



JURNAL PENJAMINAN MUTU CORPUS THEMATIC ANALYSIS : TRENDS IN QUALITY AND QUALITY ASSURANCE RESEARCH

Oleh

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Abstract

Research as a component of quality assurance serves as a venue to provide spaces for scholarly dialog among experts in bridging together aspects and elements that call for inquiry and debate. This study employs documentary analysis to effectively address the need of the research. Articles accepted and published in the Journal of Quality Assurance are downloaded, revisited, and analysed. Based on available online data, this study includes articles published from year 2018, covering publication issues after it was included in the list of the Asean Citation Index (ACI). In-depth scrutiny of data revealed three main arguments pertaining to inquiries of articles accepted and published in the journal: Quality Assurance in Education in Bountiful Quantity, From the Inner Psyche to the Social Systems of Humankind, and The Roles of Employers and Employees. The thrust of the journal in championing research works related to 'quality assurance' has been instrumental in contextualizing the concept of quality as applied in diverse fields of studies. The journal has served as a niche for scholars in advocating a community of practice where knowledge production is evident and scholarly approaches to research inquiries are manifested.

Keywords: *Journal Of Quality Assurance; Quality Assurance; Research, Trends and Issues*

I. INTRODUCTION

The dawn of 21st century skills and Industrial Revolution 4.0 are just a few drivers that demand inquiries on quality through the lens of various sectors and contexts. Mechanisms are examined in the hope of coming up with responsive standards in assessing efforts leading to quality outcomes thus yielding positive and desirable results. Policies and programs are being scrutinized to overhaul lapses and eventually align goals and objectives to the desired outputs through complex quality procedures and methodologies. In higher education, quality assurance is seen to be crucial in strengthening competitiveness in keeping up with prospects and trends (Garwe, 2014), and as a way to achieve excellence (Ryan, 2015).

Research as a component of quality assurance serves as a venue to provide spaces for scholarly dialog among experts in bridging together aspects and elements that call for inquiry and debate. As gaps are established, the need to fully capture a problematic state has been uncovered. Existing literatures provide springboard to marrying and weaving views and findings, offering brand new conclusions or affirming previously established notions. Zhao (2003), for example, has explored on the quality standards of online education since it is often the heated debate topic of stakeholders. One of the concrete findings of research attempts on quality education is the continuous engagement of “students’ voice” in beefing up quality of teaching and learning environment (Garwe, 2015). Puzifferro & Shelton (2008) also noted that a common quality assurance model framework would lead to “consistent assessment of learning design, content, and pedagogy.” Research is being utilized for universities to be make their presence felt (Musa, 2018).

As the Journal of Quality Assurance (Jurnal Penjaminan Mutu or JPM) actively realizes its role of being a platform for argumentation and debate on concerns related to quality, it is high time to examine how research has paved way for emerging trends and issues related to quality assurance.

Experts in the field have identified critical points to discuss as agenda setting efforts are established. In a nutshell, it is very timely to advance inquiries on trends, issues, and prospects related to researches on quality assurance. Davies, et al. (2017) concluded that findings from research enterprises continue to be “vulnerable” to the impact of theoretically “unreliable data” from non-performing contributors. The role of JPM is crucial in providing evidence-based and logical inquiries in the field of quality and quality assurance.

Trends on quality assurance research focus on the strands that quality expert and practitioners and research scholars frequently revisit as deemed critical and crucial. These are the concepts that dictate the indicators that relate to pressing events regarding quality. As trends change over time, its impact is considered to be influential in terms of setting the previous landscape of quality, providing rationale for its present state, and eventually predicting future prognosis. It is a must for these indicators to provide direction of “quality oriented, efficient and timely new knowledge useful to all stakeholders” (ISESCO, 2016).

Issues on quality assurance research highlight matters and concerns for immediate discussion. It encompasses important topics and dialog that essentially require critical decisions and agreement. This also refers to problems on quality and quality and quality assurance that call for solutions, which in the context of this study have been attempted to resolve and address. Sandelowski (2014) stated that community of practitioners in the field altogether perform “taste-making” (also referred to as constant refinements) in evaluating the quality of qualitative research.

