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A Comparative Study Of The Quality Assurance Practices In Public And Private Higher Educational Institutes

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Abstract
This study examined the quality assurance practices in public and private higher education institutions. The research focused on assessing their alignment with Total Quality Management (TQM) principles and standards set by the Higher Education Commission (HEC). Data were collected through structured questionnaires targeting faculty members and students from both public and private institutions. The results were analyzed using descriptive statistics and sample t-tests to identify significant differences in the implementation of quality assurance practices. The findings highlighted key differences between public and private institutions. Public sector institutions were found to excel in areas such as course evaluation and incorporating feedback, while private sector institutions performed relatively better in providing updated learning materials and skill-oriented programs. However, both sectors faced common challenges, such as inconsistent government policies, lack of staff training, and insufficient commitment from management, which hindered the effective implementation of quality assurance measures. The study emphasized the significance of stakeholder participation, regular program evaluations, and constructive feedback as essential components of a robust quality assurance system. Although some elements of TQM, such as continuous improvement, were observed, there remains a need for further integration of these principles into institutional practices. This research contributes to a better understanding of the current state of quality assurance practices in higher education institutions. The findings offer valuable insights for policymakers and academic leaders to strengthen educational standards.

INTRODUCTION

In the current higher education landscape, quality assurance has emerged as a critical component in guaranteeing the delivery of successful and meaningful educational experiences (Altbach et al., 2019). Universities play an important role in a country's social and economic growth by educating an extensive range of professionals and promoting societal ideals. They also promote social reform, develop talented personnel, and advance research objectives. This worldwide growth of higher education highlights the necessity of preserving educational quality (Michaela & Antony, 2007).
Understanding and accessing quality assurance practices within higher educational institutes is especially important in District Vehari, where they play a critical role in shaping the region's intellectual and professional landscape.

Introduction to Quality in Education

"Quality" has gained popularity among practitioners and scholars due to its significant influence on organizational performance, cost reduction, customer happiness, loyalty, and profitability (Leonard and Sasser, 1982; Seth et al., 2005). Higher education can be defined as learning beyond the secondary level. Higher education classes often take place at universities, colleges, and higher educational institutions. Higher education also includes certain college-level institutions. Quality in education refers to a variety of factors that influence the efficacy, significance, and impact of learning experiences. According to UNESCO (2014), quality education addresses students' interests, needs, and various learning styles while encouraging active participation, critical thinking, and meaningful learning experiences. The degree to which a college or university accomplishes its goals and achieves its desired results in terms of student achievement, development, and performance" is the definition of quality in education (Popham, 2008). The emphasis on student outcomes and the efficiency of educational procedures in reaching those results are highlighted in this definition.
Quality education invests in teachers' ongoing professional development, increasing their pedagogical knowledge, skills, and capabilities to meet the changing demands of students as well as society (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009). In today's world, guaranteeing the quality of higher education is more than a choice; it is a need to meet the expectations of students, parents, and quality assessors. The quality of higher education is influenced by a variety of elements, including instructor quality, course content, teaching approaches, student population, infrastructure, research, and technology. Inadequate quality in any

of these areas has the potential to lower overall educational standards (Roelofs & Trowel, 2009).

Background of the Study

According to Rauf (2004), quality is a combination of an institution's aura, environment, and overall sense of excellence in all aspects. Nowadays, more than ever prior in human history, the quality of higher education determines a nation's richness or poverty. Higher education quality has become a national success indicator. Countries that prioritize higher education and improve its quality are ranked as having the greatest education systems. HEC created a quality assurance agency to protect the public interest by enforcing high standards in higher education and supporting continual progress via the study and development of higher educational benchmarks and quality parameters. According to Rahman (2007), HEC places a special emphasis on institutions of quality enhancement, assurance, accreditation, mechanisms, and universities across the nation. This means that in order to sustainably improve higher education delivery, a system for ongoing self-monitoring and system improvement must be developed.

The Higher Education Commission (HEC) was a novel organization founded in 2002. Pakistan lacks research on higher education, which affects the difficulties in delivering high-quality education (Siddiqui, 2007). Unlike in other cultures, higher education in Pakistan still plays a passive function and hasn't developed into a transformational force. According to Mustafa (2017), the lack of a quality component in higher education exacerbates the issue and is to blame for socio-cultural stagnation.

In Pakistan, students often engage in higher education after the 12th grade. They seek higher education between the ages of 16 and 18 years. However, for the previous two decades, the higher education system has been substandard, inefficient, and antiquated, relying on old tactics such as rote learning and memorizing. The government focused on elementary education (Taskforce Report, 2002). Higher education funding was insufficient for development and enhancement (Taskforce Report, 2000). The establishment of Quality Enhancement Cells was one of the most important initiatives in this respect. It began with twenty public-sector universities. However, the HEC currently admits both private and public sector universities. These cells reside at universities and seek to improve tertiary education efficiency (Rasool 2011).

Due to its significance, the quality of higher education institutions (HEIs) is a topic of much discussion and attention. The most significant changes to the higher education system were implemented by the Higher Education Commission (HEC), which was established in response to the recommendations made by a task group concerned with improving the standard of HEIs in Pakistan. As a result, HEC made a number of changes to improve the quality of postsecondary education following its establishment in 2002 in order to support a thriving, knowledge-based economy and society. In several HEIs, HEC has assisted HEIs in setting up QECs and has built a framework for QA. The quality assurance and improvement of higher education institutions' quality management systems (QMS) is the primary emphasis of HEC at the moment. The term "QMS" is relatively new in Pakistani tertiary education (Ahmed & Ali, 2012).

The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) was founded on January 18, 2005 by the HEC of Pakistan with the goal of setting up the funding for capacity building through seminars, training, and stores to assist higher education institutions in realizing their aspirations to become multinational enterprises. When HEC replaced University Subventions Commission in 2002, there were just 26 universities in Pakistan. Pakistan is home to 124 universities, 67 of which are public and 57 of which are private (HEC, 2008). For their institutions to be viable, competitive, and able to ensure that their students receive high-quality education both domestically and outside, they need to develop and implement a Quality Assurance strategy (Bhatti & Tauqir, 2006; Rauf, 2007).

The UK's Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (2004), aims to ensure public funds are invested in high-quality education, provide information about education quality, and offer recommendations for improvement. Less developed countries face significant challenges in the global job market, emphasizing the importance of continuous improvement and quality assurance. Pakistan's emphasis on quality assurance signals its commitment to addressing challenges and building a foundation for future success. This study will compare various quality assurance methods in Pakistan's higher education system in district Vehari and address associated issues or models.

Statement of the Problem

A comparative study of the quality assurance practices in public and private higher educational institutes

Research Objective

The objectives of this study are:

- To compare the quality assurance practices in public and private higher educational institutes
- To identify the strengths and weaknesses of quality assurance practices in public and private higher educational institutes.
- To examine the impact of quality assurance practices on the overall quality of education in public and private higher educational institutes.

- To investigate the differences in quality assurance mechanisms, such as accreditation, assessment, and evaluation, between public and private higher educational institutes.
- To explore the perceptions of stakeholders, including students, faculty, and administrators, regarding the effectiveness of quality assurance practices in public and private higher educational institutes.
- To develop recommendations for improving quality assurance practices in public and private higher educational institutes based on the research findings.

