Scientific Research Publishing

Open Journal of Social Sciences, 2022, 10, 241-264
https://www.scirp.org/journal/jss
ISSN Online: 2327-5960
ISSN Print: 2327-5952

An Assessment of the Practices on Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) among Teacher Education Institutions in Basilan, Philippines

Rachel L. Rodriguez

Basilan State College, Isabela City, Philippines
Email: mikechengrod1027@gmail.com

How to cite this paper: Rodriguez, R. L. (2022). An Assessment of the Practices on Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) among Teacher Education Institutions in Basilan, Philippines. *Open Journal of Social Sciences, 10,* 241-264.
https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2022.105017

Received: April 8, 2022
Accepted: May 17, 2022
Published: May 20, 2022

Abstract

Like any other higher learning institutions, PHEIs in Basilan, an island province of the Philippines in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), are also confronted with challenges when it comes to QA in tertiary education in terms of CQI. The study was conducted to assess the practices on continuous quality improvement among teacher education institutions in Basilan. The study employed a mixed methods design, all quantitative data were collected purposively from sixty (60) faculty members using an adapted questionnaire formulated by Thalner (2005) of Western Michigan University, the instrument consists of a framework that measures CQI in higher education, and descriptive statistics were used to analyze the weighted means, standard deviations, and ranges for the various variables. While the qualitative data were collected from ten (10) college deans, and program chairpersons and the vice president for academic affairs from the four HEIs, utilizing FGD and KII. Results showed that awareness on the continuous quality improvement is present but the need to strengthen the training on the process and methods should not only among department heads to strengthen the commitment as a shared culture in the pursuit of quality assurance, Commitment towards continuous quality improvement regardless of departments and among stakeholders is evident to be a powerful tool given the training and other resources available, and support mechanism for a continuous quality improvement must be guided by a framework best fit for academic institutions. Thus, this study came up with the following recommendations: maintain and enhance standards as well as review policies. Quality assurance is a way for institutions to maintain standards and continuously improve the standards of education, facilities, support, among others, commitment to provide excellent customer service which will be strengthened if there will be trainings and webinars and emphasize commitment towards con-

tinuous quality improvements in the core values of the academic institutions.

Keywords

Academic Program Review, Accreditation, Benchmarking, SWOT Analysis, Continuous Quality Improvement, Quality Assurance

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) highlighted that the number of students studying in different tertiary education institutions around the world is getting bigger and bigger which calls for greater emphasis on quality education among higher institutions of learning. There are several challenges being faced by HEIs when it comes to management of QA. Stander and Herman (2017) identified physical and financial resources, capacity development (e.g., HEI leadership, research, academic staff responsibilities), and program design (e.g., curriculum design) as the primary barriers to QA management of higher learning organizations.

Like any other higher learning institutions, Philippine Higher Education Institutions in Basilan, an island province of the Philippines in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), are also confronted with challenges when it comes to QA in tertiary education, in particular, in terms of CQI. For instance, based on the initial assessment of the researcher, only one out of four PHEIs has subjected its Teacher Education Program (TEP) for accreditation, two out of four have tried benchmarking activities, and one has considered Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threat (SWOT) Analysis. Whatever the results of their engagement to the methods used to achieve quality there is a need for these TEIs in Basilan to continuously process the mechanism for quality improvement to address the needs of the society. For instance, the Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) in the province, experience problems when it comes to teacher education curricular programs. Many of the basic education teachers needed by the Department of Education (DepEd) in Basilan cannot be fully supplied by the four (4) TEIs of the province. This is due to the fact that the TEIs do not offer degrees that are required by DepEd such as Bachelor of Early Childhood Education (BECEd) to teach in the Kindergarten, Bachelor of Physical Education (BPEd) or Bachelor of Culture and Arts Education (BCAEd), who will teach Music, Arts, Physical Education and Health (MAPEH) subjects in the Junior High school, Bachelor of Technology and Livelihood Education (BTLEd) who will teach the TLE subjects, and Bachelor of Special Needs Education (BSNEd), to teach in the Special Education (SpEd) classes. With the implementation of K-12 curriculum, the need for these specialized fields is high.

With the challenges being faced by TEIs in Basilan, it is but timely to conduct

a study that evaluates the importance of QA in higher education, in particular, CQI, to address the quality needs of the said institutions. In fact most of the studies suggested to assess how quality is measured in Educational institutions. It is even emphasized in all new CHED memorandum orders (CMOs) in Teacher Education curricular programs (CMOs 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 80, 82 s. 2017, Article VII Section 23) the relative importance of CQI. With the changing landscape and dynamics of tertiary education, QA processes must change with it (Ruiz & Junio-Sabio, 2012). The study of Thalner (2005), was made for directors in departments of Financial Services, Facilities Management, Auxiliary Services, and Corporate Training within all public higher education institutions, none was used in the academic department.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The present study aims to assess the CQI practices of TEIs in Basilan province. Specifically, the research answered the following questions:

1) What are the practices of the TEIs in Basilan in implementing CQI?

2) To what extent have the TEIs made use of the following CQI methods:

a) academic program review,

b) accreditation,

c) benchmarking and

d) SWOT analysis?

3) What are the perceived internal and external drivers that TEIs consider in their pursuit for CQI?

4) What support have the TEIs received in their continuous efforts to achieve quality?

5) What are the challenges being faced by TEIs in their CQI efforts?

6) What perceived outcomes were achieved by TEIs as a result of their CQI process?

7) What CQI framework can be recommended for TEIs in Basilan based on the findings of the study?

1.3. Significance of the Study

It is hoped that gaps identified in this study form the basis for Continuous Quality Improvement Framework for the TEIs of Basilan. The framework will help TEIs in restructuring their department, ensure that quality teaching is frequently evaluated, and problems are identified during the process and will help the Deans and Directors and other educators in the TEIs of Basilan to become more competent in planning, evaluating and monitoring the activities in their respective program of assignment. Moreover, the findings from this study can be used to refine policies and procedures intended to reinforce quality performance in teacher education.

