APQN	APQN RESEARCH ON THE COVID IMPACT ON HE QUALITY IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION
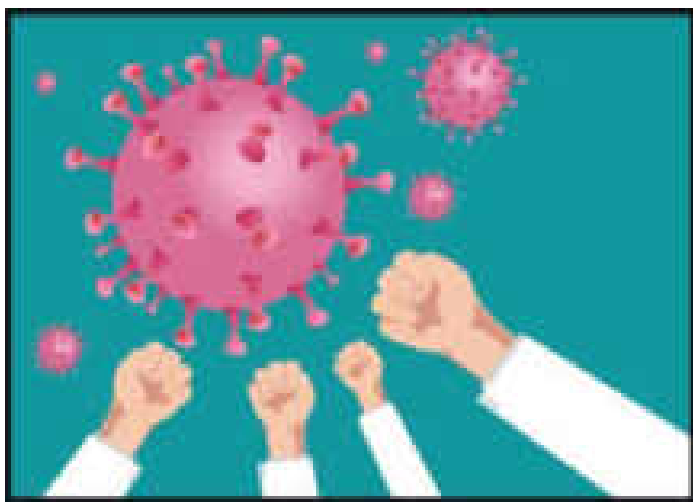
Chief Editor: Jianxin Zhang

APQN Research on the COVID Impact on the Quality of Higher Education

Chief Editor: Jianxin Zhang

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June, 2022

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Foreword

At the end of 2019, Coronavirus Disease 2019 (hereinafter referred to as "COVID-19") broke out out of a clear sky. It has brought the whole world into a painful halt. In April in 2020, over 1.5 billion students were forced to stay away from schools in over 190 countries, covering 90% of the world's student population.

The COVID Pandemic attacked all the global human being in a threatening and horrible manner, which has extended an open challenge to all strata of lives on the planet. Thomas Friedman believes, the COVID pandemic will become "*There is the world B.C. — Before Corona — and the world A.C. — After Corona.*" Just like "B.C. (before Christ) and A.C. (after Christ). This is an unprecedented scenario in the world history of education.

COVID caught all of us by surprise and forced us to manage amidst huge uncertainty: uncertainty as to when we can travel again, uncertainty as to when business events will return and uncertainty as to when COVID will be over. The first step in dealing with uncertainty is to accept it – accept the situation we are facing. We have unusually spent over 1000 days during the pandemic, which are once-in-a-century days. In this battle without gunpowder smoke, more than 7 billion people in the world, no one is an "outsider", let alone a "bystander".

People all over the world are trying to cope up with the crisis. APQN work with the fraternity of the academic to get out of the messy situation and try to find appropriate solutions. We are happy to find that APQN utilize COVID lockdown as a springboard to disrupt with more sustainable solutions for the future. We have inclined towards "work from home" culture.

In the past 2-and-half years, APQN carried on many actions during the COVID pandemic, including 4 surveys, 7 interviews, 1 online forum,3 international online conferences, 1 online-teaching standard and other researches. The current book entitled "*APQN Research on the COVID Impact on the Quality of Higher Education in*

the Asia-Pacific Region" is the result of most of APQN actions under COVID-19. The book consists of 10 chapters as followings:

I. APQN Survey on the COVID Impact on the HEIs

II. APQN Survey on the Influence of COVID on the QAAs

III. Survey on the Effectiveness of Online Teaching in the HEIs

IV. Review of APQN 2020 Online Forum

V. APQN Board Interviews on HE Quality in COVID Crisis

VI. Qualitative Research on Effectiveness of Online Course during COVID-19

VII. Academic Review of the 12th Higher Education International Conference

VIII. Research on the Meta-Review to the Asia-Pacific Quality Register (APQR)

IX. APQN Standard for Online-Teaching Quality Assurance

X. Overview of 2021 AAC on COVID Response Mechanism

The contents of the 10 chapters includes the following 4 parts:

Part I is the research of chapters 1-3, which describes the impacts of COVID outbreak, such as "Survey of the COVID Impact on the HEIs", "Survey of the COVID Impact on QAAs" and "Survey on the Effectiveness of Online Teaching in the HEIs".

Part II is the research of chapters 4-7 which narrates the uncertainty and challenges during the of COVID-19, such as "Review of APQN 2020 Online Forum", "APQN Board Interviews on HE Quality in COVID Crisis", "Qualitative Research on Effectiveness of Online Course during COVID-19" and "Academic Review of the 12th Higher Education International Conference".