Research Questions

The main research questions for this study are:

- What are the existing quality assurance practices employed in higher education institutions in?
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- 1. What are the strengths and weaknesses of quality assurance practices in public versus private higher educational institutes?
- 2. To what extent do quality assurance practices influence the overall quality of education in public and private higher educational institutes?
- 3. How do quality assurance mechanisms (e.g., accreditation, assessment, evaluation) differ between public and private higher educational institutes?
- 4. What are the perceptions of stakeholders (students, faculty, and administrators) regarding the effectiveness of quality assurance practices in public and private higher educational institutes?

Limitations of the Study

Participants' replies to the questionnaire will reflect their understanding, expertise, and views on the subject. Despite efforts to keep individual participant responses anonymous, there is still a possibility of bias.

Delimitation of the Study

This research was focused on two specific tehsils in District Vehari, concentrating primarily on their higher education environments. The research was specifically focus on two public universities and two public colleges, as well as two private sector institutions chosen from these tehsils. Furthermore, the research was focus on two departments within each selected institute. This delimitation guarantees a targeted and manageable investigation, allowing for in-depth examination of quality assurance processes within a certain geographic area and institutional context. Total Quality Management theory was be utilized to analyze the data collected.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this section, the researcher presented the methodology of the study, *"A comparative study of the quality assurance practices in higher educational institutes ."* Kothari (2004) described research as an ongoing pursuit of knowing. Research is a systematic, scientific search for relevant facts on a certain topic. Research involves scientific investigation. When talking about research methodology, we don't just talk about the methods we employ; we also explain why we chose a particular approach over others so that the researcher or others can assess the research findings. We also discuss the rationale behind our technique choices in the context of our study (Kothari, 2004). Smith (2010) defines methodology as a set of procedures and concepts employed in a particular subject or field of study.

In this , the researcher outline her study's research design as well as the reasoning for choosing that strategy. It also contains information on the respondents, the researcher-participant interface, and data collection techniques. The study aimed to assess quality assurance in public and private universities, as well as the involvement of key stakeholders such as employers, alumni, and faculty members in course development and program review. This study focuses on faculty members' perceptions of research facilities and professional development opportunities.

Research Design

According to Leedy (1995), study design is an important part of the research process since it serves as a blueprint for the organization and methods of a study. Scholars in the discipline have had extensive discussions regarding how studies are carried out, which is an important aspect of the research procedure. According to the work of MacMillan and Schumacher (2001), a design for research is a strategy for selecting study subjects, locations, and data collection techniques to address one or more research inquiries. They also emphasize that a well-structured study plan aims to provide respectable outcomes. Johnson (2019) also asserts that the study design effects the possibility of drawing meaningful conclusions from the data, as well as the validity and reliability of research outcomes.

The cross-sectional research methodology used in this study is appropriate for studies that want to collect data from many groups at one particular moment. In social sciences, cross-sectional designs are frequently employed to analyze and contrast several populations or subgroups at one particular time (Creswell, 2014). This cross-sectional method works well for comparative studies that aim to find variations in behaviors and attitudes between public and private institutions as well as between various stakeholder groups, such as students and faculty. The information gathered aids in determining the degree to which stakeholders,

including instructors and students, are involved in these processes and if these quality assurance systems comply with directions issued by the Higher Education Commission (HEC). The present study uses a self-created questionnaire to collect quantitative data from respondents.

Research Approach

The research methodology used in this study is descriptive quantitative, which is appropriate for methodically examining how teachers and learners see quality assurance procedures in both public and private colleges and universities. According to Creswell (2014), when the goal is to measure attitudes, actions, beliefs, or other factors and extrapolate findings from a wider sample group, quantitative research is usually employed. According to Kothari (2004), quantitative research emphasizes objectivity and the generation of data that can be used to assess and compare different institutional practices. This approach is ideal for examining the alignment of quality assurance measures across public and private higher educational institutions, as it provides the framework to identify patterns and relationships through numerical analysis. Large amounts of data may be summarized by the researcher using statistical methods, especially descriptive statistics, which facilitate understanding and comparison of complicated quality assurance procedures (Mills & Gay, 2019). Structured methods such as surveys and questionnaires are frequently used in quantitative research. These tools enable researchers to collect huge volumes of data from a wide sample, hence improving the generalizability of the study findings to a wider population. Providing outcomes that are unbiased, trustworthy, and repeatable is the aim (Bryman, 2012). In order to make it easier to gather and analyze numerical data using structured questionnaires and provide quantifiable, objective results, the quantitative method was used in the current study.

Population of the Study

All the public and private sector universities and colleges from district Vehari are selected as the population of the study. According to the present data on HEC website there are total 13 public and 29 private higher educational institutes in district Vehari (HEC, 2022)

Table 1: Total Number of Higher Educational Institutes in District Vehari

Region	Universities		Colleges	
	Public	Private	Public	Private
Vehari	4	1	3	15
Burewala	3	2	3	11
Total	7	3	6	26

Sample of the Study

A two-stage random selection procedure was employed to pick participants. The first step involved randomly selecting 3 public sector institutes (1 university and 2 colleges) and 4 private sector institutes (1 university and 3 colleges) from the following selected institutions and a complete list of all the institutes are attached in the Appendices section. To facilitate the selection process, each institution was assigned a unique number, and a random selection was conducted to choose the participating institutions for the study.

Table 2: Total Number of Higher Educational Institutes selected as a Sample

Institution ID	Institution Type	Public/Private	Region
1	University	Public	Vehari
3	University	Private	Vehari
5	College	Public	Vehari
7	College	Private	Burewala
9	College	Public	Burewala
4	University	Private	Burewala
6	College	Public	Burewala
8	College	Private	Burewala
10	College	Private	Burewala

In the second step, four departments were selected from each institution. Questionnaires were delivered to the department heads, the entire teaching staff of the selected departments**,** and their students. Out of the 300 questionnaires distributed, a total of 186 responses were received from participants across various institutions. To analyze the responses based on the institution type, each institution was assigned a unique identifier, and a random selection process was implemented. The responses were proportionally divided between public and private institutions, reflecting their respective representation in the study. Approximately 94 responses were gathered from

public institutions, which include 1 university and 2 colleges, while around 92 responses were obtained from private institutions, comprising 1 university and 3 colleges.

Table 3: Response Rate by the Participants of the Study

Institution Type	Institutions	Department Selected	Questionnaire Distributed	Responses Received	Proportion Responses
Public	1 university, 2 Colleges	4 each	150	94	50.5%
Private	1 university, 3 Colleges	4 each	150	92	49.5%
Total	6	24	300	186	100%

Instrument of the Study

According to Creswell (2014), any device or technique used to collect, quantify, and examine data related to a research project is called an instrument of research. The core data was acquired using a self-created questionnaire distributed to faculty members, department heads, and students at public and private higher educational institutions. Questionnaires are an essential tool for gathering structured data in quantitative research, which enables researchers to determine the values of variables and examine correlations between them. The objective of these questionnaires is to collect quantifiable data, which enhances the study's overall reliability (Creswell, 2014). The purpose of the questionnaire was to gather information on the quality assurance procedures that these institutions are using, as well as about the opinions and participation of important stakeholders in these procedures.

Questionnaire Design and Implementation

Two structured questionnaires, one for faculty members and one for students, served as the primary data collection method in this study. Each questionnaire was thoughtfully created in order to collect detailed data on respondents' opinions on quality assurance procedures in higher educational institutions.

Both questionnaires included sections that collected

In order to gauge faculty members' opinions about current quality assurance procedures, their efficacy, and their conformity with the Higher Education Commission's (HEC) requirements, a faculty questionnaire was created. In the meanwhile, students' views of quality assurance were investigated using a questionnaire, with an emphasis on students' knowledge of quality assurance measures and how they affect learning outcomes. Evaluating these views is essential because they have a big impact on how quality assurance procedures are implemented and how effective they are (Dillman et al., 2014).