2. Research Method

The present study employed mixed methods research design. According to

Creswell (2014) Mixed methods research is an approach to inquiry involving collecting both quantitative and qualitative data, integrating the two forms of data, and using distinct designs that may involve philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks, specifically, Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Design. Figure 1 shows the schematic diagram of the phases in Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods, which involve a two-phase process in which the researcher collected quantitative data in the first phase, then the results were analyzed, and then it was used to plan (or build on to) the second, qualitative phase. The qualitative phase entails collection and analysis of data that are non-numeric to understand concepts, opinion, or experiences. Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods was used in this study as basis in assessing the CQI practices among TEI's in Basilan to formulate the CQI Framework.

2.1. Participants

The participants of the study include administrators, regular and part-time faculty of the TEIs in Basilan. These target participants were selected since they are directly involved in CQI process and that they have the knowledge about CQI process; however, Inclusion and exclusion criteria were formulated to clearly define the participants of this study. The participation of the eligible or qualified respondents were voluntary, they were not coerced, in fact, those who were eligible to qualify as study participants have the option to withdraw anytime from the study without any punishment or repercussion or the like. Further, there were no known risks perceived in this study. Thus, psychological support was not necessary; however, the researcher was willing to assist should there be any need of assistance in relation to this study.

2.2. Instrument

Quantitative Phase

An adapted questionnaire formulated by Thalner (2005) of Western Michigan University was utilized in this study. The instrument consisted of a framework that measures CQI in higher education. The researcher made some modifications on the content to make it suitable to the setting and the participants of this study. A confirmatory factor analysis (Cronbach's alpha) using SPSS was conducted to determine the level of reliability, a reliability coefficient of 0.841 showed that the respective reliability indices for the constructs in the instrument are within the acceptable range from 0.70 to 0.90, this means that the level of reliability is good, and that the instrument is highly reliable.

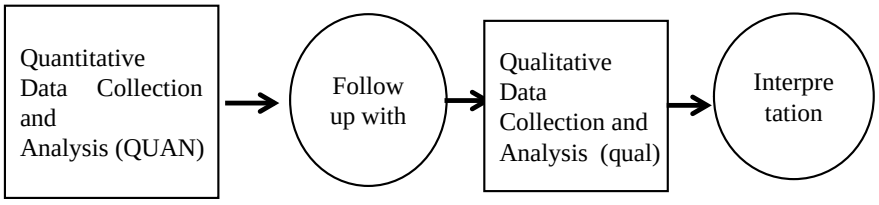

Figure 1. Schematic diagram of the phases in explanatory sequential mixed methods.

Qualitative Phase

A question/interview guide was established. In the formulation of questions to be used during the Semi-Structured Focused Group Discussion (FDG) and key informant interview (KII), questions were open-ended to allow each participant to express their insights regarding the question or topic.

2.3. Data Gathering Procedures

The data gathering proceeded in two distinct phases with rigorous quantitative sampling in the first phase followed by convenience sampling in the second, qualitative phase, and the final step is the interpretation (Creswell, 2014).

Quantitative data analysis

For research question number 2: To what extent have the TEIs made use of the following CQI methods:

1) academic program review,

2) accreditation,

3) benchmarking and

4) SWOT analysis?

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the weighted means, standard deviations, and ranges for the various variables. For research question number 3: What are the perceived internal and external drivers that TEIs consider in their pursuit for CQI? For question number 6: What perceived outcomes were achieved by TEIs because of their CQI process? Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the weighted means, standard deviations, and ranges for the various variables. For research question number 3 - 6, descriptive statistics were used to analyze the weighted means, standard deviations, and ranges for the various variables.

Qualitative data analysis

For questions number 1 and the rest of the questions, the data were supported by the qualitative data (Biggam, 2011).

3. Results and Discussions

To answer the questions, the researcher collected all Quantitative data from sixty (60) faculty members of the TEIs in Basilan using the standardized survey questionnaire, while the qualitative data were collected from ten (10) informants of which two (2) are College Deans, one (1) Vice President for Academic Affairs one (1) program chairperson and six (6) faculty members from the Teacher Education Department of the four Higher Education Institutions, through semi-structured interviews and focused-group-discussions.

3.1. Practices of the TEIs in Basilan in Implementing CQI

The interviews and FGD conducted resulted in the following results: First, When the participants were asked about how they described the quality management practices of their college or institutions as an academic leader, the data enabled the researcher to coin four (4) themes namely providing quality services with

four (4) recurrences; Providing services within the average standard with three (3) recurrences; Achieving quality service through management influence with one (1) recurrence; and Aligning quality management with standards with two (2) recurrences. The total recurrence for the quality management practices of Teacher Education Institutions in Basilan is ten (10).

The most commonly occurring theme is "*providing quality services*". Given the information, it can be viewed that everyone is aware of the need to deliver quality services with the use of continuous quality improvement processes and methods motivated by support from organizational leaders. This indicates that amidst significant changes being experienced in the higher education system such as the increasing competitiveness resulting from globalization in the 21st century still the TEIs in Basilan continue to thrive and deliver quality services, their goal is geared towards delivering quality services as evident in the Mission, and Vision of their respective institution, and it is being felt by the stakeholders even after they have already graduated from the school or the institution.

However, the least commonly occurring theme is "*Achieving quality services through management influence*" which means that the TEIs are aware that despite minimal management presence the quality service must be delivered to its clientele as it is already indicated in the roles and responsibilities of employees to perform at their best as well as quality service is one of the objectives to remain organizationally competitive.

This finding is consistent with Rodriguez et al. (2018), which showed that many of the Philippine Higher Education Institutions (PHEIs) went into institutionalization of quality assurance mechanisms by establishing quality management systems that will help in adopting quality standards and mechanisms in HEIs overall operations wherein a need for the appropriate support from the organization's leaders and stakeholders must be emphasized. The approaches in delivering quality assurance initiatives are to continuously work together in providing the right services to clients which should be in an organization-wide commitment for internal stakeholders.