As trends and issues are clearly identified, prospects are established referring to future directions and undertakings in the realm of quality and quality assurance. This study is done to offer inputs towards realizing a more responsive contribution to knowledge production as JPM advocates scholarly works in the field of quality assurance. It is imperative to note the role of the journal in

providing directions leading to evidence and research-based efforts advanced by experts in the field. These prospects are key drivers in imagining pathways of quality and quality assurance efforts given its current state. This study is an attempt to identify the trends of quality and quality assurance research based on accepted and published articles in the context of JPM. The strands frequently revisited by researchers will be highlighted together with the underlying frameworks.

II. METHODOLOGY

This study employed content analysis to effectively address the need of the research. Articles accepted and published in the JPM are downloaded, revisited, and analysed. Based on available online data, this study included articles published from year 2018, covering publication issues after JPM was included in the list of the Asean Citation Index (ACI). There are two issues available each year, with 12 articles available each issue. Each manuscript was analysed and investigated as to how it contributes to the identification of trends and issues of quality and quality assurance. Utilizing corpus thematic analysis, the researchers conducted in-depth of research inquiries and key words as grounded in the context of JPM.

Total 48 of articles were included in the study. Once each manuscript is downloaded, the researchers started to identify main points related to the (1) overall research inquiry of each article and (2) identified key words. Since this study involves purely public documents available online, the study poses no threats to human beings, thus no ethical concerns are at stake. Authors name and affiliations are also not included in the analysis.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Local and international journals set their parametric theme of paper submission and publication depending on their preference and expertise setting its journal identity. This gives researchers a clear boundary in writing the journal articles to be done. Hence, any publications must set comprehensible

guidelines in submission and in their publication to maintain its clear identity. This is true with *Jurnal Penjaminan Mutu (JPM)*. This publication caters works related to 'quality assurance' in a general. Quality assurance is the act of supervising and evaluating the different facets of a project, service, and/or facility considering the set standards (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). However, the target is to identify whether it really hits its goal of catering journals related to the boundary it sets. To reveal it, the corpus of its journals from 2018 is analyzed considering their abstracts and keywords. Eventually, in the process, the following themes emerged from the analysis.

Quality Assurance in Education in Bountiful Quantity

For centuries, education is indeed believed to be the foundation of an economically successful and culturally adherent state leading to the nation's prosperity as whole (Al-Shualbi, 2014). Due to this reason, experts of the academe see education as a social facet of continuous improvement. Thus, researches focus on the assurance of its quality and this is evident among empirical outputs. As a result, it is not surprising that in this quality assurance journal, the trend is in education quality assurance.

The realization of learning through curriculum with the aid of school management targeting academic achievements. The endeavor of education is indeed learning. Thus, all the elements vital to its improvement are highlighted in all empirical aspirations and this includes the corpus at hand. Its twin area, teaching, is often the subject of enhancement. In the journals, *teachers' competency* is in trend. However, it is not surprising since up skilling teachers is deemed as the key to improve learning (Australian Department of Education and Training, 2005).

Another concern to deal with is *peer teaching*. Due to the prevailing challenges of close guidance with the learners, education experts seek solutions to help the teachers in

the field. That is when this reinforcement teaching comes in. With teachers' plan provisions, students help other students to overcome classroom challenges. However, the quality of learning must not be compromised to achieve excellence in education. This fear may be thought of since the alternatives, in most cases, are not of the same competency with the real teachers in charge. Thus, this is also a subject of scrutiny along with the others.

Furthermore, *learning style* is also one of the elements dealt with, in the journals. Since individuals learn in different ways, teaching must also be done in various ways based on the students' learning styles. Hence, to ensure that students learn in the best way, their styles must be identified to formulate the best teaching approach that fits them.

Right after instructional planning and execution, it is also important to evaluate the extent of students' learning. Schools and education experts provide measurement tools to gauge the academic performance of the learners (Kent University, 2020). The results show the strengths and weaknesses of the students; thus, the edifying institution can manage to create programs or projects that can sustain their strengths and can eliminate their weak points. Due these reasons, *learning evaluation and academic test* are the targets of the publication and all other research projects. Their validity and reliability are always put into a test.

While learning is indispensable in the society's progress, the *curriculum* is its tool of realization. Through the experiences it provides, the learners are expected to fulfill their holistic development in the target areas, for the learners themselves (Villena, Reyes & Dizon, 2015). Aside from its aforementioned function, the curriculum also serves as the bridge to materialize the aspirations of the nation through pedagogical and andragogical acculturation preserving its tradition and through research-based innovation promoting development. Thus, curriculum experts and educationists must be meticulous in planning, designing, implementing, and evaluating the phases of the curricular experiences to

achieve the goals of the universal and the local academe. Thus, it is frequently a subject of quality assurance and this is also evident in the corpus.