The purpose of the faculty questionnaire was to assess the extent to which various stakeholders—such as employers, alumni, and students—participated in the creation and assessment of courses and programs. The student questionnaire, on the other hand, attempted to measure students' perceptions of their engagement in these processes. In order to guarantee that quality assurance procedures are applicable and successful in fulfilling educational requirements, stakeholder interaction is essential (Perkins, 2017).

Likert scales, which go from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree," were used in both surveys to gauge respondents' views and opinions. This strategy made guaranteed that replies were consistent and clear, which made it easier to analyze the data quantitatively (Fowler, 2014). The study's objective was to collect accurate and trustworthy data on quality assurance techniques in higher education from staff and students, using distinct structured questionnaires.

Validity and reliability of the Questionnaire

The level to which an instrument properly measures what it is supposed to measure is referred to as validity. To guarantee that the replies reflect true opinions about quality assurance procedures at higher education institutions, the validity of the questionnaires used to collect data from faculty and students is essential in the context of this study (Creswell, 2014; Kothari, 2004). To ensure that the data can be used to make reliable and relevant conclusions, it is imperative that the questionnaire correctly captures the targeted constructs.

The investigation of whether the questionnaire addresses every pertinent facet of the subject matter being studied is known as content validity. The questionnaire was created in accordance with the Higher Education Commission's (HEC) criteria and was based on a thorough examination of the available literature on quality assurance in institutions of higher learning to guarantee content validity. To make sure that all important elements—like institutional guidelines, involvement of stakeholder groups, and barriers to quality assurance—were adequately represented, experts in the field of education, including faculty members acquainted with quality assurance processes, reviewed the questionnaire (Creswell, 2014).

The degree to which an instrument aligns with an established measure is known as its criterion validity. The questionnaire items were created in accordance with accepted quality assurance frameworks and practices described by reputable

organizations like the Higher Education Commission, even though the present research did not directly compare the questionnaire to another validated instrument that already exists (Kothari, 2004). This alignment contributes to the instrument's ability to produce accurate and trustworthy data.

A small sample of respondents from institutions that were comparable to those in the main research participated in a pilot test of the questionnaire. The researcher was able to improve the questions, define any unclear phrases, and make sure the questionnaire appropriately reflected the participants' perspectives according to feedback from the pilot test. The questionnaire's validity has been enhanced through the pilot testing procedure (Muijs, 2010).

A research instrument's consistency and stability throughout time are referred to as reliability. Put differently, same outcomes should be obtained from administering the same questionnaire several times under comparable circumstances (Creswell, 2014). To guarantee that the information gathered from the questionnaire is trustworthy and repeatable, reliability is essential. This helps to build confidence in the study's conclusions. The questionnaire's reliability in this study was guaranteed by a number of methods. First, Cronbach's alpha was used to assess internal consistency. This coefficient gauges how strongly the questionnaire questions correlate with one another. When the questions consistently measure the same constructs, such perceptions of quality assurance processes, the Cronbach's alpha value is high (usually above 0.70) (Field, 2018).

Second, by giving the questionnaire to a small sample of responders twice, the reliability of the test-retest was evaluated. The instrument's long-term stability was validated by a high degree of correlation among the two sets of answers (Bryman, 2012). By using these techniques, it was made sure that the study's questionnaire accurately reflected the opinions of both teachers and students on quality control procedures in higher education.

Data Collection

In the initial stage of the research, the investigator undertook the responsibility of data collection personally. To ensure a comprehensive reach, online questionnaires were distributed to various students and faculty members residing in remote areas, thereby expanding the participant pool. Through diligent efforts, numerous visits to institutions, and the valuable assistance of MPhil students , the researcher successfully achieved the target of obtaining 180 total responses from both public and private sector institutions.

Data Analysis

The term "descriptive statistics" describes techniques for condensing and arranging data such that it is simpler to comprehend and analyze. It entails computing numerical values, such as the median, mode, mean, standard deviation, and percentages, that characterize the primary characteristics of a data set. The distribution, variability, and central tendency of the data are summarized by these statistics. Descriptive statistics, according to Creswell (2014), assist researchers in presenting quantitative findings in a format that is comprehensible and provide a concise synopsis of the patterns that surface from the gathered data. Usually, descriptive statistics are employed as a preliminary step in data analysis, laying the groundwork for more intricate inferential statistics when necessary. One sample t-test was used to analyze the results.

The researcher utilized Excel's charting features to show the data graphically. To make the data simpler to read, graphs and charts were made to show the distribution of replies, such as tables and bar charts. For example, tables were used to represent the percentage of respondents who agreed or disagreed with statements relating to the efficacy of quality assurance systems, while bar charts depicted disparities between public and private institutions.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

Total quality management, also referred to as TQM, is an approach to management that aims to increase consumer satisfaction and organizational performance. TQM concepts have been used in industry for a long time, but their use in services, namely higher education, is relatively recent. TQM implementation in higher education institutions (HEIs) is being pushed by increased competitiveness among colleges and high job market demands. Several writers have explored the deployment of TQM in North American and European higher education institutions, including operational experiences and reasons for failure. TQM application in poor nations' higher education institutions has received limited attention (Oakland, 2014).

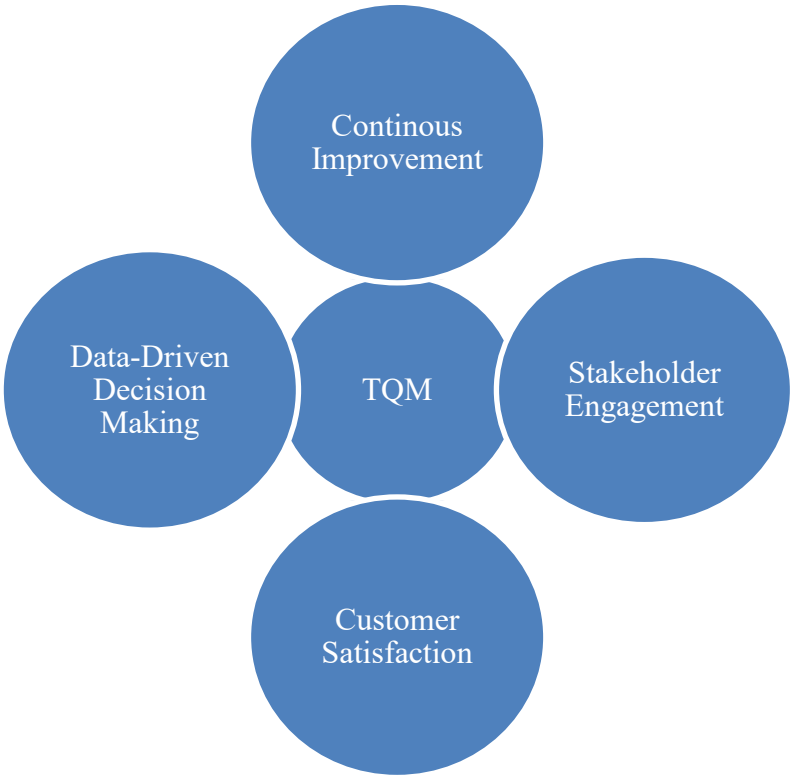

Figure 1 Elements included in TQM Model

According to Malik and his colleagues (2010), in colleges and universities, the term "quality assurance" refers to systematic methods that guarantee academic programs, teacher performance, and institutional policies fulfill prescribed criteria, such as those established by Pakistan's Higher Educational Commission (HEC).