As such, when commitment towards excellence in service is part of the shared culture benefits come along like employee motivation, increase morale, teamwork, and improve teaching pedagogies. An integral component of quality assurance is continuous quality improvement which is about adhering to regulations and tracking on compliance of an organization including improving outcomes as mentioned by Alpert & Green-Rogers (2015) leading to an incremental and progressive mechanism of process improvement and methods used although it could be on a gradual or breakthrough situation for TEIs in Basilan.

In terms of their initiatives in implementing CQI, Although TEIs have already initiated methods for CQI such as, but not limited to, subjecting itself for program evaluation thru Accreditation process, allowing and or supporting both faculty and students by sending them to attend seminars and trainings related to their program, However, It can be noted that there is still a need for the team players of the academic institutions to be aware of the CQI initiatives, as two

participants have commented:

Although there is a need for the team players of the academic institutions to be aware of the CQI initiatives not all are tasked to do specific CQI method. Educating them requires training to understand the need and how to use CQI. Most of the persons in charge to prepare are those with managerial position and few designated people, for example, in State Colleges and Universities those who were trained as accreditors to work for accreditation are those faculty with assistant professorial rank and above, so the instructors are not aware of the mechanisms of accreditation, in addition, some of the members of the faculty of education department in Basilan are part-time instructors of which most of them are fresh graduate especially in the private institutions, further, when applying for a new program to offer it is actually the Deans who are initiating, planning and directing all the needed requirements for compliance, therefore most of the faculty are not really aware of some of the methods for CQI and the concept of CQI itself. When CQI culture is intact, quality education is assured which Stratton (2019) emphasized the regularity of audit, reflection, and improvement wherein methods such as SWOT analysis, academic program review, accreditation and benchmarking are the indicators to widen the perspective of every member towards the CQI culture.

Finally when asked about their CQI efforts, the participants expresses their thoughts which enable the researcher to coin four themes about continuous quality improvement efforts of TEIs as described by the faculty, deans and program chair namely; Continuous quality improvement in offering excellent quality education with six (6) recurrences; Implementing continuous quality improvements with barriers have one (1) recurrence; Determining continuous quality improvement with average rank garnered two (2) recurrences; and Considering accreditation in continuous quality improvement implementation with four (4) recurrences.

Considering Basilan as an Island Province, we cannot deny the fact that the academic environment is not yet well established and not yet at par with other state colleges and universities or other Higher Education Institution outside Basilan, considering the peace and order situation, in addition, most of the faculty comprising Higher Education Institutions systems in Basilan are the products of the same Institutions. Moreover, the assessment and evaluation as well as the faculty policies and procedures although based on CHED standards are not fully established and implemented with meager educational resources and facilities, which may somehow affect the implementation of continuous quality improvement projects and programs.

This is true as Brown and Marshall (2008) evaluated the various quality issues in higher education wherein the factors academic environment, standards, assessment and evaluation, faculty policies and procedures, curricular programs, resources, and students affect the implementation of continuous quality improvements particularly on its outcome. In addition, accreditation results promote better commitment from TEIs in Basilan when it comes to resources and

in the long run, contributes to a more appreciative continuous quality improvement culture.

3.2. Extent of TEIs Using Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Method

It can be gleaned from Table 1 that most of the participants answered to a large extent, this indicates that the TEIs in Basilan gives importance and emphasis on continuous improvement of their academic programs through periodic curriculum reviews so as the components will be up to date to the needs of the academic environment, complies with the educational government regulations, and produce globally competitive students. This indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's in Basilan demonstrated during the period covered in this study in this particular indicator was good. This further indicates that the TEIs limits its data availability or access to persons in charge and authorized personnel only wherein not all stakeholders may be given the data on process improvements to comply with confidentiality and avoid resistance to change prior to implementation. Data process improvements may include surveys and researches that require results to be treated with utmost confidentiality.

It is interesting to note that this table supports the claim of the respondents in

Table 1. Extent of TEIs using CQI method as to academic program review.

Academic Program Review/ Data Analysis Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. Record and collect relevant data as part of continuous improvement efforts.	3.5000	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was excellent.
2. Analyze data as a part of continuous improvement methods.	3.5000	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was excellent.
3. Data on process improvements are available to academic supervisors, teachers and stakeholders.	3.1833	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was good.
4. Review curriculum to integrate new trends in teaching.	3.6000	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was excellent.
5. Discuss with core teachers strong and weak areas of students.	3.3333	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was excellent.
6. Share teaching methods that are effective.	3.4667	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was excellent.
COMPOSITE MEAN	3.4305	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was excellent.

the interview and focused group discussion where they expressed the idea that they deliver quality services especially n curriculum review, in fact, as they perceived this has become their culture—the delivery of quality service. In this table, the highest mean (3.6) is on curriculum review among the six variables responded to in the survey. It is good to note that they collected and analyzed data for their continuous improvement efforts. This indicates their being systematic because they based their decisions on data collected. Further, with mean of 3.4 is the variable on sharing teaching methods that are effective. This means that there is really a continuous effort to improve. They share ideas as a team. Their collective effort can lead to a culture of teamwork, this manifests an organizational leadership to develop conscious effort to work for quality. However, there is a need to share this data with the supervisors and stakeholders. This got the lowest mean of 3.1 although it is still good.

This study on the pursuit of continuous quality improvement also conforms with the inherent characteristics of quality service whereas the TEIs in Basilan approach is gearing towards the aim of the academic organization to attain customer satisfaction (Evans & Lindsay, 2020; Freeman, 2019) by responding to the needs of the students given the internal and external drivers. Moreover, when it comes to academic program it should always be quality representing the goal of any organization, regardless of their types, classifications, and size (Freeman, 2019; Srinivasan & Kurey, 2014). Furthermore, having an academic program that is aligned with the global market needs creates client satisfaction as Diaz (2014) mentioned having a good service provides value given the changing milieu of the education, Philippine higher education institutions (PHEIs) need to proactively change in order to remain at par and relevant to the challenges of the world (Rodriguez et al., 2018) wherein quality management systems are being established. It is an organization-wide initiative where quality becomes the overall climate of the workplace (Evans & Lindsay, 2020) wherein the academic programs as a major component of the workplace environment guides the teaching and learning process, its implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

Based on the data reported in **Table 2**, the participants reported an average weighted mean of 3.3933 which indicates that the extent of Teacher Education Institutions on using continuous quality improvement methods as to bench marking. Data in **Table 2** showed that the highest indicators are "Analyze Board Exam passing rate and compare it with national passing rate and leading institutions" and "Review the curriculum and compare it with CHED memorandum Orders and leading institutions" both with numerical rating of 4 described as "to a great extent" this indicates that TEI's used Benchmarking to a great extent as a method for CQI during the period covered in this study in these particular indicators, which means that the TEIs use data gathered based on results of board examinations, prepare comparative reports among leading academic institutions and the set national passing rate, as well as use trends to see the academic performance of their students and the educational institution as a whole.