Part III is the research of chapters 8-10 which shows the results, such as "Meta-Review to APQR", "APQN Standard for Online-Teaching QA" and "COVID Response Mechanism".

Part IV is annex 1-6 which provides more details to the researches carried on during the pandemic, such as 4 surveys, 7 interviews, and "APQN Standard for Online-Teaching Quality Assurance" issued globally on May 30, 2021.

Last but not the least, deep appreciation to the 14 authors of this book. They are Jianxin Zhang (APQN 5th and 6th President, professor of Yunnan University and Chief Expert of Yunnan Higher Education Evaluation Centre, China), Galina Motova (APQN Vice President, Deputy Director of the National Centre for Public Accreditation, Russia), I-Jung Grace Lu (Assistant Research Fellow of

Higher Education Evaluation and Accreditation Council of Taiwan, Chinese Taipei), Yahang Yang (research fellow at Center for China and Globalization, China), Xiaoyin Cao(licensed attorney in Illinois, U.S.A), Daria Efremova (specialist of the Accreditation Office, National Centre for Public Accreditation, Russia), Anna Ishutkina (methodologist, analyst and translator at the International Relations Office, National Centre for Public Accreditation, Russia), Zhijie Xiang(PhD candidate at Yunnan University, China), Panpan Huang (graduate student at Yunnan University, China), David W. Sansom (Deputy-Director of the MPI-Bell Centre at the Macao Polytechnic Institute), Gan Cunyan (Director of Teaching and Learning Centre of Macao Polytechnic Institute), Shirun Wang (graduate student at Yunnan University, China), Wenjing He (graduate student at Yunnan University, China), and Jagannath Patil(founder Chairperson of Asia Pacific Quality Register, former APQN President and APQN Board Co-opted Director, at National Assessment and Accreditation Council, India). Most of the research are volunteer work,without any funding. The authors carried on the research on a pro bono basis. They have demonstrated APQN spiritual legacy of "the Spirit of Dedication". As the current APQN President and chief-editor of this book, I am greatly appreciate for their dedication that is the passion and love for the cause of education quality bonded by the affection and friendship among our members!

The challenge of the COVID Pandemic is embedded with a huge opportunity. No doubt, higher education in the globe has been transformed by COVID-19, the lockdown, and eventually, the recovery. COVID-19has pointed out that the world of education requires a paradigm shift. The educational systems should have been hybrid with both face-to-face learning as well as online learning components. Most of the higher education institutions (HEIs) have been in practice of holistic learning accommodating both offline and online systems. The present pandemic has forced all the academic institutions to shift to online mode of learning. APQN has a long way to go to realize its sustainable development under COVID-19.

Dear all, let's work hard to realize APQN mission of "e*nhancing the quality of higher education in the Asia-Pacific Region*"!

I. Survey of the COVID Impact on the HEIs

Project Title:

APQN Survey Research on the COVID impact on Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

Leader:

Jianxin Zhang

Authors:

Jianxin Zhang　Yahan Yang　Xiaoyin Cao

Consultants:

Jianxin Zhang, Galina Motova, Jagannath Patil, Deepthi Bandara, I-Jung Grace Lu, Farida Nurmanbetova, Pingping Liu*Fund supporter:*

The Project was funded by the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (Code No.: APQN2020-01).

Duration:

March to July, 2020

Executive summary

The pandemic of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) relentlessly spread all over the world! The COVID pandemic in the globe has had profound impacts on education by closing campus almost everywhere on the planet, in the largest simultaneous shock to all education systems in our lifetime, which has greatly influenced our learning, work, and life. "*The pandemic has already had profound impacts on education by closing schools almost everywhere on the planet, in the largest simultaneous shock to all education systems in our lifetimes*." [1]

At this crucial moment, it is particularly important to examine the impact of the pandemic outbreak on each individual and each university. In March 2020, the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN) set up a special research project group led by APQN President. The research group conducted the global Survey of the COVID Impact to the students, teachers and administrators at HEIs, in order to analyze the psychological and behavioral responses of each "Insider" on-site, and try to find solutions for higher education in the post-pandemic era.