Applying TQM to Higher Educational Quality Assurance

Continuous Improvement in Educational Quality

TQM emphasizes continuous improvement by regularly assessing and revising educational programs, products and services, and procedures (Oakland, 2014). In higher education, this is consistent with quality assurance initiatives to routinely assess and improve teaching techniques, the development of curriculum, and staff efficiency (Harvey & Green, 1993). This research will look at how institutions of higher learning in Vehari incorporate ongoing improvement by following to HEC regulations and completing self-assessments. The PDCA (Plan-Do-Check- Act) cycle, a fundamental technique in total quality management (TQM), offers a systematic way to improving quality assurance in educational institutions. In the current study, the PDCA cycle is used to evaluate how successfully colleges and universities in Vehari fit their quality assurance methods with the Higher Educational Commission's (HEC) standards. According to Deming (1986), using the PDCA cycle, institutions may not only maintain compliance with regulations but also develop a culture of continuous improvement, which improves overall educational excellence and satisfaction among stakeholders.

Stakeholder involvement in Quality Assurance

TQM focuses a strong emphasis on including all stakeholders in management of quality. In higher education, this entails active engagement by learners, instructors, management, employers, and alumni in reviewing and enhancing academic programs (Sallis, 2014). According to Srikamthan and Dalrymple (2007), to guarantee that quality assurance is not a solitary task but rather an inclusive institution-wide duty, institutions must acknowledge the contributions of all stakeholders. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the involvement of stakeholders in quality assurance procedures, including curriculum creation, program evaluations, and course reviews. By utilizing the TQM approach, including stakeholders guarantees that programs stay relevant to both professional and educational objectives.

Data-driven Decision Making

TQM emphasizes the need of data-driven decision-making. In educational institutions, this entails gathering and evaluating student input, curriculum evaluations, and outcomes of programs to inform future changes. Data-driven decision-making guarantees that quality enhancements are based on measurable criteria rather than misconceptions (Boaden, 1997). In the present investigation, the

researcher looked at whether higher educational institutes in Vehari use information gathered from students course evaluations, instructor reviews of performance, and program evaluations in establishing curriculum and teaching techniques by using this model.

Cross-departmental Collaboration

TQM views quality as a joint obligation that extends throughout an organization's departments and units (Oakland, 2014). In a recent research, this concept investigated how various educational and administrative departments within higher education institutions coordinated their efforts to execute quality assurance rules. For instance, how does the Quality Assurance Office work with different academic departments to match institutional objectives with the general quality policy? Collaboration among departments ensures that quality assurance is not limited to one department or division, but rather embedded throughout the institution, resulting in more uniform implementation of standards for quality (Harvey & Green, 1993).

Customer (Student) Satisfaction

The success of TQM is dependent on customer satisfaction. In the field of higher education, students are frequently seen as the key clients. TQM in education focuses on addressing students' needs through excellent academic programs, efficient instruction techniques, and supportive environments for learning as communicated by Sirkanthan and his co-worker in 2003. The study investigated how successfully educational institutions monitor and react to learner satisfaction by gathering input from curriculum evaluations, feedback from pupils, and job outcomes after graduation. The efficiency of QA methods in satisfying student requirements is critical to overall program performance and compliance with institution and HEC guidelines (Malik et al., 2010).

In a nutshell, the Total Quality Management (TQM) paradigm offers a systematic framework for understanding and enhancing assurance of quality in educational institutions.

Ethical Considerations

In this study, ethical considerations were very important. Informed consent was obtained from the heads of departments and the institutions involved before collecting any data. The researcher explained the purpose of the study and the procedures to ensure that participants understood what was expected of them. Confidentiality was maintained by keeping responses anonymous and securely storing the data to protect the identities of faculty members and students. Participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences. The researcher also promised to accurately represent the findings without any dishonesty. Finally, approval was obtained from the relevant ethical review board to ensure that the research followed all necessary guidelines.

Evaluation of Current Quality Assurance Practices

This part of the questionnaire examined the existing quality assurance practices in academic departments, with a focus on course evaluation, feedback systems, and program updates. The purpose was to evaluate how these practices are implemented and identify potential areas for enhancement.

Table 1: The department has written mission statement

Response	Public Sector (%)	Private Sector (%)	Mean Difference	t-value	Std. Deviation	Confidence Interval (Min-Max)
Yes	93%	100%	1.043	49.311	0.204	1.00-1.09
No	7%	0%				

The t-test results (t = 49.311, df = 92, p = 0.000) indicate a statistically significant difference in responses between faculty members from public and private institutes regarding the existence of a departmental mission statement, with a mean difference of 1.043 and a 95% confidence interval of [1.00, 1.09]. The findings shown in table 4.1 highlights that 93% of faculty members in public sector and 100% in private sector confirmed the presence of a mission statement, reflecting a high level of awareness about this aspect at the departmental level as shown in Table 1. The statistical evidence supports that this awareness is consistently significant across faculty members from both public and private institutions.

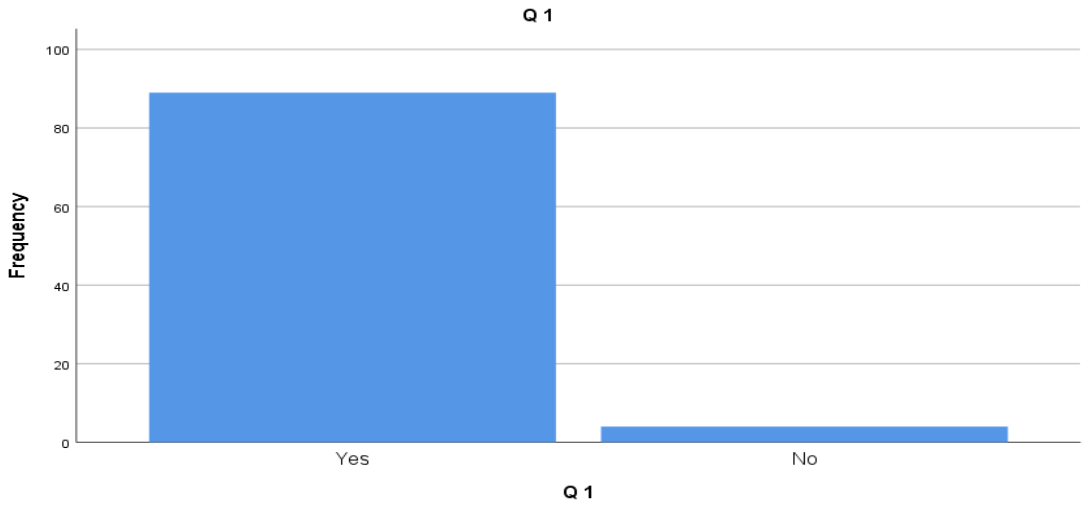

Figure 1 The department has written mission statement

Table 2: The department has quality assurance office

Response	Public Sector (%)	Private Sector (%)	Mean Difference	t-value	Std. Deviation	Confidence Interval (Min-Max)
Yes	82%	69%	1.258	27.577	0.440	1.17-1.35
No	18%	31%				

The t-test results (t = 27.577, df = 92, p = 0.000) reveal a significant difference in the responses of faculty members from public and private sectors regarding the presence of a quality assurance office or cell within departments. With a mean difference of 1.258 and a 95% confidence interval of [1.17, 1.35], the data shows that faculty in the public sector generally report higher agreement with this statement than those in the private sector. Overall, 82% of public faculty members confirmed the existence of a quality assurance office, while 18%% responded "No" as shown in Table 2. This difference in response rates suggests that quality assurance offices may be more established in public institutions than in private ones, indicating a potential area for improvement within the private sector.