Table 2. Extent of TEIs using CQI method as to bench marking.

Bench Marking Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. Observe the best practices of leading institutions.	3.3000	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was excellent.
2. Compare our processes with leading institutions.	3.3667	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was excellent.
3. Emulate teaching practices but within the context of our learning environment.	3.3333	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was excellent.
4. Analyze Board Exam passing rate and compare it with national passing rate and leading institutions.	3.4833	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was excellent.
5. Review the curriculum and compare it with CHED memorandum Orders and leading institutions.	3.4833	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was excellent.
COMPOSITE MEAN	3.3933	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was excellent.

According to Evans and Lindsay (2020), quality assurance requirements can be achieved when their total quality management is strategic, structured, and comprehensive approaches are available in managing the organization which involves the tools and techniques for benchmarking. In the context of higher education, quality assurance is a "systematic approach that covers processes in an HEI to better serve students and other stakeholders based on expected standards of quality" as mentioned by Kahveci et al. (2012) giving importance on teaching and learning pedagogies as part of the benchmarking criteria. When there is strong quality assurance it can easily implement quality processes and procedures that will lead to improved quality operations (Hou et al., 2020) because of benchmarking. As stated by Seyfried and Pohlenz (2018), one of the integral components of quality tertiary education is quality assurance wherein the presence of benchmarking initiatives in the pursuit of continuous quality improvement will create support to improve quality education and establish a culture of quality.

It can be gleaned from **Table 3** that the highest indicator is "Document and collect data and analyze for improvement", this indicates that the TEI's to a great extent used accreditation as a method for CQI in this particular indicator, which means that the TEIs uses data gathered, documented and analyzed to formulate strategies, tools, techniques, and performance evaluation measures for their continuous quality improvement. The results of the data gathered justify their decisions for their continuous quality improvement. **Table 2** also provides the least indicator is "Compile and sort documented activities as reference for our improvement",

Table 3. Extent of TEIs using CQI method as to accreditation.

Accreditation Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. Document student's teaching practicum.	3.5000	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was excellent.
2. Collect and analyze data of students' performance in their major subjects.	3.4000	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was excellent.
3. Document and collect data and analyze for improvement.	3.6000	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was excellent.
4. Compile and sort documented activities as reference for our improvement	3.3833	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was excellent.
COMPOSITE MEAN	3.4708	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was excellent.

this indicates that the TEI's to a great extent used accreditation as a method for CQI in this particular indicator, which means that the TEIs used different activities to properly document their activities for quality improvements including efficient compilation and sorting of documentations. The participants however reported an average weighted mean 3.4708.

In the study of de Paor (2016), maintained professional accreditation is a good tool in improving quality of education among tertiary-level institutions in which the pursuit of continuous quality improvement is a vital step as quality assurance is put into consideration. As pointed out by Ulewicz (2017), the role of stakeholders is important in the quality assurance processes in the educational sector, wherein there is a level of engagement necessary because it augments the level of quality in the academic operations.

It can be viewed from Table 4 that the highest indicator is "Consider Board Examination passing rates as our strengths" this indicates that the TEI's used SWOT analysis to a moderate extent as a method for CQI in this particular indicator, which means that the TEIs considered the results of board examinations as their strength to a moderate degree but they continuously review, monitor and improve it so as not to become a weakness for any accreditation, academic rankings, among others.

The academic institutions must investigate their strengths, enhanced their weaknesses, create threats into opportunities that will preserve a community of team players that shares a culture of quality this will also involve collaborations with other members of the stakeholders to address the learners' needs responding on the earliest possible time. As emphasized by Rasool et al. (2019) that different administration leadership approached, absence of budget for quality assurance, questionable commitment of the top management, and low motivation

Table 4. Extent of TEIs using CQI method as to SWOT analysis.

SWOT Analysis Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. List down the strengths of the department	2.7167	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was good.
2. Consider Board Examination passing rates as our strengths	2.8333	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was good.
3. Identify some weaknesses of our department	2.7333	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was good.
4. Consider challenges from outside the institution.	2.5833	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was good.
5. Uses these challenges as opportunity to improve	2.7000	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was good.
COMPOSITE MEAN	2.7133	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was good.

among employees are the top problems that can be established with the use of SWOT analysis tools.

Findings revealed the following:

Generally speaking, if we look at **Table 5**, The participants rated Accreditation, Academic Program Review, and Benchmarking to a Great Extent, with Accreditation as one with the highest mean, however the participants rated SWOT ANALYSIS as to a moderate Extent this indicates that the TEI's used SWOT analysis to a moderate extent as a method for CQI, this is because they have considered the results of board examinations as their strength and the challenges from outside the institution to a moderate degree, This was supported by the participants during the FGD and KII that SWOT Analysis is least used among the four methods.

Despite this result, they continue to review, monitor and improve it so as not to become a weakness for any accreditation, academic rankings, among others.

As mentioned by Park et al. (2013), the recognition of quality improvement work that is designed for a system in a perfect sense achieves the result it gets wherein strategic planning is also vital. Hence, a structure design for CQI methods utilization must provide the needed outcomes of the TEIs wherein such design would include shared community vision, evidence-based decision making, collaborative action, investment and sustainability among others.

Although "accreditation", garnered the highest mean which indicates that the TEIs used their continuous quality improvement methods to pass and got high ratings from various accreditations as well as sustain such ratings to the highest

Table 5. Summary table for the extent of TEIs using CQI method.