1.1 Research background

The COVID pandemic (hereinafter referred to as "the pandemic", if not emphasized) has had an unprecedented impact on all countries/territories of the world. As of 1 April 2020, over 1.5 billion students were affected by campus closures in over 190 countries. This represents 90% of the world's student population and is an unprecedented situation in the history of education. [2] As of June 16,

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[1] World Bank(2020). The COVID Pandemic: Shocks to Education and Policy Responses. World Bank, Washington, DC. © World Bank. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/33696 License: CC BY 3.0 IGO.

[2] UNESCO(2020). COVID Impact on Education. 2020-4-15 https://en.unesco.org/COVID19/educationresponse/

there are more than 7 million confirmed patients worldwide.

Thomas L. Friedman believes that the COVID pandemic will become "*our new historical divide: B.C. and A.C. – the world before corona and the world after*" [①], just like "B.C.(before Christ) and A.C.(after Christ)". As for higher education, the pandemic is also a very important historical divide, with the common implementation of online teaching, the traditional face-to-face teaching was gone, the mental health of teachers and students caused common anxiety because of this little virus. HEIs' functions have become more diversified, in addition to students training, scientific research, and social services, they also become an important social organization to fight against the pandemic.

This research surveyed the COVID Impact on students, teachers and administrators in HEIs around the world, analyzes the psychological and behavioral changes brought about by the pandemic, as well as the measures are taken by HEIs in the fight against the pandemic, reflects on the changes and great impact of the pandemic on higher education, and provides a strong reference for HEIs to secure the wellbeing of teachers and students and try to find solutions for the sustainable development of higher education the future public health emergencies in the post-pandemic era.

1.1.1 Survey design: from individual to organization

The research group conducted three consultations with the scholars and experts anonymously, confirmed the survey framework and questions. Due to the fact that the survey was aimed at students and teachers in various countries/territories around the world, and in order to ensure the cultural competence and sensibility, the research group consulted experts from different parts of the world in legal and social work fields to ensure that the survey was accurate and objective.

The survey consists of 31 questions in five parts. The first part is the respondents' basic information, a total of 7 questions (no.1-7). The second part is the psychological status and behavior of the respondents during the COVID pandemic, a total of 11 questions (no.

[①] FRIEDMAN, T. L. Our New Historical Divide: B.C. and A.C.- the World Before Corona and the World After [EB/OL].(2020-03-17)[2020-03-20]. https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/17/opinion/coronavirus-trends.html

8-18). The third part is the HEIs' actions to fight against COVID-19, a total of 6 questions (no.18-24). The fourth part is the recommendations for HEIs, a total of 6 questions (no. 25-30). And the fifth part is the feedback of the respondents' opinions with 1 question.

The survey was distributed on "Survey Star", a professional online survey, assessing and voting platform in China (https://www.wjx.cn), from March 31 to May 20, 2020, a total of 50 days. By adopting snowball sampling, the group collected 1570 valid respondents using social self-media such as "WeChat" and e-mail promotion.

In order to further explore the understanding of the respondents, the research group also carried out a qualitative study on 6 Directors of APQN Board and other relevant scholars as well as respondents by structural questioning and interviews (Table 1).

Table 1   List of in-depth interviewers

Name	APQN position	Country	Organization
Jianxin Zhang	President	China	Yunnan Higher Education Evaluation Center (YHEEC)
Galina Motova	Deputy Director	Russia	National Centre for Public Accreditation
Deepthi Bandar	Board Director	Sri Lanka	University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka
Farida Nurmanbetova	Board Director (Elected)	Kazakhstan	Eurasian Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Health Care (ECAQA)
Jung Grace Lu	Board Director	Chinese Taipei	Higher Education Evaluation Accreditation Council of Taiwan (HEEACT)
Jagannath Patil	APQN Board Director	India	NIAD QE
Syun Tutilya	APQN Project Leader	Japan	NIAD QE

Note: Those who reply to open questions and also were interviewed

are not included here.

1.1.2   Sample information: full coverage worldwide

The survey covered the respondents from 47 countries/territories around the world, 90.38% were from Asia. More than 30 respondents are from 7 countries/territories: China mainland, Russia, Sri Lanka, Kazakhstan, Bangladesh, United States and Chinese Taipei, which are in a statistical consequence. This is partly because the survey tool and delivery channels of APQN's survey are mainly from Asia and the Pacific Region, especially from China.