Along with the planning, designing, implementing, and evaluating of curriculum is another essential part of the success in the academe – *school-based management (SBM)*. The systematic and scientific management of the school, based on its philosophy, also serves as a pressing drive that leads the institution to insurmountable breakthroughs. Specifically, SBM covers the concerns from the sound horizontal and vertical relationships among the administration, the teachers, the non-teaching staff, and most especially the students, to the wide array of well-planned and organized trainings and seminars sustaining how effective and efficient both employees and employers' work and the proper handling of campus treasury, *school budget*. Furthermore, in managing the school, supervision of instruction is also an essential element. Through *supervision*, the schools' strengths and weaknesses are identified. This is to give further inputs that help in the improvement the work skills, flow, and achievement of the school itself.

Furthermore, SBM is also the product of education's de-bureaucratization. More often than not, the research lens focuses on this unique milieu-based decentralized management of a school to reveal research-based inputs that may solve perennial perplexities not only in the institution itself but also in similar contexts of other schools. Due to its essential role in the school's various attainments, its execution has always been part of the empirical studies including this publication.

Through the convergence of well-organized pre and post-curricular implementation and the well-executed management of the school, learning becomes possible. However, its success can be gauged by evaluating its *outcomes, student's academic achievements, and graduate quality*. These are the combined results of the performance of all the campus members. Thus, they are the clear reflections of what the

school has set as means and ends of the teaching-learning process. This is the reason that they become facets to discover and re-discover for further insights. Hence, the three also appear in JPM papers.

The two boundaries of education tripartite stages. JPM published studies regarding the two major stages of education particularly childhood education and higher education. *Early childhood education* starts the formal teaching-learning process. It serves as the foundation of the succeeding educative stages. Therefore, it is crucial to create learning experiences in this stage in a way that young learners are edified based on the level of their cognitive, affective, and psychomotor limits (National University, 2020). With the aid of *technology, multimedia, and ICT* in education, these experiences are reinforced; thus, *digital quality assurance* is made. Thus, with all these facets to be monitored, scrutiny of this level is a must.

The other vital boundary of the stages is *higher education (HE)* in which innovation commences. It produces novel theories and praxis both in pedagogy and andragogy. This stage of education reveals the solutions to existing academic and extra-academic perplexities through research (Camacho, Valcke, Chiluzza, 2017). This is also the reason that *research and publication performances* are considered in HE's quality assurance. As these institutions research, upon their discretion, their works are submitted and evaluated for publication.

Moreover, HE institutions continuously advocate producing *quality graduates* through a constant *internal quality assurance* or by making sure that the graduates are competently skilled. This is usually intertwined with the national standards addressing the needs of the community. Hence, it is not surprising that these are also subjects of quality assurance in the focal publication. However, the JPM's focus is not only on the academic facet of education; it also caters journals capturing the hybrid of education and religion in the field and its implementation.

The stabilization of Hinduism in education. Divine teachings across cultures have always been in the siege of moral preservation; thus, the help of the edifying bodies is also sought. In the era of constant globalization, the challenge is to preserve values, culture, humanity, and spirituality among humans through religion in education (Pew Research Center, 2016). In *religious education* such as *Hindu education or learning of Hinduism*, imparting the dogmas of the faith is the ultimate aim. However, the distraction caused by the ever-changing technology trend-driven society affects the morals of the general public positively and negatively especially that of today's generation. Nonetheless, the goal is to assure that these faith's principles intertwined in the curriculum are properly executed as constant change exists. Another factor is the teaching force. Even in the religious education of the Hindus, teachers are seen as an important factor to achieve the faith's doctrines and its integration in the academics. Teachers are put into the spectrum of evaluation gauging their competency both in the mastery of the subject matter and their teaching capabilities. This is also known as *Hindu teachers' competency*. These matters strikingly appear in the focal corpus.

From the Inner Psyche to the Social Systems of Humankind

In the analysis of the keywords in the set of journals, surprisingly, social science appears to be the research interests of the writers. Social science deals with the way humans behave socially and culturally (Encyclopædia Britannica, n.d.). The topics range from the broadest to the specific social concepts including some issues relevant to the contemporary epoch. From the complexities of philosophy, ethics, politics, and culture to the contexts of cyberbullying, free sex, and gender, the society as the subject of quality assurance is scrutinized.