CQI Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
Academic Program Review	3.4305	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was excellent.
Benchmarking	3.3933	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was excellent.
Accreditation	3.4708	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was excellent.
SWOT Analysis	2.7133	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was good.
Overall Mean	3.2519	It indicates that the use of CQI by TEI's demonstrated during the period covered in this study was good.

standards. The least variable is the "SWOT analysis", which means that the TEIs are also using other tools and techniques in the strategic planning and other activities for continuous quality improvement.

Given the different challenges associated with quality assurance management, Nguyen et al. (2017) listed some important success factors in attaining quality education among higher educational institutions and these includes establishment of quality assurance unit/agency that will review, plan, implement and evaluate, international collaboration, human resource development, professional development and initiatives for quality assurance with emphasis on culture of quality. Hence, in having a culture of quality indicators such as academic program review, benchmarking, accreditation, and use of SWOT analysis can help address the different challenges and create support mechanisms towards achievement of goals and objectives.

When asked about how frequent they are using the different methods of CQI, the informants—the faculty, deans and program chair quickly answered the question which enable the researcher to coin two (2) themes namely: Utilizing other methods for CQI with one (1) recurrence and Applying frequently CQI Methods such Accreditation, benchmarking, academic program review, and SWOT analysis with seven (7) recurrences.

It can be noted that the most occurring theme is "*Applying frequently CQI Methods such Accreditation, benchmarking, academic program review, and SWOT analysis*" which means that the variables of this study are ascertained as the most commonly used by the TEIs in the pursuit for excellence. In this situation, the TEIs of Basilan are frequently applying the methods on CQI to improve their services as all members of the organization are aware of its benefits.

Hence, the CQI methods will be dependent on the needs and concerns of the TEIs, whenever there is an alternative which would provide more benefits in terms of results the willingness to try is somehow present. In the pursuit of CQI, organizations learn from experiences (Park et al., 2013).

3.3. Perceived Internal and External Drivers That TEIs Consider in Their Pursuit for CQI

It can be seen from Table 6 that the highest indicator is "To improve quality teaching and learning" which means that the TEIs main intention is geared towards and always on improving teaching and learning pedagogies as an internal

Table 6. Perceived internal drivers that TEIs consider in their pursuit for CQI.

Perceived Internal Driver Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. To improve quality teaching and learning	3.3667	It indicates that the drivers to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were most evident.
2. To improve Board Exam results	3.3333	It indicates that the drivers to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were most evident.
3. To improve departmental efficiency	3.3333	It indicates that the drivers to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were most evident.
4. To improve departmental image or prestige	3.2500	It indicates that the drivers to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were most evident.
5. To become more competitive	3.3167	It indicates that the drivers to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were most evident.
6. To improve communication within the department	3.2667	It indicates that the drivers to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were most evident.
7. To improve communication between departments	3.2167	It indicates that the drivers to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were most evident.
8. To improve the quality of work life for our departmental employees	3.2000	It indicates that the drivers to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were more evident.
9. Because of dissatisfaction with past practices	3.2667	It indicates that the drivers to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were most evident.
OVERALL MEAN	3.2833	It indicates that the drivers to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were most evident.

driver to achieve institutional mission, vision and goals with the use of continuous quality improvement tools and techniques.

Data on Table 7 shows an overall mean of 3.3252. This indicates that the external drivers to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were most evident. The students are still the most important consideration. Delivery of quality service is much more direct to students. In fact, in the internal driver that they consider in previous Table 8 it is to improve teaching and learning that got the highest mean (3.36). Three variables: to respond to student's needs, respond to pressure from immediate superior and governing boards. However, the highest mean (3.53) is on responding to student's needs. This indicates their top priority on student's needs. Which means that the TEIs always prioritizes the needs of their students, feedbacks are an essential part in the pursuit of continuous quality improvement, the students being the output of TEIs is the reflection of all the strategies, initiatives, programs and activities being implemented that purposely addressing the learners needs while achieving the institutions objectives.

As stated by Mahbub (2017) pointed out that the quality assurance must be characterized by a strong internal quality assurance system and periodic audits

Table 7. Perceived external drivers that TEIs considered in their pursuit for CQI.

Perceived External Driver Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. To respond to student's needs	3.5333	It indicates that the drivers to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were most evident.
2. To respond to pressures from immediate superior	3.4500	It indicates that the drivers to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were most evident.
3. To respond to pressures from governing boards	3.2667	It indicates that the drivers to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were most evident.
4. To respond to pressures from upper administration	3.3333	It indicates that the drivers to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were most evident.
5. To respond to pressures from alumni	3.1833	It indicates that the drivers to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were more evident.
6. To respond to pressures from community groups and leaders	3.1833	It indicates that the drivers to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were more evident.
OVERALL MEAN	3.3252	It indicates that the drivers to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were most evident.

Table 8. Summary table for perceived internal and external drivers that TEIs considered in their pursuit for CQI.

Indicators	STD	Mean	Interpretation
Internal Drivers	0.49812	3.2833	It indicates that the drivers to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were more evident.
External Drivers	0.55159	3.3252	It indicates that the drivers to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were most evident.
Overall	0.40723	3.3038	It indicates that the drivers to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were most evident.

are in place to respond to the needs of the students and the pressures of governmental bodies, alumni, community and other stakeholders. In attaining successful academic program review, the process must be in consonance with the efforts of an academic institution and should support the long-term and strategic initiatives of the educational institutions (Saint Louis University, 2020) with the presence of the external drivers to be able to address the needs properly.

Table 8 shows the summary for the perceived internal and external drivers. To summarize, although both internal and external drivers are vital as TEIs pursuit for continuous quality improvement, external drivers exhibit higher results, this is due to components on governmental regulations and compliance to accreditation reflecting the results of the performances of the TEIs in Basilan along with the review, and approval on the continuity of courses offered. This indicates that the institution should consider themselves as an open system with the involvement of other stakeholders especially the parents with the community, the local government, the alumni, as well as other business sectors who can contribute to the successes of projects and programs geared toward continuous quality improvement.