From the perspective of 7 continents, 6.31% of the respondents are from Europe, 1.72% from North America, 0.7% from Oceania, 0.32% from Africa, 0.32% from Antarctica, and 0.25% from South America (Fig. 1). Most of them are from the same location (87.52%) while12.48% of them are in different HEIs from their own location countries. It can be inferred that more than 1% of the respondents are international students or teachers or visiting scholars in other countries.
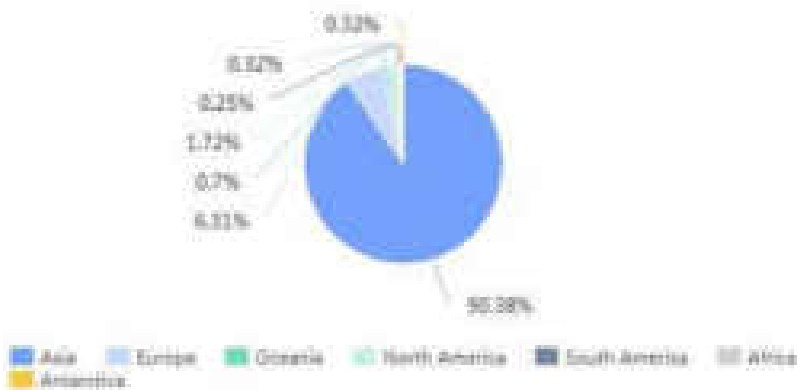
Fig. 1   Percentage of the respondents from 7 continents

In terms of sex ratio, 24.46% (384) are male while 75.22% (1181) are female and the others are 0.32% (Fig. 2). Due to the large sex differences, by dis-aggregated statistics and cross-analysis, the research group considered that sex did not affect the validity and reliability of the research. In addition, as sex and other options cannot form an effective correlation, sex will not be used as an influencing factor in subsequent analysis.
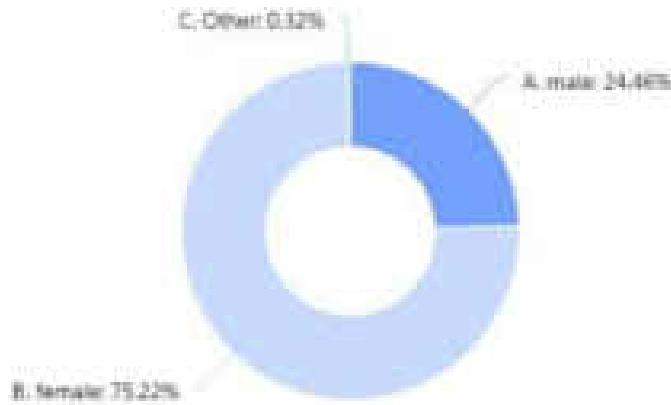
Fig. 2　Sex ratio of the respondents

In terms of age, 57.45% (902) of the respondents are under 30 years old, 26.82% (421) aged 31-45 years old, 12.29% (193) aged 46-60 years old and 3.44 % (54) over 60 (Fig. 3).
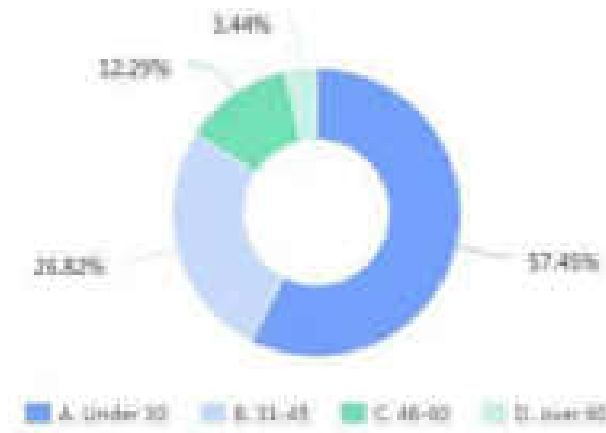
Fig. 3　Age ratio of the respondents

In terms of identity, the largest proportion is students (60.82%), second in teachers (30.96%) rank in the second place, and administrators (8.22%) cover the smallest proportion. ① The students from higher vocational institutions cover 23.82%, undergraduates cover 19.55%, and graduates and doctoral students

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① In the follow-up analysis of the respondents, if identity is not emphasized, then the current research includes teachers, students and administrators, referred them by respondents.

