

Challenges, Impacts and Crisis Management on Higher education and Quality Assurance under and after COVID-19 Crisis

Challenges, Impacts and Crisis Management on Higher education and Quality Assurance under and after COVID-19 Crisis:
Redefining Roles of Quality Assurance Networks and Quality Assurance Agencies

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Outline of Presentation




- 🍷 Impacts of Covid-19 on higher education in Glonacal system
- 🍷 Crisis Management in higher education and supportive statements from international QA networks
- 🍷 INQAAHE Survey
- 🍷 Crisis Management in Taiwan Context
 - implication over Policy Shift, Learning Mode and Quality Assurance



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Impacts of Covid-19 on higher education in Glonacal system




-  Driven by globalization, higher education has been undergone significant changes since the 80s, particularly in **massification, marketization, and international competition**.
-  With a rapid increase in global talent mobility, higher education systems, institutions, and educational policy makers are supposed to interact within Glonacal dimension severely
-  Due to Covid-19, immediate global lockdown not only force governments and universities
 - To reshape the relationship with global market
 - To reinforce the point over how quality of higher education institutions should be measured in the countries
 - where most campuses are closed, lectures are forced to move on line as well as students are compelled to learn at home



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Internationalization, quality and inequality are Three Major impacts

-  Internationalization
 - a big decline in international student mobility during Covid-19 due to restriction of international travel
 - students' preference for studying abroad would be likely changed
 - study destination patterns would be also reconstructed from global scale to regional scale
 - the hard hit in global mobility and internationalization in higher education would likely require at least 5 years of recovery
-  Quality
 - A variety of face-face discourses, particularly lab works and internship, forcing to move to online mode, had led to a concern over student learning outcomes and assessment
-  Inequality
 - a widening “inequality” on account of the pandemic due to the varying levels of online acquisition and infrastructures in higher education worldwide



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Crisis management in Higher Education

- ❖ Crisis management is defined as
 - a process to identify “potential impacts that threaten an organization as well as to provide “a framework for building resilience, with the capability for an effective response that safeguards the interests of the organization's key stakeholders, reputation, brand, and value-creating activities, as well as effectively restoring operational capabilities”
 - It would involve a variety of stakeholders to develop a plan swiftly for “mitigation response, and continuity or recovery in the event of an incident”.
- ❖ Based on the level of impacts, there are three major types of crisis management
 - “widespread disruption to normal operations for an extended period”
 - “an incident that threatens the reputation of the organization”,
 - “serious injury, illness, and death”



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Challenges and changes for quality measures

- ❖ The transition to online learning under COVID-19 crisis challenges the tradition mode of external reviews undertaken by quality assurance agencies.
 - *extending validity of accreditation, postponing or canceling on site visits or switching to “desk review” due to campus closures or travel restrictions, and lifting requirements concerning online education*
- ❖ New focus on focus on how higher education institutions are capable of coping with rising risks over a declining research funding and a shortage of international students
- ❖ provide sufficient on-resources and support for unprepared teachers and disadvantaged students under this specific occasion



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Supportive statements from international QA networks and new adaptability in QA procedures

Several international quality assurance networks *such as International Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (INQAAHE), European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), Asia Pacific Quality Network (APQN), and Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)*, have swiftly responded to the health crisis either in publishing guideline and principles

INQAAHE published

- *INQAAHE's affirmation of support during COVID-19 pandemic*
- **INQAAHE Principles for Crisis Management**



INQAAHE Principles for crisis management in quality assurance

- adherence to **integrity** over assuring quality in higher education institutions
- maintaining **student learning experiences and engagement**
- ensuring **equity and access** as the top priorities
- remaining **close to higher education institutions** and sharing quality guidelines with them
- launching **clear communication plans** for confidence building over QA agencies
- continuing to **enhancing the role of enhanced partnership** and sharing good practices,
- adapting to **unforeseen circumstances** in the unprecedented crises



Changes, challenges and impacts over QA agencies and HEIs in terms of 6 dimensions

Items/ issues	QA	Higher education institutions	Impacts
Methodology	Change Review procedures/ Virtual visit	Measuring student learning experiences and engagement in practical training	Effectiveness of virtual on site is questioned
Accreditation status/ validity	Prolong accreditation period	Validity of the program	Termination of program accreditation would lead to emergence of low quality of provisions
Integrity	Confidentiality of review panel discussion and documents reviews	Academic integrity in student recruitment, class participation, examination, and assessment	Reliability of review decisions
Equity	Different standards for online degrees	Inequality for the underprivileged groups of students without sufficient technology for online learning	Lack of equipment and facilities for on line teaching and learning
Finance	No fees from reviewed universities	can 't afford accreditation fees	Sustainability
Partnership	Guidelines and support for higher education providers	Communication and support with QA agency are insufficient	No guidelines and resources in place for universities

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INQAAHE Survey

- 🌱 INQAAHE is keen to find solutions to support our members and the Higher Education community at large.
- 🌱 Due to disruption caused by COVID-19 has utterly changed the learning experiences of millions of students worldwide and dramatically affected the operations of HEIs and Quality Assurance Bodies
- 🌱 INQAAHE has prepared a brief study on the impact of COVID-19 in order to develop useful recommendations on QA practices in the times of global pandemic and social isolation.