As Bendermacher et al. (2020) specified the factors of quality assurance and its effect on continuous quality improvement include establishment of perspectives on open system, involvement of stakeholders, fostering and environment of teaching and learning, bridging the gap between ownership and accountability, and fostering integrative leadership and supportive communication climate contribute to the improvement of CQI in higher education. Hence, the internal and external drivers contribute to the realization of the quality improvements each TEIs in Basilan are concerned of.

3.4. Support That TEIs Received in Their Continuous Efforts to Achieve Quality

Table 9 showed that the highest indicator for support is "Staff time to commit to the program" which means that the TEIs have an available team player who is supportive on the pursuit for continuous quality improvement given the core

Table 9. Support to continuous quality improvement.

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. Commitment of upper administration	3.1333	It indicates that the support to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were not so evident.
2. Commitment of immediate superior	2.7333	It indicates that the support to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were not so evident.
3. Commitment from other areas of the institution	3.1500	It indicates that the support to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were not so evident.
4. Participation by other areas of the institution	3.1167	It indicates that the support to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were not so evident.
5. Support from faculty	3.2333	It indicates that the support to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were not so evident.
6. Financial resources committed directly to the continuous improvement process	2.8000	It indicates that the support to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were not so evident.
7. Staff time to commit to the program	3.2833	It indicates that the support to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were clearly evident.
8. Training in continuous improvement methods for faculty	3.1167	It indicates that the support to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were not so evident.
9. Training in continuous improvement methods for administrators	2.5333	It indicates that the support to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were not so evident.
10. Employees with a general understanding of continuous improvement methods	3.0333	It indicates that the support to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were not so evident.
11. Administrator's knowledge about continuous improvement methods	3.1167	It indicates that the support to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were not so evident.
12. Departmental rewards or recognition tied to successful implementation	3.0000	It indicates that the support to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were not so evident.
13. Individual rewards or recognition tied to successful implementation	3.0500	It indicates that the support to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were not so evident.
14. Financial incentives	3.0333	It indicates that the support to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were not so evident.

Continued

15. Faculty development	3.1833	It indicates that the support to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were not so evident.
OVERALL MEAN	3.0350	It indicates that the support to CQI in the TEI's during the period covered in this study were not so evident.

competencies, capabilities, and knowledge towards the achievement of institutional goals. The least indicator is "Training in continuous improvement methods for administrators" which means that the TEIs need more trainings on different methods as the teaching and learning processes become more complex overtime as well as the changes in the requirements on teaching pedagogies must be able to adapt to the global market perspectives. In addition, "Receiving financial and non-financial support from the management" wherein there are financial incentives or additional payment on top of salaries are given in doing the continuous quality improvements as well as motivational factors from the management. The TEIs of Basilan are motivated given the support from the administration as to financial aspects such as incentives, overtime pay, among others in addition to the salaries received.

According to Best and Dunlap (2014), current policy must be assessed whereas with this action the determination is the support mechanisms so as internal and external stakeholder investment for the development of the academic institutions. Financial and non-financial supports for the employees will enhance morale and shared values towards continuous quality improvement culture. Stakeholders also are very supportive to the enhancement of educational institutions because they believe that will benefit not only the school but all other players of the community.

3.5. Challenges That TEIs Faced in Their Continuous Efforts to Achieve Quality

Results showed that the highest theme is "Lack of cooperation and resistance from employees towards continuous quality improvement" which means that without cooperation and commitment present in the culture shared by the TEIs it would be difficult for them to work towards an improved organization. When there is resistance from employees there is no or less commitment effort on the CQI initiatives. Other challenges include Technology and personnel issues"; "Absence of faculty orientation on CQI"; "Failure to achieve standardized qualification and retention of Students" and "Absence of faculty orientation on CQI" which means that technological concerns are a necessity in the implementation of CQI as teaching pedagogies and operations of TEIs in Basilan are mostly online, especially in this time of the pandemic.

These challenges can be overcome by involving all the stakeholders in the CQI process, keep them always posted on any incremental development that the in-

stitution has achieved, then there is a need for the institution to introduce a reward and or incentives system for others to be motivated and engaged.

3.6. Perceived Outcomes Achieved by TEIs as a Result of Their CQI Process

Table 10 shows the data on the perceived outcomes achieved by TEIs as a result of their CQI Process. Having pursued their quest for Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI), the respondents perceived that they have achieved some results of their efforts. These perceived outcomes are as follows: their highest perceived outcome with a mean (3.7) is on quicker response to student's needs. Their top priority is students, and this is also their perceived outcome. In fact, this is followed by the variable of improved ability to monitor students' progres, which means that the TEIs through continuous quality improvement can provide strengthened services to their learners as a response to their needs making academic services on a satisfactorily impact. Hence, this strategy on responding to students' needs through improve service is enhanced by having continuous quality improvements in place within the TEIs.

Table 10. Perceived outcomes achieved by TEIs because of their CQI process.

Perceived Outcomes	Mean	Interpretation
1. Quicker response to student's needs	3.7000	It indicates that the Outcomes to CQI experienced by TEI's during the period covered in this study were clearly manifested.
2. Improved service to our students	3.2667	It indicates that the Outcomes to CQI experienced by TEI's during the period covered in this study were clearly manifested.
3. Improved ability to deliver new teaching strategies	3.4333	It indicates that the Outcomes to CQI experienced by TEI's during the period covered in this study were clearly manifested.
4. Improved technique in assessing student's performance	3.4333	It indicates that the Outcomes to CQI experienced by TEI's during the period covered in this study were clearly manifested.
5. Improved faculty morale	3.3500	It indicates that the Outcomes to CQI experienced by TEI's during the period covered in this study were clearly manifested.
6. Improved teamwork	3.4333	It indicates that the Outcomes to CQI experienced by TEI's during the period covered in this study were clearly manifested.
7. Improved communications in the department	3.4167	It indicates that the Outcomes to CQI experienced by TEI's during the period covered in this study were clearly manifested.
8. Improved relationship within the department/college	3.5000	It indicates that the Outcomes to CQI experienced by TEI's during the period covered in this study were clearly manifested.

