

Foreign Quality Assurance Systems and Accreditations: Its impact on Higher Education sector development in Developing Nations

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Abstract

This paper explores potential application issues around foreign quality assurance systems and international accreditations in the developing nation's higher education sectors. Taking an exploratory research approach involving a contextual and ideological analysis of the subject in literature studies, the study evaluates significant information more specifically how international accreditation and quality assurance system in developing nations higher education sector impact on development of education sector. The study discusses how such assurance systems and accreditations have been implemented with a critical analysis of how they should be implemented to benefit the developing nation's quest for higher education development and their relative necessity in the age of globalization. Emergent aspects including the new methods of teaching and learning that showcase the limitless potential of alternative approaches, the effects of international accreditation and quality assurance of higher education including issues of fairness and transparency, and some inherent challenges including financial, social, cultural, and potential education development problem are presented. The study emphasizes the importance of cooperation among agency experts as an apt way to achieve desired educational outcomes. Further it concludes that the developing nations need to reconsider and refine national frameworks pertaining to international accreditation, enabling enhanced competitiveness in the international educational domain and push for local educational development initiatives.

Keywords: international accreditation, quality in higher education, academic accreditation, quality assurance, foreign quality systems, developing countries, higher education, educational neocolonialism

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Introduction

While looking at the developing nations and the education systems in these nations, then the key question is regarding this research context is whether foreign quality assurance systems and accreditations in developing nation's higher education sector impede modern education development in developing nations. The globally changing landscape of business and education sector administration challenges accreditation experts to explore how they can improve or transform traditional educational practices, especially in developing nations and more specifically in the Global South. The Global South categorization is adopted from the Jakovljevic et al. (2021) assertion of the countries within Latin America, Asia, and Africa who are also part of the developing nations. In this context, quality management as a factor in education managerialism is defined as the overall coordination of quality components and ensuring that all requisite elements of higher education learning adhere to defined standards of quality, while quality assurance in this context is considered to be the systematic process of ensuring that quality standards and processes are applied effectively to ensure excellence in the higher education system in the developing nations countries (Hou, 2011). Therefore, the quality assurance system is based on the process that are systematically adopted for in education and incorporation of quality and standardized education system infrastructure (Coulter, 2016).

The research approach here is exploratory research: a research that is based on significant observation of real-world issues with a critical analysis of conceptual ideologies presented in the literature regarding development of foreign quality assurance systems and accreditations. In synthesis of essential issues and arguments, inclusion of in-depth insights about stakeholders' perceptions regarding use of quality foreign systems and accreditations is crucial, especially in the context of the developing nations, for example, Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Furthermore, these issues dominate the discussion and are require careful consideration by higher education officials who decide relevant issues, for instance, whether their institutions should even pursue foreign accreditation or not.

Understanding Education development and Managerialism in developing nations

In the context of educational innovation, embracing various alternatives to traditional higher education should be properly and carefully considered. This process includes new methods of teaching and learning, showcasing the limitless potential of alternative approaches and more importantly the concept of managerialism in the overall education sector (Harvey, 2004). Managerialism is essentially based on the idea that public service in which in this context is the education sector needs to be managed in accordance with the consideration of the economic logic (Adams, 2006). This is based on the new management systems that are modernized and which put critical emphasis on competition as a basis for action and dynamism in the sector, entrepreneurial thinking, and clear parameters that guide professional conduct and more importantly a business minded approach to management in education sector (Lynch et al. 2012).

The need for effective application of managerialism is essential through technological innovation and utilization of standard approaches to education that is not conventional (Ramirez, 2015). Therefore, the processes of quality assurance and accreditation are themselves likely to undergo major changes in order to align with local managerialism context that favors this developing nation's education system and does not in any way depict extended control by the developed nations but rather as benchmark that is founded on local development strategies for educations sector. In that context, the desire and need for international accreditation of the developing higher education institutions has been persistently discussed with differing views of its significance and whether it impedes the development of education sector in developing nations (Lim, 2018).