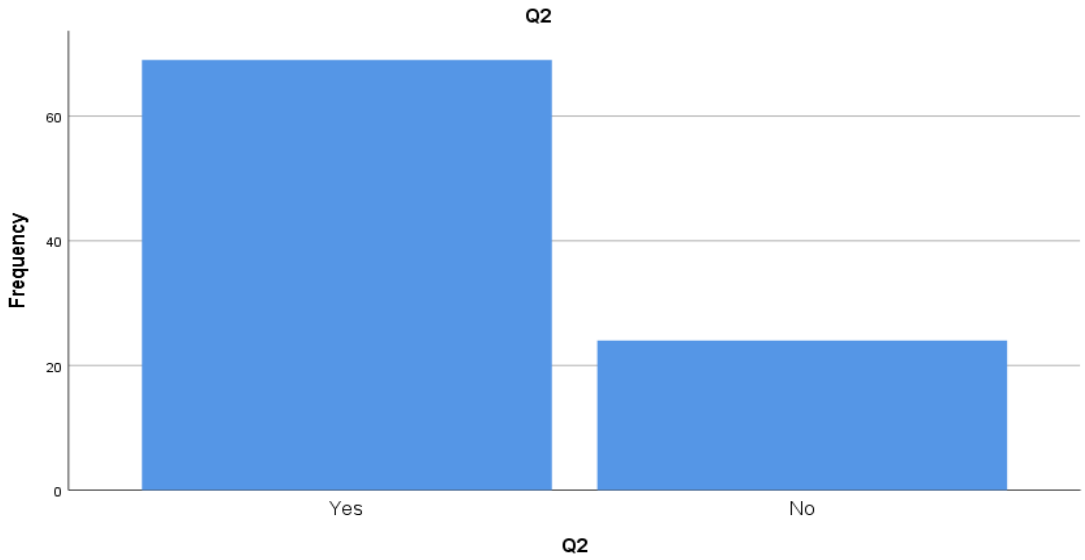

Figure 2 The department has quality assurance office

Table 3: The university /college has quality assurance cell

Response	Public Sector (%)	Private Sector (%)	Mean Difference	t-value	Std. Deviation	Confidence Interval (Min-Max)
Yes	76%	75%	1.247	27.729	0.434	1.16-1.34
No	24%	25%				

Figure 3 reflects faculty members' responses regarding the existence of a quality assurance office or cell at the college and university levels. The data presented in table 4.3 indicates that 76.7% of faculty members from both public and private sectors confirmed the presence of such an office, whereas 23.3% disagreed. The response rate for this question appears almost similar across both sectors. However, the t-test analysis (t = 27.729, df = 92, p = 0.000) reveals a significant difference, with a mean difference of 1.247. The 95% confidence interval ranges between 1.16 and 1.34, confirming the reliability of the results. This suggests that while the overall agreement is consistent, the statistical significance highlights a notable disparity in the level of awareness or acknowledgment of the quality assurance office among faculty members.

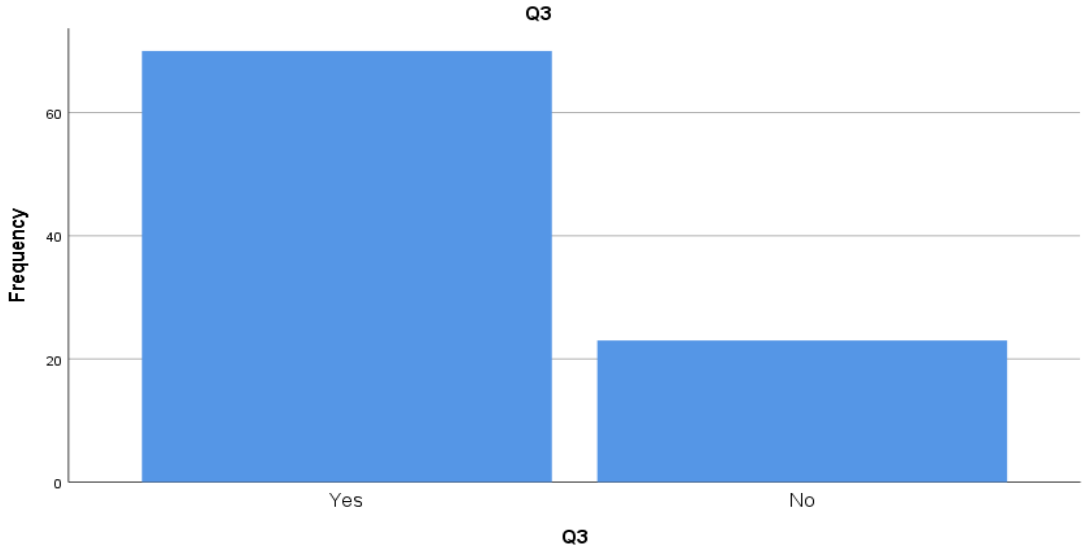

Figure 3 The university /college has quality assurance cell

Table 4: The department has a quality policy

Response	Public Sector (%)	Private Sector (%)	Mean Difference	t-value	Std. Deviation	Confidence Interval (Min-Max)
Yes	91%	83%	1.140	31.527	0.349	1.07-1.21
No	9%	17%				

The responses regarding the existence of a quality assurance policy at the departmental level highlight a significant difference between public and private sector institutions. Faculty members confirmed the presence of a quality assurance policy, with a higher agreement rate among public sector faculty (91%) compared to private sector faculty (83%). The t-test analysis (t = 31.527, df = 92, p = 0.000) confirms a statistically significant difference in responses, with a mean difference of 1.140 and a 95% confidence interval ranging from 1.07 to 1.21. These results indicate a notable variation in the perception or implementation of quality assurance policies between the two sectors, emphasizing a stronger adherence in public sector institutions.

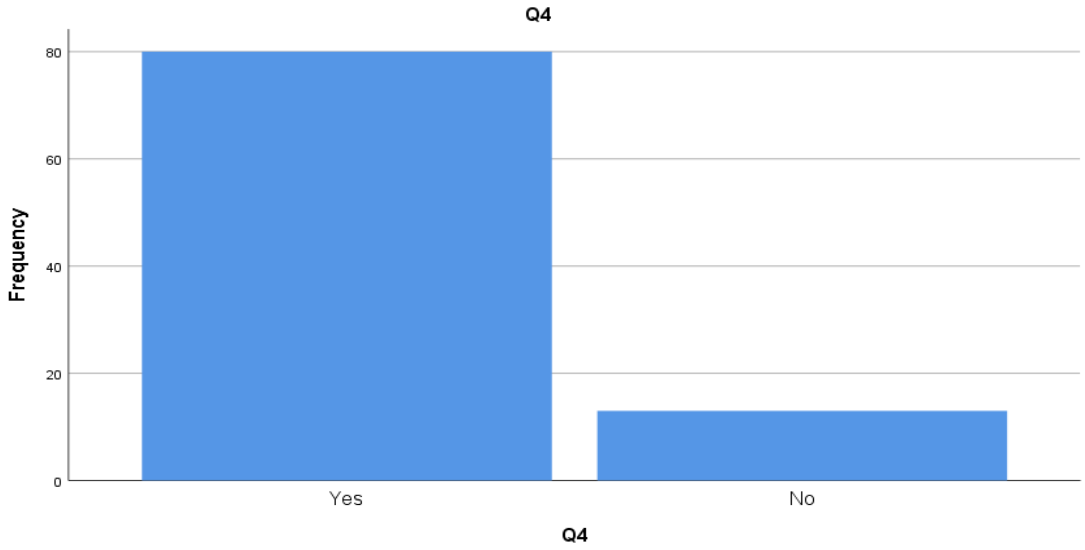

Figure 4 The department has a quality policy

Table 5: The department has quality manual

Response	Public Sector (%)	Private Sector (%)	Mean Difference	t-value	Std. Deviation	Confidence Interval (Min-Max)
Yes	88%	76%	1.194	28.977	0.397	1.11-1.28
No	12%	24%				