Philosophy and culture as curving twins of society and politics. Through the sociological lens, an established philosophy founded by culture and tradition drives the

citizens to think and act in a way they do (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2020). Their thoughts and acts are moved by the two coexisting factors, the prevailing philosophical principles and cultural imprints in their community. Thus, beliefs and ways cannot be separated from each other. In other words, *philosophy* and *culture* are intertwined. Although the two may be entities to be appreciated as they are, they must also be put under the spotlight of criticism. Like any other concepts with polarity, these two may be positive, negative, or both. The positive sides may be appreciated, but the negative and grey areas must be checked. It must be done because the areas must be the cause of gradual progress or the impediment of social development. Unfortunately, the failure of progress realization does not only come from the people themselves; sometimes, the state leaders start the conflict. Thus, they and the way they govern on the basis of their principles must also be evaluated, too. In and out of the metropolis, philosophy and culture curve the state's government and its dealings. In other words, the two greatly affect *politics*.

In assuring the nation's progress, the government must act as the germinating agent of good will for the benefit of the people and not as a hindrance of socio-economic affluence. Therefore, the target is to assure that state's success shall be achieved considering the people and the leaders' acts and thoughts as driving forces of national development. Hence, these become parts of the journals' concerns.

Ethics, the society, and the youth. Convention is the collection of cultural imprints. This dictates the societal acceptance tolerance (Tummolini, 2013). What goes beyond it is marked as a taboo. Thus, the main concern is the identification of what fits in, based on the society's preference. This leads to the study of *ethics*. The study marks an individual's proper behavior in conducting a social activity. Thus, it goes with the society's accepted act of values – *morals or ethical behavior*. Respecting what majority and/or minority of the people believe in is always the key of community harmony. Being sensitive

of other people's social norms is always a consideration to make. In other words, *ethical sensitivity* (ES) is a necessary element of one's character to have a harmonious life with others. Thus, in publications, ES is also applied. Writers are asked to be ethically careful of their works.

The individuals' *characters* truly create the social ambiance extending from the school and the workplace to other places such as political and religious dwellings. Youths of today are seen as the preservers of cultural and ethical reservoir; thus, children's characters are always highlighted as the subject of constant evaluation in and out of the campus. Another reason is they are vulnerable to both positive and negative influences such as that of technology. In the invention of online games, children's character is seen affected. As a result, these become topics of different educational studies.

Furthermore, among the members of the Youth, *teenagers'* characters range from positive to negative spectrum. Through the sociolinguistic lens, the way they communicate, verbally or nonverbally, reveals the varied aspects of their cultural and ethical imprints. Hence, youth communication becomes a research interest.

Social issues and stepping on the tempting line of taboo. As some individuals try to fit in the conventions of the society, some people still break through the ethical boundaries set by the majority. Eventually, going over the limits of the society is stepping into the indulgence of taboo. This begins the different issues such as on gender, free sex, and cyber bullying. *Gender* is not a new issue to discuss. The equality among men and women has always been the topic of discourse from the ancient times to the contemporary era. Today, this is still part of the research mainstream especially in gender-sensitive cultures and religions. Another issue is *free sex*. Intercourse is considered to be sacred in different religions since it is the act of life-giving. This is true on the premise that life is divine (Anapol, 2014). However, in the advent of the new breed's mindset, it becomes a mere pleasure giving pastime for some

especially the Youth. With the birth of social media, another emerging issue in the virtual community arises – *cyberbullying*. This happens when netizens use internet platforms to directly and indirectly attack their targets affecting their emotions through the bully's posts and comments. As this issue emerges, legislators around the globe address this by making laws protecting the netizens. However, the point is to check whether these things are further addressed for the benefit of the general public. Due to this reason, it is not surprising that all these social issues are present in the published papers of JPM.

The Roles of Employers and Employees

The corpus' lens of quality assurance also sets its focus on the management of organization. Organizational management is the process of planning, executing, supervising, and evaluating the workflow of a group people performing together with common goal (Jacque, 1998). The primary goal of its evaluation is to identify the sound execution of the roles of the employers and employees. Specifically, this is done to assure the efficiency of the employers' managerial skills and the employees' work skills as reflected in their outputs and their organization achievements. These two skills and the other related factors are the emerging elements of this theme.

Employers' roles in the organization.