Importantly, international accreditation in higher education lies at the core of national development which can be achieved through effective managerialism. In recent decades, governments in the Developing nations, especially in Africa, Latin America, and some of the Indian developing countries, have recognized the importance of higher education for generally improved social and economic development (Haris, Washizaki, & Fukazawa, 2018). For that reason, these governments have begun investing

extensively in expansion of higher education, usually promoted through international accreditation which is associated with a mark of quality of education (Ramirez, 2015). Besides that, through enacted liberalization, governments in the developing nations have begun allowing private educational institutions to present individualized plans and strategies for improving higher education's overall functioning (Prinsloo, 2020). Key strides have been achieved in enhancing the development of higher education with increased focus on enhanced learning outcomes leading to increased higher education institutions that have been accredited and improved higher learning regimes in Africa, Latin America and Asia (de Wit et al., 2021)

Quality Assurance and International Accreditation in Developing Nations Higher Education

According to assertions of Dudin & Shishalova, (2019) and based on the perspectives of national development and ongoing quality improvement in education, quality assurance and international accreditation have received substantial attention as powerful tools for helping developing nations to fully realize higher education's value. International accreditation can be defined as the ongoing process of ensuring that higher education institutions comply with specific quality standards (Hou, 2014). At the same time, international accreditation can be viewed as a catalyst for improving perception and overall functioning of higher education in the developing nations (Hou, 2011). These two concepts have enhanced education systems and improved the overall quality attainment in the education provision through a standardized approach that ensures value of education to the society (Coulter, 2016). In this way, implementing foreign quality assurance systems and accreditations in developing nation's education sectors can be appropriately done by respecting local expectations and needs and by combining them with relevant international quality standards. For this paper, the two efforts—quality assurance and accreditation—are so entwined that distinguishing between them is of relatively little significance. However, while bearing in mind the possibility of neocolonialism, this article explores the most relevant issues in application of foreign quality assurance systems

and accreditation for the developing nations i.e., Latin America, African countries, and some Asian developing nations.

The key changes have involved dynamic administration systems that focus on comprehensive management systems in higher education resource management and involvement of all stakeholders through a modernized approach to managerialism other than conventional centralized management systems. Such a transformation should be conducted optimally to preserve essential academic values of different countries' higher education systems especially in developing countries especially, in Africa, Latin America and Asia (Hou, 2011). At the same time, specialists from the higher education sector are expected to go beyond dimensions of change, exploring implications of disruption in higher education resulting from introduction of innovative quality assurance models and influenced by critical application managerial models (Mati, 2018). Such implied disruption also can be observed at the policy level—through adoption of wide-ranging policies to improve functioning of developing higher education sectors in the developing nations. This brings the question of whether these perceived development in education sector and the involvement of international influence through accreditation and assurance systems constitute a modern education development enigma that could contextually be termed as neocolonialism. According to Romanowski (2020) neocolonialism is the control of less developed nations by the well-developed nations through indirect means and can include the propagation of the political or social economic activities with the objective of reinforcing capitalism. Essentially, globalization as concept used in this paper under the higher education context is used to denote the extent of which the well-developed countries have amassed extensive influence over developing nations and asserting their influence especially in key institutional systems i.e., the higher education sector (Prinsloo, 2020)

Applying Quality Assurance and following Accreditation Procedures: A Luxury or a Necessity?

After internationalization among universities in the developing nation's higher education sector has been subject to numerous, interlinking

changes (Alsharari, 2018), given different actors and higher education institutions' roles. In the age of internationalization and globalization, because of such interlinking, emergence of the "network society" is not surprising (Harvey, 2004). In this way, applying foreign quality assurance systems and following accreditation procedures in higher education are distinct processes driven by technological innovation and the importance of exchanging information through various means and platforms.