The responses regarding the existence of a quality assurance handbook at the departmental level indicate a notable difference between public and private sector institutions. According to the data, 88% of faculty members in the public sector confirmed the presence of a quality assurance handbook, compared to 76% in the private sector as shown in figure and table 5. Despite the higher agreement rate in the public sector, private sector faculty members also displayed a relatively positive response to the statement. The t-test results ($t = 28.977$, $df = 92$, $p = 0.000$) reveal a statistically significant difference in responses, with a mean difference of 1.194 and a 95% confidence interval ranging from 1.11 to 1.28. These findings emphasize the stronger perception of the existence of quality assurance handbooks in public sector institutions while highlighting a considerable acknowledgment in the private sector as well.

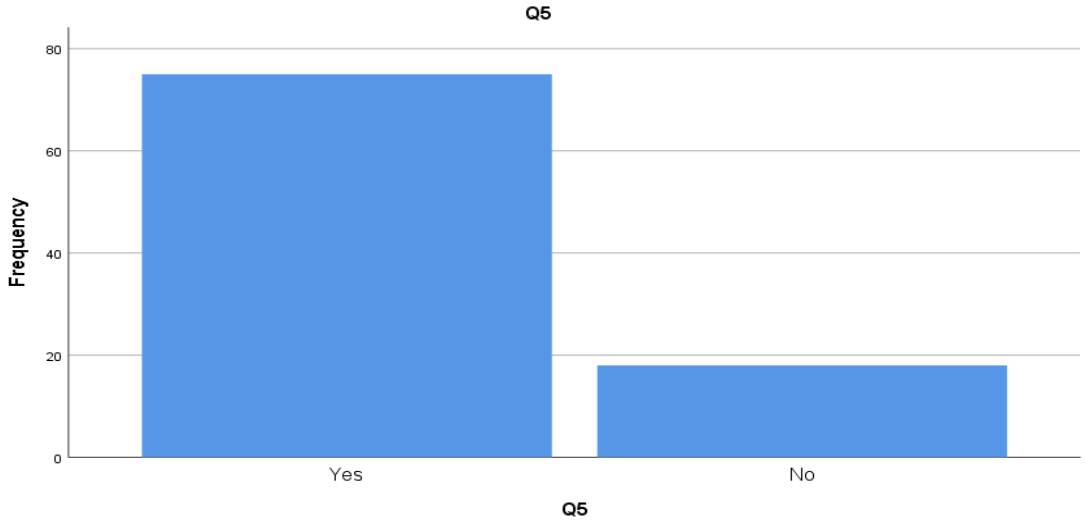

Figure 5 The department has quality manual

Perceptions of Quality Assurance Practices in Your Department and Institution

Table 6: Academic programs are assessed frequently

Response	Public Sector (%)	Private Sector (%)	Mean Difference	t-value	Std. Deviation	Confidence Interval (Min-Max)
Strongly Agree	6%	19%	4.054	69.955	0.559	3.94-4.17
Agree	85%	78%				
Undecided	6%	2%				
Disagree	0%	2%				
Strongly Disagree	3%	0%				

The analysis of faculty members' views on the frequent assessment of academic programs reveals notable differences between public and private sector institutions. According to the data, 85% of faculty members in the public sector agreed that academic programs are regularly assessed, while 78% of private sector faculty members held the same opinion as shown in table 6. The t-test analysis (t = 69.955, df = 92, p = 0.000) confirms a statistically significant difference in responses, with a mean difference of 4.054 and a 95% confidence interval ranging from 3.94 to 4.17. These findings highlight a stronger perception of regular academic program assessments among public sector faculty members compared to their private sector counterparts, emphasizing the disparity in quality assurance practices between the two sectors. The graphical representation of responses is given below.

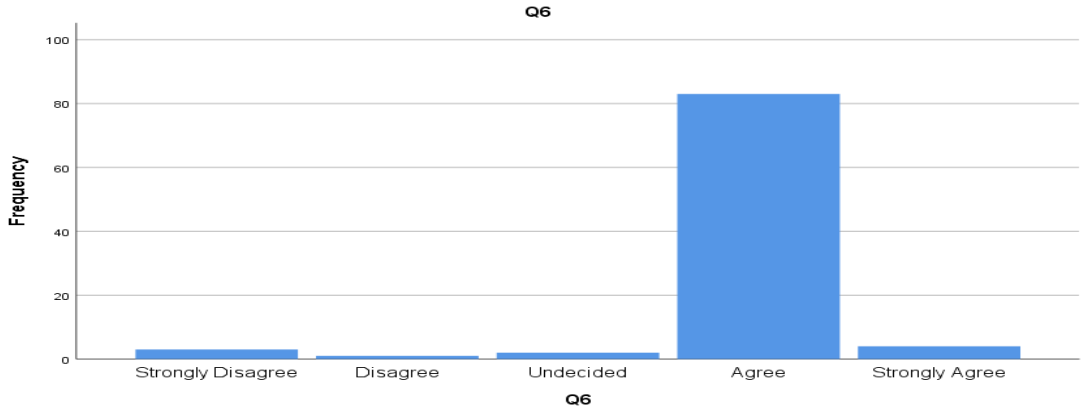

Figure 6 Academic programs are assessed frequently

Table 7: Courses are evaluated frequently

Response	Public Sector (%)	Private Sector (%)	Mean Difference	t-value	Std. Deviation	Confidence Interval (Min-Max)
Strongly Agree	3%	5%	3.68	40.217	0.884	3.51-3.87
Agree	91%	88%				
Undecided	0%	3%				
Disagree	0%	2%				
Strongly Disagree	6%	2%				

Table 7 highlights faculty members' views on the frequency of course evaluations. The data reveals that 91% of public sector faculty agreed that courses are frequently reviewed, compared to 88% of private sector faculty. A smaller percentage disagreed or strongly disagreed, with 6% from the public sector strongly disagreeing, while only 2% from the private sector held the same view. The t-test results (t = 40.217, p = 0.000) confirmed a significant difference between the two sectors, with a mean difference of 3.68 and a standard deviation of 0.884. The confidence interval, ranging from 3.51

to 3.87, further supports the conclusion that public sector institutions are slightly more consistent in reviewing and updating their courses compared to private institutions.