cover 17.45%. However, the difference among the three is small.
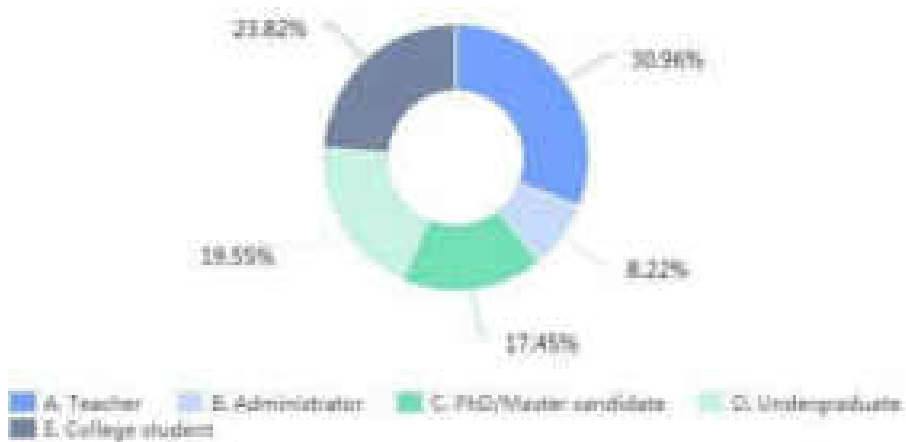
Fig. 4　The proportion of the respondents

In terms of field/subject categories, except for military science, every other categories have respondents. The largest proportion is education (43.95%), which is also closely related to the distribution channels of the survey. Because of the snowball distribution method, APQN, as a network of quality assurance in higher education, the majority of the respondents are relevant students or practitioners in the domain of education. Those respondents from education field shared their insights on how higher education thrive in the post-pandemic era, which will be further discussed in the part of open question(No.31). The second rank is literature (20%), then followed by art (4.65%), management (4.39%), and medicine (3.12%). 12.93% of the respondents choose others (Fig. 5).
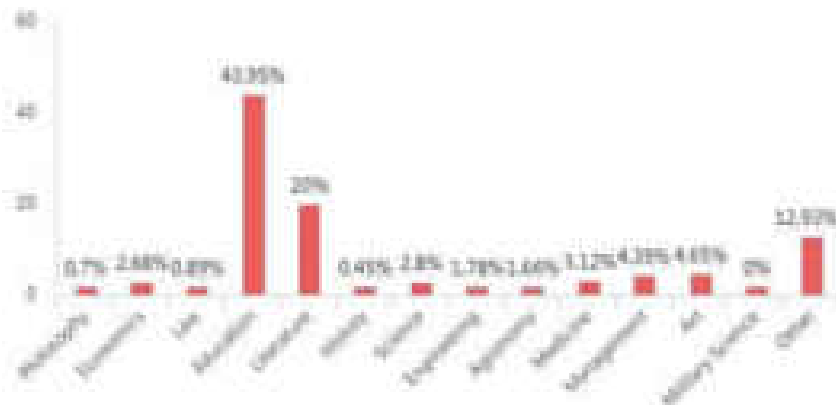
Fig. 5　Percentage of the respondents' field/subject categories

The above sample analysis shows the following three characteristics: 1) the survey widely covered 47 countries and territories around the world; 2) the respondents are relatively young, more than 60% are students; 3) the respondents are from various academic backgrounds.

1.2   Individual psychological and behavioral responses

The COVID caught every in surprise, leaving each under great pressure. During this special period, many people's learning/work and life have been disrupted, so do the people's psychological state.

1.2.1   Mental state: dramatic changes

In the face of the public health crisis, people have different psychological and behavioral responses, which are highly correlated with the sociocultural environment, physiological and psychological conditions, and past experiences.[1]   As the public health crisis affecting the world, the pandemic has had a profound impact on people in different countries/territories.

1.   "Fear" is the first reaction to most people

When they learned of the pandemic outbreak, the first reaction of 41.95% of respondents was "fear", and 34.59% were nervous. In addition, 4.97% and 1.66% were depressed and angry, 4.46% felt they didn't care, and 12.74% chose "others" (Fig. 6).