Similarly, the global economic system has been subject to significant changes during its transition toward a knowledge-based economy. A similar transformation has been related to emergence of diverse forms of dependency among developing nations globally (Dudin & Shishalova, 2019). Such changes have been observed in several different spheres of society including the higher education sector (Onsman, 2010). Liberalized international trade and commerce have provided relevant opportunities for the developing nations globally not only to relocate production but also to reconsider the importance of higher education.

From the perspective of globalization's influence on higher education, is worth to note that application of quality assurance systems in education, seems a necessity rather than a luxury (Coulter, 2006) because globalization and the transition toward a knowledge society create new demands and new forms of higher education (Harvey, 2004). In fact, such developments have transformed people's perceptions of universities (Stensaker & Maassen, 2015). The latter have been commonly described as "knowledge centers," indicating their strategic importance for future development, including of knowledge centers themselves, in both developed countries and the developing countries.

From globalization point of view, there is an increased demand for higher education internationally (Hayden, 2011) and, in developing nations, increased requirements and expectations of competent and knowledgeable employees (Zapryagaev, 2015). In contrast, most of the developing nations globally cannot demonstrate consistent application of quality managerialism through such aspects as quality assurance in higher education, indicating that demand for higher education reforms will continue to increase (Abbas, Yousafzai, & Khattak, 2015). It's important to note that the use of quality

assurance systems and accreditation procedures presents new lifelong learning demands in both developed nations and the developing nations.

Since international accreditation seems to have become a necessity in developing nation's higher education sectors, recognition of a new higher education market and how it functions are important. Provision of higher education services is marked by persistent expansion and well enhancement of the quality of education (Abukari & Corner, 2010). For example, universities in developed countries actively seek to attract students from developing nations. Hence, distinctly borderless education has developed to meet complex demands for quality and reliability, especially in the developing nations (Horga & Gal, 2009). Such borderless education is not a luxury but a direct outcome of various economic, political, social, and cultural changes occurring globally.

The necessity of applying quality assurance systems and following accreditation procedures is associated with the importance of developing a new, more efficient regulatory framework in higher education. Such regulation relates to the global emergence of new providers and distinct forms of higher education (Stensaker, Langfeldt, Harvey, Huisman, & Westerheijden, 2011). Even some middle-income countries like Malaysia, according to World Bank, readily embrace international accreditation, while some high-income nations, for instance, Greece, might be reluctant to accept a similar change (Obolenska & Tsyrukun, 2016). Perhaps as examples on the periphery of "world society," these two nations do not define global models in the same way that people in other countries find authoritative and attractive. Even so, the process of globalization has altered stakeholders' traditional views of higher education in developing nations. At the same time, neocolonial tensions arise between nations' necessary adherence to their national standards and, often, their education ministries' demands of living up to "the best standards," such as the U.S. standards. This tension is further complicated by adhering to what might be termed as U.S. neocolonialism to avoid previous powers' neocolonialism, for instance, that of France, the United Kingdom, or The Netherlands.

At any rate, opposing international accreditation seems irrelevant since it is linked to emergence of open attitudes towards international higher

education. Modern policy greatly emphasizes the idea that private, and non-national higher education institutions can fulfill various public functions (Alsharari, 2019). Alongside this, despite traditional higher education institutions having a specific value-based system to follow, they are expected to be strong and resilient and to address the force of competition in international higher education (del Carmen Arau Ribeiro & Coelho, 2019). Handling future challenges to higher education will require efficient strategic preparation to determine the precise needs to be addressed.

However, some stakeholders developing nation's i.e., in Africa and Latin America higher education sectors tend to perceive policy on global higher education as solely a trade issue—basically as global free trade of knowledge services due to domination seen from the developed nations influence (Michael, 2015). This aligns with principles of globalization in higher education and implies that those opposing globalization are most likely to consider international accreditation in negative terms (Stafford & Taylor, 2016). Such stakeholders seem disturbed that a similar approach to education would challenge the traditional academic culture in the developing nation's universities.