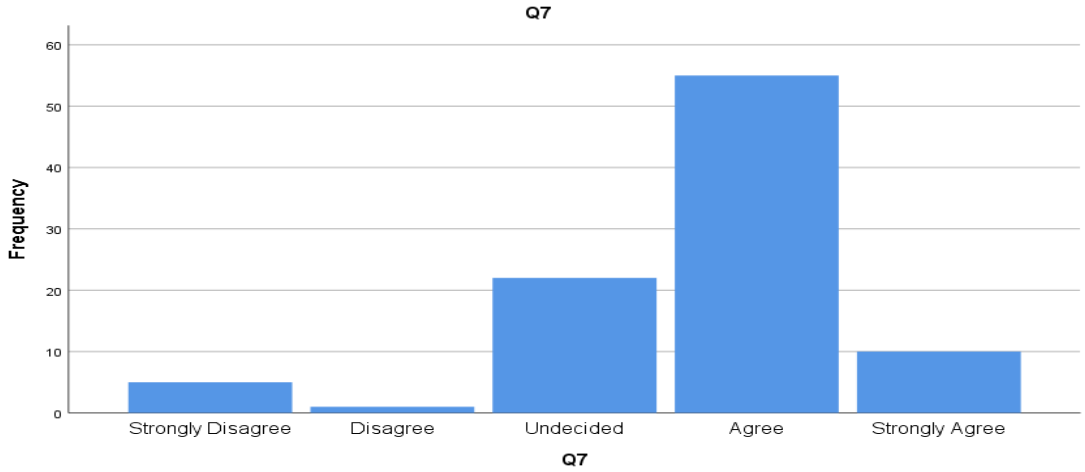

Figure 7 Courses are evaluated frequently

Table 8: Faculty members participate in course review

Response	Public Sector (%)	Private Sector (%)	Mean Difference	t-value	Std. Deviation	Confidence Interval (Min-Max)
Strongly Agree	6%	14%	3.591	35.724	0.969	3.39-3.79
Agree	62%	58%				
Undecided	24%	25%				
Disagree	0%	1%				
Strongly Disagree	9%	3%				

Table 8 highlights faculty members' perspectives on their involvement in the course review process, with 62% of public sector faculty and 58% of private sector faculty agreeing that they actively participate in this process. Although the difference in agreement between the two sectors appears small, it remains notable. The t-test analysis ($t = 35.724$, $df = 92$, $p = 0.000$) reveals that this difference is statistically significant, with a mean difference of 3.591 and a 95% confidence interval ranging from 3.39 to 3.79. These findings suggest that faculty members in both sectors generally perceive themselves as playing an active role in course evaluations, though public sector faculty show slightly higher engagement compared to their private sector counterparts. This underscores the importance of fostering collaborative practices in course reviews across all institutions.

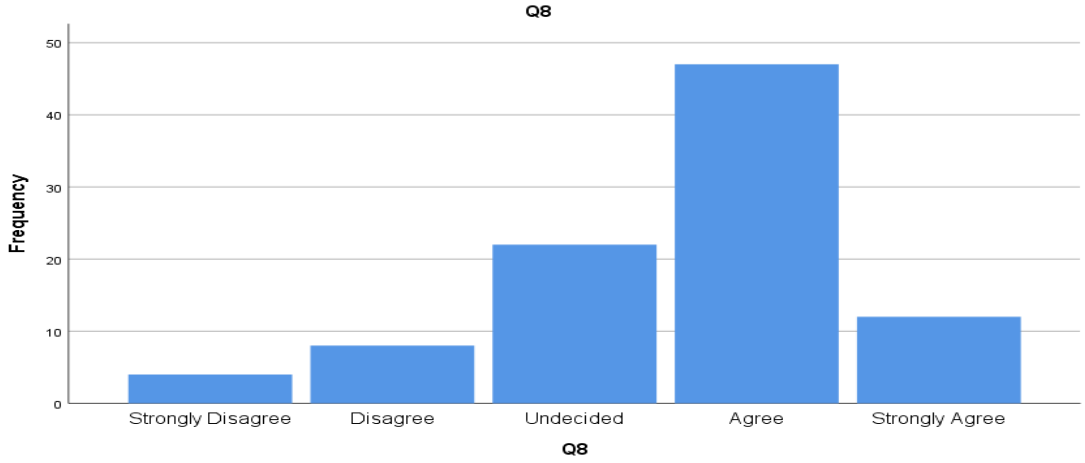

Figure 8 Faculty members participate in course review

Table 9: Employers participate in program evaluation

Response	Public Sector (%)	Private Sector (%)	Mean Difference	t-value	Std. Deviation	Confidence Interval (Min-Max)
Strongly Agree	12%	14%	3.075	22.180	1.337	2.80-3.35
Agree	44%	54%				
Undecided	32%	19%				
Disagree	6%	10%				
Strongly Disagree	6%	3%				

Table 9 presents the views of faculty members from public and private universities and colleges regarding the involvement of students' prospective employers in program reviews. The analysis reveals that only 44% of faculty members from public institutions and 54% from private institutions perceive employers as participating in the program evaluation process. The t-test analysis (t = 22.180, df = 92, p = 0.000) confirms a statistically significant difference between the two sectors, with a mean difference of 3.075 and a 95% confidence interval of 2.80 to 3.35. Despite this difference, faculty members from both sectors generally express unfavorable opinions about the engagement of employers in program reviews. These results highlight the need to strengthen collaboration between institutions and employers to enhance program evaluation processes and align educational outcomes with market demands. The graphical representation of findings is given in the figure 9.

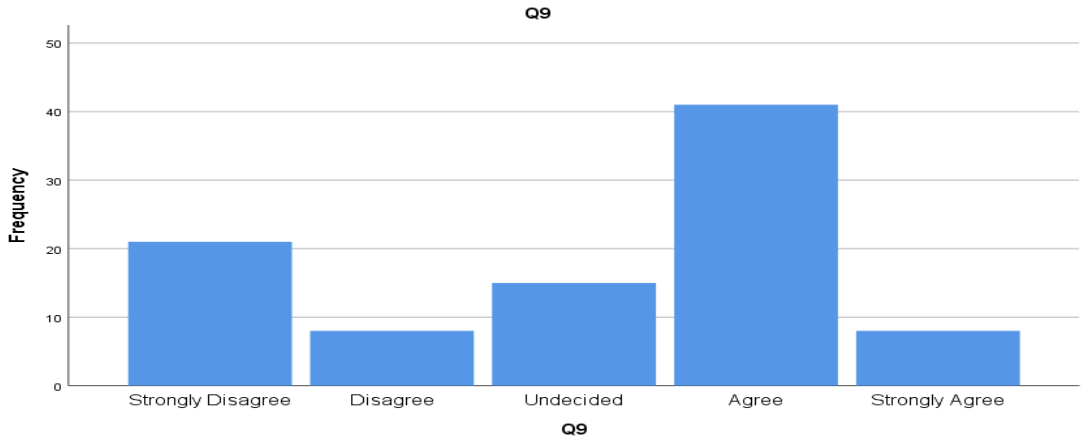

Figure 9 Employers participate in program evaluation

Table 10: Graduated learners participate in program evaluation

Response	Public Sector (%)	Private Sector (%)	Mean Difference	t-value	Std. Deviation	Confidence Interval (Min-Max)
Strongly Agree	3%	12%	3.161	20.647	1.477	2.86-3.47
Agree	41%	46%				
Undecided	15%	15%				
Disagree	18%	3%				
Strongly Disagree	24%	22%				

The sample t-test results show a significant difference in the views of faculty members from public and private institutions about students' involvement in the program evaluation process. The t-value of 20.647 with a p-value of 0.000 indicates that the difference between the two groups is statistically significant. The mean difference of 3.161, with a 95% confidence interval ranging from 2.86 to 3.47, further supports this finding. These results suggest that private sector faculty members are more inclined to support the idea of students participating in course evaluations compared to their public sector counterparts. This difference highlights a notable contrast in the perspectives on student involvement in the program review process

between public and private institutions. The graphical representation is given in table 10.