Continued

9. Improved communication with the institution	3.4500	It indicates that the Outcomes to CQI experienced by TEI's during the period covered in this study were clearly manifested.
10. Improved relationship with community groups and leaders	3.2833	It indicates that the Outcomes to CQI experienced by TEI's during the period covered in this study were clearly manifested.
11. Improved departmental prestige	3.3833	It indicates that the Outcomes to CQI experienced by TEI's during the period covered in this study were clearly manifested.
12. Performances are recognized	3.4333	It indicates that the Outcomes to CQI experienced by TEI's during the period covered in this study were clearly manifested.
13. Improved extension service to our community	3.3667	It indicates that the Outcomes to CQI experienced by TEI's during the period covered in this study were clearly manifested.
14. Improved ability to monitor student's progress	3.5167	It indicates that the Outcomes to CQI experienced by TEI's during the period covered in this study were clearly manifested.
15. Improved process efficiency	3.5167	It indicates that the Outcomes to CQI experienced by TEI's during the period covered in this study were clearly manifested.
OVERALL MEAN	3.4320	It indicates that the Outcomes to CQI experienced by TEI's during the period covered in this study were clearly manifested.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the summary of findings, the researcher came up with the following conclusions:

1) Awareness on the continuous quality improvement is present but the need to strengthen the training on the process and methods should not only be among department heads to strengthen the commitment as a shared culture in the pursuit of quality assurance.

2) Curriculum review in any academic program addresses the need to integrate new trend in teaching-learning process to produce globally competitive students.

3) It is a priority to improve quality teaching and learning as the main service of any academic institution which serves as an internal driver for success in incorporating different teaching and learning pedagogies leading towards a work-life balance among team players.

4) Commitment towards continuous quality improvement regardless of departments and among stakeholders is evident to be a powerful tool given the training and other resources available.

5) There must be a committed workforce in the pursuit of quality assurance

through continuous quality improvement as well as standardized academic qualifications of entry and retention of students among TEIs as well as availability of resource that will support the implementation of continuous quality improvement initiatives.

6) When students' needs are met the soonest possible time, the service is evidently improved. The role of continuous quality improvement creates an environment where improved service for students is made available assuring quality in place.

7) The support mechanism for a continuous quality improvement must be guided by a framework best fit for academic institutions.

Recommendations

Based on the summary of findings and conclusions drawn, the researcher came up with the following recommendations:

1) Maintain and enhance standards as well as review policies.

2) Continuous training for all team players participating in academic review, benchmarking, accreditation and SWOT analysis.

3) Increase image and visibility since it is affected by quality where both can be used to lead the institution to a stronger stakeholder support such as donations, grant, or any funding, increase interest of potential students to the TEIs as well as employers.

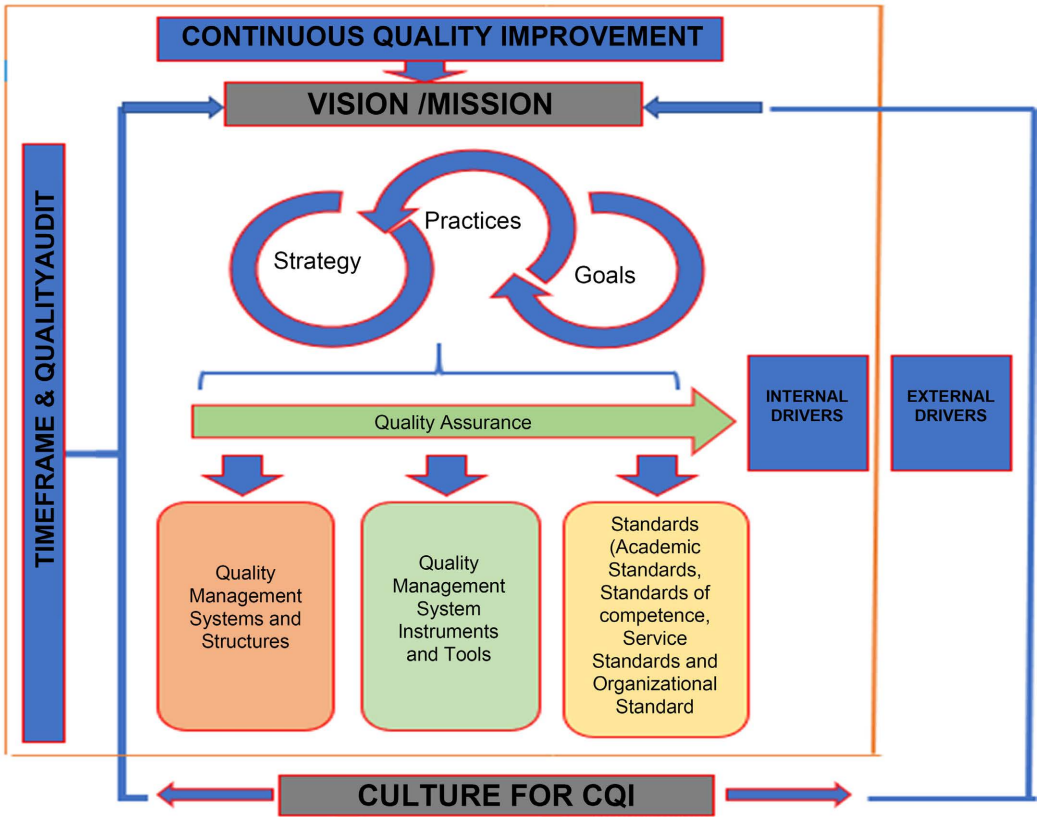

Figure 2. CQI framework for TEI's.

4) Emphasize commitment towards continuous quality improvements in the core values of the academic institutions.

5) Quality assurances instruments, mechanisms and caring about quality in institutions can build trusts from society, politics, and the economy. Stakeholder awareness can be systematically identified, and address demands and requirements.

6) Commitment to provide excellent customer service which will be strengthened if there will be trainings and webinars.

