. The curriculum should align with labor market demands and emphasize knowledge, skills, and attitude. The competency-based curriculum is preferred, and periodic curriculum assessments are necessary to ensure relevance.

Facilities and supporting staff are crucial for quality enhancement. Universities should provide lecturer rooms, labs, LCDs, libraries, and the internet, while supporting staff ensure the best use of available facilities. Academic staff quality should be prioritized over quantity, with stringent recruitment and professional training practiced as a culture. Regular student evaluations and incentives for outperforming teachers are also recommended.

Student assessment is crucial for success in learning. Regular assessment and testing discipline can significantly change the learning culture of students and the university. A student feedback system and emphasis on formative and summative classroom assessments are essential for building IQA and EQA. A whole-system approach is necessary for building a strong EQA, as services provided by universities are crucial for EQA evaluation.

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