There are limited drawbacks towards adoption of effective quality assurance systems and accreditation frameworks in higher education developing nations. As noted, the various opportunities and advantages that have been highlighted show an extensive alignment to the global development goals (Campbell & Neff, 2020). However, there is a lack of consistent implementation framework for the quality assurance systems and accreditation in the developing nations. Essentially, this is based on lack of effective policies regarding higher education and its quality management to ensure that certain accreditation programs would be effectively applied to the education sector (Asiyai, 2020). Furthermore, there is an existent issue of overall resource management in institutions of higher learning and thus it becomes difficult to implement quality assurance systems that are based on the international quality standards. Therefore, it can be noted that the key issue of concern is the implementation logistics of quality assurance and accreditation systems within these nations and thus a lot of resources and

time may require to ensure effective quality assurance system and accreditation frameworks work effectively (Asiyai, 2020).

Determining International Quality Agencies' Fairness and Transparency

Application of foreign quality assurance systems and accreditations in higher education requires determination of whether such international agencies are fair and transparent. An important link exists between quality assurance or accreditation and international recognition of individual qualifications in the higher education sector (Stafford & Taylor, 2016). Assessing qualifications fairly and transparently means properly positioning them within the domain of the receiving nation's qualifications. In other words, as mentioned, evaluation's precise outcome depends on specific characteristics of the country's higher education system (Harvey, 2004) and on the specificity of the host higher education system.

There are different quality assurance systems in academic recognition, especially in Europe which offer a good benchmark that can be utilized in the developing nations. For instance, the Lisbon Recognition Convention for academic recognition is an important document for determining various aspects of professional recognition and accreditation in the higher education sector (Chan, 2013). In fact, the higher education system has shifted from *equivalence* toward global recognition of *quality professional standards* (Horga & Gal, 2009). Comparing countries' higher education systems can reveal important insights into stakeholder practices in the field; as a result, international quality agencies can adjust their approaches accordingly.

In fact, quality assurance systems seem the initial step toward individual universities' recognition in the developing nation's higher education sectors. Certainly, credential evaluators seek to obtain thorough knowledge of whether particular qualifications have been earned at a higher education institution of substantial quality (Abukari & Corner, 2010). Once this aspect has been specified, evaluators focus their efforts on more individualized work (Hou, 2011): on multiple components of respective

qualifications, particularly workload, precise level, profile, and learning outcomes.

In establishing national qualification frameworks, the developing nations are expected to include specific qualifications using a transparent procedure. This entire process is usually linked with components of national quality assurance (Hou, 2014). Therefore, stakeholders in higher education aim to provide clear, reliable statements regarding various aspects of international accreditation. Confirming specific quality dimensions of foreign qualifications being evaluated is fundamental (Musa, 2019) to instill a culture of trust and positivity, which plays an important role in building positive relationships among all stakeholders.

Credential evaluators must obtain reliable, comprehensive statements about the validity of quality foreign quality assurance systems and accreditations in higher education in the developing nations (Asiyai, 2020). But who is responsible for issuing such statements, considering that various developed countries and international quality agencies are involved (Michael, 2015). Thus, to make well-informed decisions on the quality of foreign higher education models and accreditations, having *comprehensive* information on quality is vital (Onsman, 2010). In this context, evaluating quality can happen both directly and indirectly but always emphasizing the need to remain as fair and transparent as possible.

In understanding international quality agencies' procedures, each higher education institution must assume partial responsibility for quality assurance. To ensure substantial fairness and transparency, each institution is expected to develop an internal quality culture (Stensaker et al., 2011), and the most important aspect of such a culture is identification of an optimal way to contribute to continuous quality improvement. However, to serve the ultimate purpose of international accreditation, internal quality assurance should be further supported by comprehensive external assessments (Michael, 2015). Thus, a high level of cooperation among stakeholders, educational ministries, international agencies, and universities is required to complete the accreditation process as expected.

