

## Perceived Factors that Promote Result-Oriented Practices of Guiding Standards in Teacher Training Universities in Mozambique

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**Abstract:** The study explored factors that promote result-oriented practices of guiding standards in teacher training universities in Mozambique using the descriptive survey design. The target population was 2340 students in the final year at four government teacher training university centres in Mozambique. A total of 242 teachers in training were selected using the simple random sampling method to constitute the sample and fill the questionnaire. Data was analysed through descriptive statistics in terms of mean scores and standard deviations. The scale for mean score interpretation was as follows: 3.51-4.00 = highly critical factor, 3.50-3.00 = moderately critical factor, 1.51-2.9 = less critical factors and 1.5-1 = not critical factor. The study concluded that factors being studied constitute an important aspect for teacher training programs to effectively promote result-oriented practices of guiding standards. Based on the conclusion, the study recommended that teacher training institutions in Mozambique should incorporate the 14 factors as key ingredients in teacher training programs so as to equip novice teachers with required skills. The same can be done to practicing teachers through workshops and seminars.

**Keywords:** Quality Assurance; guiding standards; practice; ecosystem; stakeholders; collaboration.

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### Introduction

Result-oriented practices of guiding standards can be considered as purpose-driven implementation of public declaration statements which include institutional vision, mission and core values (Dobrinić & Fabac, 2021; Besterfield et al., 2014). This is vital for a smooth execution of quality assurance control in fulfilment of the global sustainable development goal for education (Cross et al., 2015). Various authors argue that public declarations contribute to the improvement and accountability of learning institutions (Christie, 2018; UNESCO, 2014; Shabbir et al. 2016; Sanyal, 2013).

Between 2008 and 2018, the Mozambican government prioritised quality education by investing a substantial amount of the total

government expenditure and Gross Domestic Product to achieve quality assurance as a primary goal towards sustainable development and in response to global millennium goals. However, due to seeming lack of implementation of set quality standards, the education system has been bombarded with concerns from the government, employers and community stakeholders in quest for quality which is more attuned to economic and developmental aspirations, leading to a drive towards quality assurance in teacher education (Musinguzi, 2019; Diaconu et al., 2014).

There is a general consensus that teacher training has a potential to determine nations' ability to solve socio-political and economic problems through the practice of quality assurance guiding standards (Guzman, 2013; UNESCO, 2021; World Bank 2015).

In support of this ambitious goal, International Network of Quality Assurance Agency in Higher Education (INQAAHE) enrolment rose from 10 countries in 1991 to 88 countries in 2000 (INQAAHE, 2021; Lemaitre & Karakhanyan, 2018; USAID, 2021). In order to standardise quality in education among subscribing members, INQAAHE had to come up with, and promoted quality assurance guidelines by member institutions.

Despite clear quality assurance guidelines, the global teacher education system is reported to be continuously hampered by diverse challenges such as limited awareness of quality assurance mechanisms, professional development, lack of mentoring, guidance and counselling and a missing linkage between universities and the industry. Mozambique is not exempted from these challenges (World Bank, 2015; Ministry of Education, 2019).

Asia, which has close to 30 member states in the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education esteems quality and believes that production of quality teachers can transform educational practices (Oppen, 2019). According to Shabbir et al. (2016), Pakistan is one of countries that are striving to maintain their status among high-ranking international higher education institutions. However, it is hindered by high annual expenditures on teacher education which threaten standard outcomes. Teacher training institutes face tremendous challenges such as lack of library books and fresh reading material.

According to Sanyal (2013), Africa is not lacking in quality assurance guidelines; however, mechanism for determining the quality of teachers and proper teacher education is a serious challenge. The study of Langa (2014) established a need for training technicians capable of implementing policies linked to development priorities. However, it seems uncertain whether educational practitioners on the ground are aware of the existence of standardized guiding principles for teacher training. This scenario poses a critical question on current level of adherence to standard guidelines. This further raises a query whether teacher training institutions are tapping sufficiently and effectively into the laid educational quality assurance strategic foundations or guidelines. There is therefore a need to establish perceived factors that promote result-oriented quality assurance practices of standard guidelines in teacher training universities in African countries. This study was conducted in Mozambique and was

guided by the following research question: What are perceived factors that promote result-oriented quality assurance practices at teacher training institutions in Mozambique?

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

This study utilised the descriptive survey design which gave room to identify data that defines and clarifies the existing phenomena. This design provided a more holistic approach to the research question as the study required the researcher to identify and measure variables without manipulating them (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019).

### **Population and Sampling**

The target population was 2340 students in the final year at four government teacher training university centres in Mozambique. A total of 242 teachers in training were selected using the simple random sampling method to constitute the sample and fill the questionnaire.

### **Validity and Reliability**

To ensure validity, the questionnaire items were examined by an education professor to ensure clarity and usability and to make sure that items are free from ambiguity and technical or sentence structural issues. Before collection of data, the researcher carried out a pilot study with 50 participants with similar characteristics as those in the main sample. The pilot study test yielded a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.915.

### **Statistical Treatment of Data**

The scale for mean score interpretation was as follows: 3.51-4.00 = highly critical factor, 3.50-3.00 = moderately critical factor, 1.51-2.9 = less critical factors and 1.5-1 = not critical factor.