7) Framework for Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI).

Figure 2 shows the CQI Framework for TEIs. The framework proposed in this study is crafted from conceptual frameworks based on Deming's PDSA cycle and the Logic model approach to evaluation. It does not necessarily follow that such a framework represents a quick fix or a simplistic recipe for success: what it can do is to contribute significantly to a systematic and focused process of restructuring and consistent improvement in Higher Education Institutions so that the communities they serve will eventually benefit from such.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

References

Alpert, L., & Green-Rogers, Y. (2015, November 6). *The CQI Process: Using the Plan-Do-Study-Act Cycle to Improve Outcomes.* University of Chicago.

Bendermacher, G. W., De Grave, W. S., Wolfhagen, I. H., Dolmans, D. H., & Oude Egbrink, M. G. (2020). Shaping a Culture for Continuous Quality Improvement in Undergraduate Medical Education. *Academic Medicine, 95,* 1913-1920. https://doi.org/10.1097/ACM.0000000000003406

Best, J., & Dunlap, A. (2014). *Continuous Improvement in Schools and Districts: Policy Considerations*. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED557599.pdf

Biggam, J. (2011). *Succeeding with Your Master's Dissertation: A Step-by-Step Handbook*. Open University Press.

Brown, J. F., & Marshall, B. L. (2008). Continuous Quality Improvement: An Effective Strategy for Improvement of Program Outcomes in a Higher Education Setting. *Nursing Education Perspectives, 29,* 205-211.

CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 74, Series of 2017. Revised Policies, Standards and Guidelines for Bachelor of Elementary Education.

CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 75, Series of 2017. Revised Policies, Standards and Guidelines for Bachelor of Secondary Education.

CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 76, Series of 2017. Revised Policies, Standards and Guidelines for Bachelor in Early Childhood Education.

CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 77, Series of 2017. Revised Policies, Standards and Guidelines for Bachelor of Special Needs Education.

CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 78, Series of 2017. Revised Policies, Standards and Guidelines for Bachelor of Technology and Livelihood Education.

CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 80, Series of 2017. Revised Policies, Standards and Guidelines for Bachelor of Physical Education.

CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 82, Series of 2017. Revised Policies, Standards and Guidelines for Bachelor of Culture and Arts Education.

Creswell, 2014.

De Paor, C. (2016). The Contribution of Professional Accreditation to Quality Assurance in Higher Education. *Quality in Higher Education, 22,* 228-241. https://doi.org/10.1080/13538322.2016.1263925

Diaz, E. (2014, August 19). What Is Your Definition of Quality? *Geneva Business News*. https://www.gbnews.ch/what-is-your-definition-of-quality

Evans, J., & Lindsay, W. (2020). *Managing for Quality and Performance Excellence*. Cengage.

Freeman, G. (2019, February 1). What Is Quality Management and Why Does It Matter? *Quality Magazine*. https://www.qualitymag.com/articles/95237-what-is-quality-management-and-why-does-it-matter

Hou, A. Y. C., Zhang, J., Justiniano, D., Lu, G., & Jun, G. (2020). Internal and External Quality Assurance of Higher Education in the Asia-Pacific Region. In *Global Trends in Higher Education Quality Assurance* (pp. 168-224). Brill Sense. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004440326_008

Kahveci, T. C., Uygun, Ö., Yurtsever, U., & İlyas, S. (2012). Quality Assurance in Higher Education Institutions Using Strategic Information Systems. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 55,* 161-167. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.09.490

Mahbub, R. (2017, April). Quality Assurance for Higher Education: Challenges in Sustaining Continuous Quality Improvement for Malaysian Universities. In *INTED 2017: 11th International Technology, Education and Development Conference* (pp. 5204-5210). https://doi.org/10.21125/inted.2017.1214

Nguyen, H. C., Ta, T. T. H., & Nguyen, T. T. H. (2017). Achievements and Lessons Learned from Vietnam's Higher Education Quality Assurance System after a Decade of Establishment. *International Journal of Higher Education, 6,* 153-161. https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v6n2p153

Park et al. (2013). *Continuous Quality Improvement in Education*. https://www.carnegiefoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/carnegie-foundation_continuous-improvement_2013.05.pdf

Rasool, S., Khan, K. B., & Ali, M. S. (2019). Impediments in Quality Assurance of Higher Education Sector of Pakistan. *Global Social Sciences Review, 4,* 52-60. https://doi.org/10.31703/gssr.2019(IV-IV).08

Rodriguez, J., Valenzuela, M., & Ayuyao, N. (2018). TQM Paradigm for Higher Education in the Philippines. *Quality Assurance in Education, 26,* 101-114. https://doi.org/10.1108/QAE-12-2015-0048

Ruiz, A. J., & Junio-Sabio, C. (2012). Quality Assurance in Higher Education in the Philippines. *Asian Journal of Distance Education, 10,* 63-70.

Saint Louis University (2020). *Academic Program Review*. Saint Louis University Website. https://www.slu.edu/provost/educational-program-development-review/academic-program-review.php

Seyfried, M., & Pohlenz, P. (2018). Assessing Quality Assurance in Higher Education: Quality Managers' Perceptions of Effectiveness. *European Journal of Higher Education,*

8, 258-271. https://doi.org/10.1080/21568235.2018.1474777

Srinivasan, A., & Kurey, B. (2014). Creating a Culture of Quality. *Harvard Business Review, 92,* 23-25.

Stander, E., & Herman, C. (2017). Barriers and Challenges Private Higher Education Institutions Face in the Management of Quality Assurance in South Africa. *South African Journal of Higher Education, 31,* 206-224. https://doi.org/10.20853/31-5-1481

Stratton, T. D. (2019). Legitimizing Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI): Navigating Rationality in Undergraduate Medical Education. *Journal of General Internal Medicine, 34,* 758-761. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11606-019-04875-1

Thalner, D. (2005). *The Practice of Continuous Improvement in Higher Education*.

Ulewicz, R. (2017). The Role of Stakeholders in Quality Assurance in Higher Education. *Human Resources Management & Ergonomics, 11,* 93-107.