Standard Setting in Higher Education's International Accreditation

International quality agencies determine what does and does not represent sufficient quality through their decision-making capacity. Therefore, if such agencies are also of high quality, international accreditation is based on specific standards that refer to a commonly accepted definition of quality (Ramirez, 2015). Given the broad spectrum of higher education and research, such standards tend to differ throughout institutional and program accreditations in the developing nations.

Communication of standards in international accreditation usually occurs through guidelines that developing nations are expected to follow. Such standards are perceived as thorough reflections of official quality standards pertaining to the higher education sector (Harvey, 2002), and their guidelines provide a substantial amount of practical information about numerous aspects of institutional self-evaluation. Moreover, relevant details are included on external assessment of foreign higher education institutions' readiness to embrace expected changes for obtaining international accreditation (Wilkerson, 2017). However, the presence of specific social and cultural values determines universities' degree of flexibility, which of course differs among developing nations countries' higher education systems.

Development of accreditation in higher education begins with a request that an institution apply for international accreditation. There are some reputable accreditation agencies that have been critically approved and used in some of the developing nations for accreditation and quality assurance processes. These agencies include, the European Foundation for Management Development Quality Improvement System (EQUIS, est. 1997), the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB, est. 1916), the Association of Master's in Business Administration (AMBA, est. 1967), the Central and East European Management Development Association (CEEMAN, est. 1993), or developed nations' accreditation agencies that have expanded their services to the nations to demonstrate that the institutions complies with minimum quality standards or eligibility criteria (Mati, 2018). Determining such criteria's relevance in making well-informed decisions about how, precisely, high quality foreign accreditation systems should and can be implemented in the developing nations is crucial

(Chan, 2013) because such institutions should be adequately assisted, in order to ensure optimal understanding of distinct mechanisms for advancing their strategic objectives and educational mission.

In establishing appropriate higher education standards for international accreditation, first, evaluators should clearly specify the distinction between program and institutional accreditation (Abukari & Corner, 2010). In other words, these two types of accreditations should reach sufficient balance to ensure a transparent, consistently delivered process (Michael, 2015). The direct outcome of using a combination of these two accreditation systems should be an optimally performing higher education system.

Another aspect of international accreditation that should be considered carefully is the important role of international accreditation agencies. These institutions usually have either an administrative or substantive role (Harvey, 2002). In both cases, international accreditation agencies focus on increasing the quality, reliability, and transparency of higher education systems in developing nations (Michael, 2015). Specifying methodology and procedures for international accreditation is a lengthy process that might require additional training, depending on nation or region. Thus, evaluators might sometimes revise their evaluation strategies for implementation, to include local and regional values or practices and to avoid imposing neocolonialism while maintaining high quality.

Nevertheless, to achieve increased reliability and quality of higher education in the developing nations, international accreditation agencies must be independent. State bureaucracies should be considered in order to avoid associated pitfalls (Li & Xiaohong, 2016). A proper indicator of these agencies' autonomy is the way they function, either as private or semi-autonomous agencies (Obolenska & Tsykun, 2016). Autonomy is fundamental and essential, considering that the aim is to instill greater trust among representatives of the academic community.

In implementation of agreed-upon foreign quality assurance systems and accreditation procedures, external experts should be adequately trained to address local stakeholders' expectations. In other words, a wide range of expertise should be consistently applied, as effectively as possible, to the

planned quality model (Wilkerson, 2017). Some countries might demonstrate relative hesitancy to include foreign professionals on peer teams despite understanding the need to expand expertise in the specific domain (Musa, 2019). To maximize positive effects of such expansion, stakeholders should promote development of an expert database, particularly in large higher education systems (Stafford & Taylor, 2016). These experts would have a proven record of successful assessment of various higher education systems.