### **Ethical Considerations**

After obtaining permission to conduct the study from the Ministry of Higher Education and Technology, the researcher obtained informed consent from participants and proceeded with questionnaire inquiries. Respondents were made aware that they had freedom to withdraw from the study.

## **Results and Discussion**

This section presents results of the study guided by the following research question: What are perceived factors that promote result-oriented quality assurance practices at teacher training institutions in Mozambique?

Participants' responses regarding perceived factors that promote result-oriented quality assurance

practices at teacher training universities in Mozambique are presented in table 1.

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Perceived Factors that Promote Result-oriented Quality Assurance Practices**

| Factors                                                              | Mean  | Std. Dev | Mean Score Interpretation |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|----------|---------------------------|
| Clarifying QA Officer role                                           | 3.376 | 2.13524  | Moderate                  |
| Global citizenship                                                   | 3.203 | .83263   | Moderate                  |
| Needy support                                                        | 3.120 | .84364   | Moderate                  |
| Environmental challenges                                             | 3.120 | .90532   | Moderate                  |
| QA professional growth                                               | 3.194 | .80936   | Moderate                  |
| Curriculum that promotes international & intercultural understanding | 3.186 | .80102   | Moderate                  |
| Non-discrimination in gender                                         | 3.124 | .86009   | Moderate                  |
| Curriculum relevance                                                 | 3.086 | .89993   | Moderate                  |
| International cooperation                                            | 3.087 | .88129   | Moderate                  |
| International and intercultural understanding                        | 3.041 | .88225   | Moderate                  |
| Peace education                                                      | 3.037 | .90523   | Moderate                  |
| Life-long learning                                                   | 3.021 | .88063   | Moderate                  |
| Provision of facilities for disabled e.g. ramps                      | 3.008 | .97262   | Moderate                  |
| Equal access                                                         | 2.950 | .84825   | Low                       |
| Factor Promoting QA Total Average                                    | 3.084 | .52231   | Moderate                  |

In table one, respondents were exposed to 14 factors to indicate their perception. Respondents rated the 14 factors as moderately promoting results oriented practices in quality assurance. The factors include clarification of quality assurance role, global citizenship, need support, environmental challenges, professional growth, curriculum that promotes international and intercultural understanding, non-discrimination in gender, curriculum relevancy, international cooperation, international and intercultural understanding, peace education, lifelong learning and provision of facilities for disabled.

Clarifying the Quality Assurance Officer's role was rated higher than the other variables, with the mean of 3.376. This was followed by the need to incorporate global citizenship into the curriculum, which had mean of 3.203. On the other hand, equal access was rated as lowly promoting result-oriented practices of quality Assurance, with the mean of 2.950. However, the overall mean score was 3.084 which suggests that respondents generally considered the listed factors as moderately promoting result-oriented practices of quality Assurance. It can therefore be argued that for the result-oriented practice of quality assurance standards, the factors should be included in the teacher training programs.

A range of literature has addressed some of the factors being studied. The University of Exeter (2020), for instance, confirmed that quality

assurance officers should be mandated with critical duties such as operational management of academic programs, program revision, approval and cancellation as well as capacity building and monitoring. To assure good results, Muchanje (2020) argued that the quality assurance officer's role should go beyond visiting schools for supervision. In Marecho's (2012) study, majority of respondents confirmed being uncomfortable with frequent supervisory visits. Such feedback could be a result of inadequate understanding of quality assurance officer's roles to propel excellence in teaching and school goal achievement. This call for a need for learning institutions to inform practitioners on the importance of supervisory activities.

The need to teach global citizenship ranking at the mean score of 3.203 confirms Looper's (2022) assertion that the contemporary global society demands that curriculum developers ensure that global social skills and values become part of the teacher training curriculum to enable trainees to deal with differences in cultures caused by migrations as people are moving from place to place in search for greener pastures. According to Estelle and Fischman (2020), Global Citizenship Education has been found to be a redemptive educational solution to universal problems in the contemporary world.

The ability to provide support for needy students with the mean of 3.120, is in line with the quality assurance target 4b of the United Nations which

endeavours to promote the distribution of higher education scholarships transparently to needy students in developing countries (USAID, 2021). Therefore, educational leaders are to ensure that teacher education sectors create conditions that enable teacher training centres to benefit from funds. According to Waktola (2009), environmental awareness can serve as a solution for environmental degradation. Hence, teacher training curriculum that is tailored to address the community's felt needs can be considered relevant for result-oriented quality assurance.

The moderately rated promotion of professional growth is in agreement with the observations by Chen (2018) that placed importance on involving students in discovering solutions in the learning process so as to develop their critical faculties as a way to enhance teachers' professional growth.

The need for a curriculum that promotes international and intercultural understanding is supported by UNESCO (2014) which considered the factors as determinants for quality education. Ease of communication and travel around the world has resulted in universities enrolling students and recruiting staff members from different countries with varied cultures. There is therefore a need for curriculum developers to ensure that curriculum developed is non-discriminatory (Looper, 2022).

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Much as respondents considered all 14 items as important factors for the quality assurance process, it can be concluded that the factors being studied constitute an important aspect for teacher training programs to effectively promote result-oriented practices of guiding standards. Based on the conclusion, it is recommended that teacher training institutions in Mozambique should incorporate the 14 factors as key ingredients in teacher training programs so as to equip novice teachers with required skills. The same can be done to practicing teachers through workshops and seminars.

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