The organization's success partially relies on the management skills of its leaders. Employers as the leading members are expected to be excellent in the *management or handling* of the workplace. Though it is still a challenge to the experienced managers, the greater weight is on those who are still novice. This situation leads to the adaptation of *management models and strategies*. However, the task is to identify the appropriateness of the chosen model and strategy in the organization's context.

It is undeniable that work *competence* is required to perform the duties and responsibilities of an employer as a planner and supervisor. Before the work force begins accomplishing its tasks, the wise employers

must be clear in formulating the plans to achieve the organization's targets. *Planning* considering *policy inputs* is indeed vital since it is the springboard of all the tasks to be fulfilled. The combined new ideas and experience-based ones can help in the attainment of the organizational goals. Moreover, as the work runs, the employers must also be keen in observing and implementing the work force and the work flow. Thus, their skill in *supervision* is required. As guides, they must provide feedbacks and set epitomes that can help the members of the organization fulfill one another's responsibilities. This is also the reason that supervision is imperative in school-based management. As policy input-based planning and supervision are indispensable in human resource management, the management of property right is vital, too. The determination of how the economic goods are used and owned gives insights to both the employers and employees to make their works and products better. In governing the work flow, an excellent employer must be also be committed. Since the labor of a planner and supervisor is unsurprisingly strenuous, what must be developed in him or her is *commitment*. This keeps him connected with the work at hand. Once achieved, the responsibilities to be done can be attained.

Employees' work competence as a strategy.

While the employers are the minds of the organization, the employees are its hands that do the work firsthand. Thus, work *competence* is indeed a must. Their ability to perform the task must be in constant check. This is to assure that they carry out their tasks properly. They must also be creative enough to apply *strategies* fitting their line of work. Moreover, since their work is also laborious and serves as the source of their income, their commitment in their jobs is expected of them. Once they start loving it, they will be productive in what they do. In general, it is of beneficial to the whole organization if constant evaluation shall be done. The target is to evaluate the delivery of both employers and employees' the roles. This creates an

impact on the organizational management experts and researchers' interest. Thus, this becomes apparent in the set of write-ups in focus.

Keywords in Bahasa Indonesian Languages. In the further scrutiny of the corpus, there are keywords that are in Bahasa Indonesian Language. Some of them are *guru agama hindu, kepala sekolah, meningkatkan mutu, mutu, Pancasila, pemanfaatan fasilitas belajar, smart veda, and wayang*. This somehow reflects the consideration to its main audience, the Indonesians, which can be seen as an opportunity to highlight local knowledge in the realm of the international academe. Translation and extrapolation in the lingua franca must be done. Since it is for international circulation, further description in English of the terms, at least in the abstract, is suggested. Nonetheless, these must also be subjected to further evaluation considering the parametric theme of the focal journal.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The thrust of the journal in championing research works related to 'quality assurance' has been instrumental in contextualizing the concept of quality as applied in diverse fields of studies. JPM has served as a niche for scholars in advocating a community of practice where knowledge production is evident and scholarly approaches to research inquiries are manifested.

With three apparent themes which emerged in the analysis of available data, it could be gleaned that the education sector has been the most favorable locus of inquiry in terms of quality assurance. To be particular, the quantity of research in quality assurance in education focuses on the lens of curriculum, school management, and Hinduism education.

Moreover, the field of social sciences has been explored by JPM authors relating it to humankind. Philosophy, culture, and politics are typically highlighted in researches. Also, ethics, the society and the youth play an essential role in social science research inquiry. Social issues were also scrutinized by some authors while relating it

to the concept of quality and quality assurance.

The employee and employer relationship and roles are also given attention by some authors, typically underscoring quality and quality assurance in the industry. The roles of employees of organization were also explored, with emphasis on work competence as a strategy. It is also worthy to note some keywords written in Bahasa Indonesia and these somehow could be seen as an opportunity to highlight local knowledge in the realm of the international academe.

The challenge for JPM in attracting studies on quality and quality assurance beyond the lens of education still remains. It is vital to reaffirm JPM's scope of study in becoming a leader in quality and quality assurance research. One noticeable opportunity to explore is how JPM capitalizes on local and regional knowledge in contributing world-class research outputs.

It is recommended that future researchers in the field explore a bigger scope of study in terms of years covered. It is also worthy to conduct a comparative study on published research concerning quality and quality assurance in Southeast Asia and beyond.

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