Establishing trust is fundamental during the early stages of creating international accreditation systems, and a high level of transparency contributes to increased trust among stakeholders in both developed countries and the Developing nations (Wilkerson, 2017). To ensure continuance of mutual trust, stakeholders must, of course, avoid conflicts of interest (Michael, 2015). On the other hand, increased trust among external evaluators results in the provision of regular constructive feedback.

As mentioned, international accreditation seems a necessity rather than a luxury, but higher education institutions in the developing nations should be adequately committed to expected changes (Harvey, 2002) so that accreditation becomes a powerful development tool (Sari, Firat, & Karaduman, 2016). For international accreditation to become a proper, long-term instrument of quality assurance and enhancement, solid academic commitment is essential.

Challenges of Foreign Quality Assurance Systems and Accreditations

Higher education in the United States (U.S) has become the gold standard for quality and accreditation, along with the assumption that this standard enables foreign educational institutions to improve their performance. However, as Altbach (2010, p. 6) states, “Accreditation is a voluntary activity—no foreign institution is coerced into accreditation by an American agency.” Even though foreign educational institutions usually prefer a certain form of U.S. influence on the quality assurance and accreditation process, they need to be attentive to possible impacts on decreased flexibility for negotiation and adaptation. In the context of the international educational system, accreditors need to understand the

functioning of institutions being accredited, including exploration of diverse academic systems and traditions (Sari, Firat, & Karaduman, 2016). From this perspective, it is essential to consider the neocolonial type of pressure for instance, U.S. accreditation might place on foreign educational institutions to conform to U.S. academic models of teaching and learning.

U.S. accreditation overseas is usually considered an expensive process, implying that foreign universities in the developing nations are likely to encounter financial challenges derived from low education budgets (Sari et al., 2016). In other words, some countries might have rather limited budgets for expansion into the international accreditation process (Altbach, 2010), and foreign accreditation agencies should not be or present the appearance of being predatory. At the same time, nations and universities in the developing nations need to consider that more fees would accumulate from the widespread process of international accreditation, resulting to increased academic reputation, and the capacity to attract more students. In this way, higher education institutions might eventually be better able to meet their financial needs (Altbach & Knight, 2007).

International accreditation for educational institutions is rather complex because it links directly to quality assurance, and the importance of their international recognition is apparent (Sari et al., 2016). Despite benefits associated with U.S. accreditation overseas, certain issues must be considered, particularly national and regional circumstances (Altbach, 2010). Notably, attaining U.S. accreditation is not the ultimate indicator of quality but a measure of satisfactory academic achievement.

The United States has persistently ensured its role as exporter of educational quality assurance. As research shows, “The fact that institutions in South America, Asia, Eastern Europe, are encouraged by governments to seek international accreditation, particularly from the U.S. has contributed to the prosperity of U.S. accreditation worldwide” (Hou, 2011, p. 187). Moreover, the ready availability of properly trained and impartial evaluators can enhance the international accreditation process.

Accreditation in Foreign Higher Education Sectors

To understand the accreditation in foreign higher education sectors, it is important to look at key developing nations that have shown a high number of accreditation programs that have been adopted from foreign agencies (Tikly & Barrett, 2013). For instance, the universities in Taiwan have begun pursuing U.S. accreditation to become more competitive internationally (Stafford & Taylor, 2016). Second, Taiwanese universities have succeeded in developing more efficient self-evaluation mechanisms that enabled them to achieve their strategic goals. Third, international accreditation has also helped Taiwanese universities ensure better cooperation with foreign universities, underlining the importance of students' professional achievement in the global job market (Hou, 2011).