Content of Survey

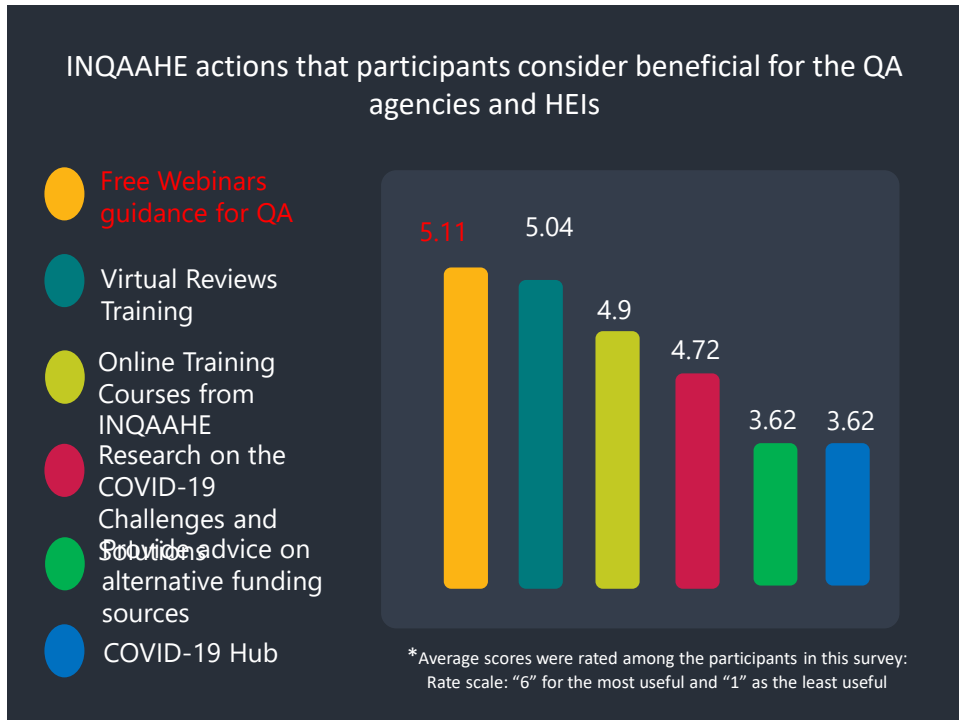
- 🍷 The survey aims to understand the impact and challenges that the QA agencies
- 🍷 4 sections divided in 10 main questions
 - Impacts on Governance
 - Responses taken by the QA agencies
 - Current support to THE Higher Education Systems and HEIs
 - INQAAHE Role and Support
- 🍷 41 Participants have answered the survey from 28 Countries



Impacts in governance and QA exercise

- 🍷 74% Operations running remotely
- 🍷 Top 3 challenges of the QA agencies with remote operations
 - Communication with coworkers, HEIs, or other stakeholders
 - Work performance and efficiency (time management, work process)
 - IT challenges (use of special software, etc)
- 🍷 Challenges under Covid-19
 - Cancellation or postponement of face-to-face activities such as onsite visits
 - Limited participation in international QA network activities
 - International cooperation projects are being suspended
 - 53% has financial issue





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Background of Taiwan Context

- 🍷 23 million population with 153 universities and college, enrolling 1.3 million students
- 🍷 HEEACT established in 2005 as a national quality assurance agency
- 🍷 **Up to present, there were 451 confirmed cases with a death toll of 7.**
- 🍷 **Campuses remain open**
- 🍷 as soon as the first COVID-19 confirmed case was released in WUHAN, Taiwan government set up the response team to investigate the situation *under the Central Epidemic Command Center (CECC)*
- 🍷 the Minister of Health and Welfare immediately was appointed by Premier Minister as the commander to coordinate and integrate a variety of resources cross different sectors

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Health regulation applied into higher education policies and implication to institutions

Three Stages

Communication and Early Deployment from late Jan. to mid-March

- To postpone the spring semester for two weeks
- To develop the standard process of confirmed cases reporting, principles for college entrance examination in the Handbook on Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases

Policy Implementation and quality assurance of on-line learning from mid-March to late May

- adhered to the principle of “suspending classes without suspending learning”
- integrate the resources from public and private sectors in order to provide 2,000 open courses in the platform of eWant, OpenEdu, ShareCourse, TaiwanLIFE, TaiwanMOOC, etc.

Control and management over foreign students returning after May



Safety measure and QA initiatives by Higher Education Evaluation & Accreditation Council of Taiwan

formed a “task force for crisis management”

With more than 130 program in 8 universities scheduled to be reviewed by the end of June

HEEACT adopted a flexible approach on onsite visit due to institutional concerns over campus safety.

HEEACT is thinking of developing a new approach to EQA of online delivery and applying IT into the traditional mode



Final questions

- ❑ Can quality of education be sustained if campus closure continues?
 - adaption of the flexible methodology into closed campuses, assurance of learning outcomes in a remote environment, maintenance of accreditation standards with limited student engagement, and postponement of accreditation onsite as well as extension of program validity
 - to rethink **if a new framework in quality assurance and their emerging roles need to be developed immediately after COVID-19.**
- ❑ What roles do international networks and quality assurance agencies should play after COVID 19?
 - it remains challenging to apply the flexible QA scheme to the whole virtual campuses instead.
 - When most quality assurance agencies are lacking experiences in assessing online delivery programs in a remote manner, it would be certainly leading to mistrust and escalating worries of institutions.



Concluding remarks

- 🌱 Wynnyckyj (2020) supported the lesson that
 - quality assurance agencies have learned under the crisis, “even though sometimes it can be difficult, in this emergency the ability to combine efforts, demonstrate high levels of professionalism and flexibility in quality assurance is of great value” (p.2).
- 🌱 INQAAHE
 - “The role of enhanced partnership and sharing good practice can never be overestimated in formulating the best responses to unprecedented crises. Limitations in the ability to meet during a protracted pandemic should provide scope for the development of more widely accessible partnership structures and these in turn will generate solutions that are more widely applicable for all stakeholders” (INQAAHE, 2020b, p1).





Thank you

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