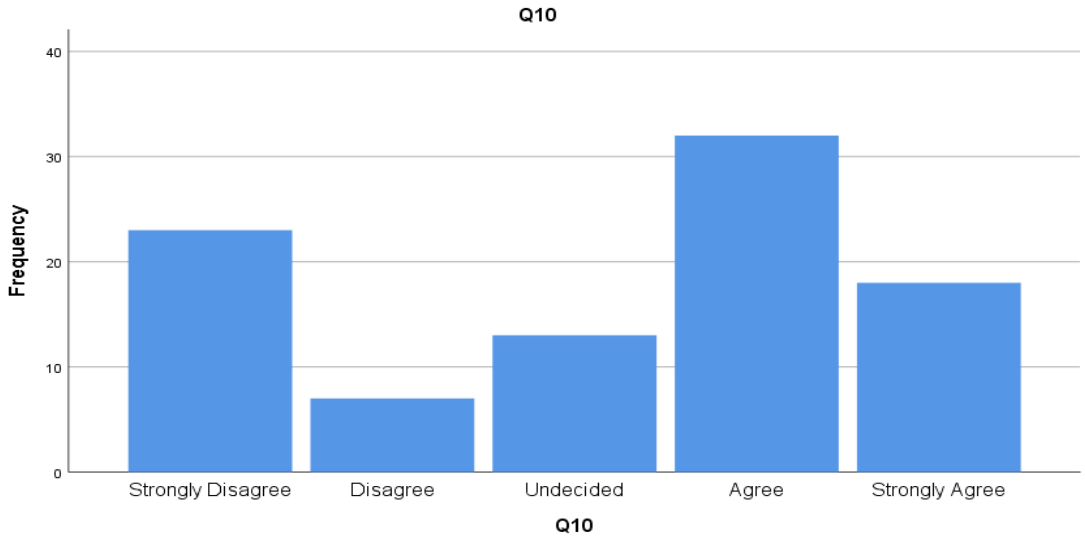

Figure 10 Graduated learners participate in program evaluation

Findings

This section presented the findings of the study and discussed them in relation to the research objectives and questions.

- The t-test results (t = 49.311, df = 92, p = 0.000) show a significant difference in responses between faculty members from public and private institutes regarding the existence of a departmental mission statement. 93% of faculty members in the public sector confirmed the presence of a mission statement, indicating a high level of awareness at the departmental level (Table 1).
- The t-test results (t = 27.577, df = 92, p = 0.000) show a significant difference in the responses of faculty members from public and private sectors regarding the presence of a quality assurance office or cell within departments. Public sector faculty members generally report higher agreement with this statement, with 82% of public faculty members confirming the existence of a quality assurance office (Table 2).
- The study revealed that 76.7% of faculty members in both public and private sectors confirmed the existence of a quality assurance office or cell at college and university levels, while 23.3% disagreed. A significant difference was found (t = 27.729, df = 92, p = 0.000), confirming the reliability of the results (Table 3).
- The study found a significant difference in the presence of a quality assurance policy at the departmental level between public and private sector institutions. Faculty members confirmed the existence of a policy, with 91% agreeing and 83% disagreeing. The t-test analysis confirmed this difference, with a mean difference of 1.140 and a 95% confidence interval of 1.07 to 1.21 (Table 4).
- The study found a significant difference in responses to the existence of a quality assurance handbook at the departmental level between public and private sector institutions. Public sector faculty members confirmed the presence of a handbook, while private sector faculty members showed a relatively positive response. The data showed a statistically significant difference in responses, with a mean difference of 1.194 and a 95% confidence interval ranging from 1.11 to 1.28 (Table 5).
- The study reveals significant differences in faculty members' views on the frequent assessment of academic programs between public and private sector institutions. Public sector faculty members agreed that academic programs are regularly assessed, while private sector faculty members held the same opinion. The t-test analysis confirms this statistically significant difference, with a mean difference of 4.054 and a 95% confidence interval of 3.94 to 4.17 (Table 6).
- The study shows that 91% of public and private sector faculty agree that courses are frequently reviewed, while 88% disagree. A smaller percentage, 6%, strongly disagreed, while only 2% held the same view. The t-test results confirmed a significant difference between the two sectors, with a mean difference of 3.68 and a standard deviation of 0.884 (Table 7).
- Table 8 shows that 62% of public and 58% of private sector faculty actively participate in the course review process, a statistically significant difference despite the small difference in agreement between the two sectors, with a mean difference of 3.591 and a 95% confidence interval of 3.39 to 3.79 (Table 8).
- The study reveals that only 44% of faculty members from public and 54% from private

universities and colleges believe employers are involved in program reviews. This difference is statistically significant, with a mean difference of 3.075. Despite this, faculty members from both sectors generally express unfavorable opinions about employers' involvement in program reviews (Table 9).

- The study reveals a significant difference in views between public and private faculty members regarding student involvement in program evaluations. The t-value of 20.647 and the mean difference of 3.161 support this finding, indicating that private sector faculty members are more likely to endorse student participation in course evaluations (Table 10).

Conclusion

Here are the conclusions based on the findings of the current study.

- Public institutions have a significantly higher awareness of departmental mission statements compared to private institutions, emphasizing the public sector's stronger focus on formalized institutional goals.
- Public institutions are more likely to have dedicated quality assurance offices at the departmental level, reflecting their greater emphasis on structured quality control mechanisms.
- While most institutions have quality assurance offices at the institutional level, public sector institutions exhibit stronger support for these structures.
- Public institutions more consistently implement quality assurance policies at the departmental level than private institutions, indicating a significant disparity in policy enforcement.
- Public institutions demonstrate a stronger commitment to providing quality assurance handbooks, showcasing their dedication to formal documentation of practices.
- Academic program assessments are more frequent in public institutions, highlighting their proactive approach to curriculum evaluation.
- Both sectors frequently review courses, but public institutions exhibit a slightly higher consistency in ensuring courses remain up-to-date.
- Faculty from both sectors participate in course reviews, but public faculty are slightly more engaged, reflecting greater involvement in academic planning.
- Faculty perceive employer involvement in program reviews as limited in both sectors, with slightly better involvement in private institutions.
- Private institutions show stronger student involvement in program evaluations, reflecting a more inclusive approach to academic feedback.

Results of the ressarch

The research findings highlight significant differences in quality assurance practices between public and private higher educational institutions. Public institutions demonstrate a stronger commitment to formalized quality assurance mechanisms, including departmental mission statements, quality assurance offices, and policy implementation. They also exhibit a more proactive approach to academic program assessments and course reviews. While both sectors have areas for improvement, public institutions tend to have more structured quality control mechanisms, whereas private institutions show stronger student involvement in program evaluations. These findings can inform strategies for enhancing quality assurance practices in both public and private higher educational institutions.

Recommendations

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

For Public Institutions

1. Sustain and Enhance Quality Assurance Mechanisms.
2. Continue to prioritize formalized quality assurance practices, including departmental mission statements and quality assurance offices.
3 . Share Best Practices. Disseminate effective quality assurance strategies and practices across departments and institutions.

For Private Institutions

1.Develop Structured Quality Assurance Mechanisms: Establish formal quality assurance offices and policies to ensure consistency and effectiveness.

2.Foster Student Involvement Continue to prioritize student involvement in program evaluations and feedback mechanisms.

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