In developing nations, certain issues should be considered when implementing foreign quality assurance systems and accreditation in higher education sectors. An emerging challenge, sometimes perceived as neocolonialism, is international educational standards' integration into local context (Sari et al., 2016). Essentially, some university administrators might be reluctant to implement changes proposed by international evaluators, and, as a result, reform of universities' governance structures can be significantly impeded (Hou, 2014). Other challenges include insufficient student-support services and meeting precise standards expected by international accrediting agencies. Furthermore, there is the challenge of ensuring fluent communication in English. As part of the accreditation process, a substantial number of materials might need to be translated into English (Hou, 2011), and this creates additional problems of resource allocation and time management. In the developing nations, some higher education institutions might be reluctant to work with English materials solely for international accreditation (Sari et al., 2016), and, as a result, significant tensions, akin to neocolonialism, might arise on social, cultural, and linguistic levels (Babatunde, et al. 2021).

The higher education sector's active inclusion in globalization explains foreign universities' strong willingness to acquire international accreditation. For instance, as Hou (2011) declares, "The internationalization of higher education on the part of Taiwan's government has not only drawn the local academic community's attention but has also

manifested a new concern over the issue of a ‘new colonialism’ (p. 189). To some extent, then, pursuing international accreditation in higher education can be perceived as a form of cultural imperialism (Rawabdeh, 2017). This means that the developing nations often has concerns about national jurisdiction over the higher education sector (Abukari & Corner, 2010), so in issues around international accreditation, the potential for neocolonialism should be thoroughly interrogated.

Moreover, similar challenges represent an inseparable part of the overall globalization process as seen in one of the developing nations, especially in Taiwan. As Hou (2011) indicates, “The Taiwan government believes that a prominence of higher education certainly increases economic strengths and increases Taiwan’s international influence” (p. 189). In other words, the local government’s desire to raise higher education’s quality automatically translates into greater pressure from developed nations to adopt Anglo-Saxon rules on higher education institutions’ quality and accreditation.

In a regional instance, Middle East which is composed of most of developing countries, whose higher education sector is largely influenced by western countries, it is quite a regional example while discussing this context, its higher education has been shaped by European influence. Historically, European colonial powers tried to develop solid educational systems that served mostly French and British interests. Europeans introduced compulsory education, emphasizing the stability of an educational system with a substantial amount of European control (Rupp, 2009). Besides that, the United States played a significant role in establishment of the American University of Beirut in 1866 and the American University in Cairo in 1919 (Rupp, 2009). The founders of these two universities obviously introduced a distinct style of U.S. higher education to the Middle East, and thus, its popularity is significant there. U.S. involvement in this region has followed numerous paths, particularly the development of research partnerships, consultations, and joint-degree programs. Since the majority of Arab elites receive their education in the United States, they recognize that U.S. higher education institutions have played a positive role in enhancing colleges and universities in the Middle

Eastern region. As new strategic partnerships develop in higher education, stakeholders need to reveal and develop more effective mechanisms of interaction to improve higher education sectors throughout the developing nations.

Conclusion

This paper conducted an exploratory literature review of the importance of quality foreign systems and accreditations in the higher education sector among developing nations, illustrating that international accreditation lies at the core of national development especially in education system (Sari et al., 2016). Such accreditation serves multiple purposes: economic, cultural, social, and educational. The developing nations can improve higher education sectors' functioning by upgrading it with alternative teaching, learning, and assessment practices that enable quality assurance and accreditation. Importantly, the paper illustrated that international accreditation in the developing nation's higher education sectors is a current necessity rather than a luxury. Although from the analysis there is numerous financial, cultural, and educational challenges of international accreditation, the process is perceived as a catalyst for the higher education sector's optimal development (Michael, 2015), that is necessitated by internationalization and globalization, which have substantially been influential in the developing nations in international education sector growth.

Finally, the paper discussed international quality agencies' standards of fairness and transparency, concluding that agencies must adhere to strict quality standards to ensure optimal development of appropriate international accreditation criteria (Stafford & Taylor, 2016). In the long term, cooperation among agency specialists has been emphasized as an apt way to achieve optimal educational outcomes. In conclusion, the developing nations need to rethink and refine national frameworks around international accreditation, thus further enabling improved competitiveness in the global educational landscape.

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