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[1]   Benedek, David M., Carol Fullerton, and Robert J. Ursano. "First respondents: mental health consequences of natural and human-made disasters for public health and public safety workers." Annu. Rev. Public Health 28 (2007): 55-68.
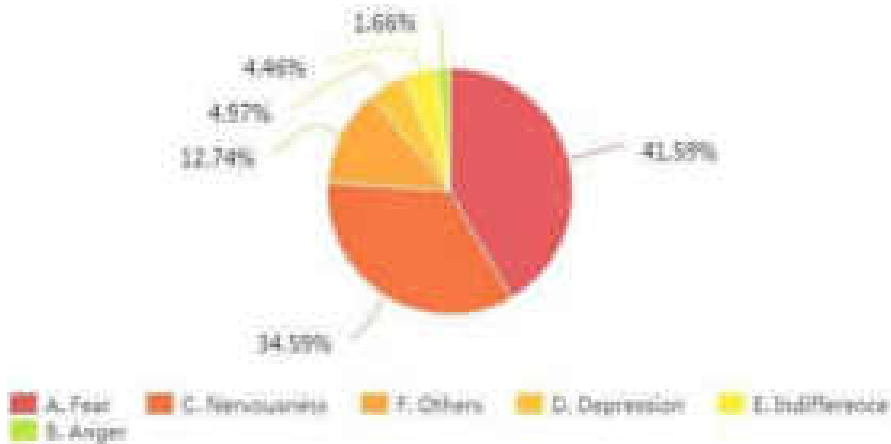
Fig. 6   First response of the respondents to the pandemic

2.   Respondents have crisis awareness and care about others' safety

For question 10, "your psychological reaction if your relatives, colleagues, classmates or friends are unfortunately infected with COVID-19", 49.68% of the respondents say "concerned", 20.7% say "fear" and 20.57% respondents, "nervousness" (Fig. 7). It indicates that the respondents are crisis-conscious and have concerns about those around them. When asked about the reasons for "fear and nervousness", more answers are focused on the fact that they think the latent period of COVID is longer and they might be in danger if they are exposed to the confirmed patients.
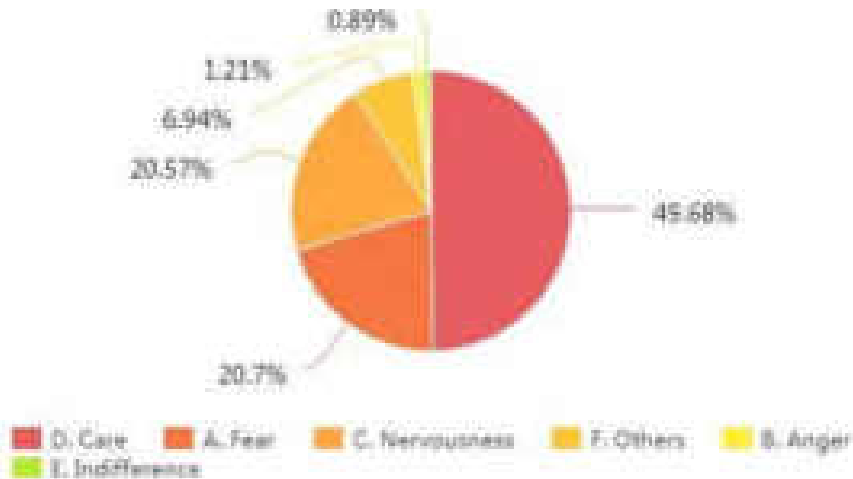
Fig. 7   Attitudes of the respondents to those who have recently been

a high-risk country/region

3.   The mentality of half respondents is in normal state

Trauma events such as public crisis will make the vast majority of people experience continuous stress or depression, which will lead them to fear, worries, anger, sadness, bring some sleep difficulties or increase the use of tobacco, alcohol and entertainment products. People with this kind of reaction can return to normal life after a period of time. The results of the follow-up behavioral survey also indirectly verified this point.[1] Luckily, 58.85% of the respondents say they were able to ensure the efficiency of learning/work and life.

4.   30% are still unable to focus due to stress

Negative emotions such as fear and stress caused by the public health crisis can affect the state of many people's daily learning/work and life, which results in their inability to concentrate. 34.27% of the respondents say they were "unable to focus" (Fig. 8).[2] Being unable to focus, means that their daily activities such as learning and work, are seriously affected by persistent anxiety, sleep disorders, which enormously affect the effectiveness of dealing with daily affairs. Certain psychological guidance, psychological education and other auxiliary treatments can effectively alleviate problem severity and help their recovery.

6.88%
31.21%
34.27%
27.64%

A. More concentrated than ever   B. The Same   C. Cannot get concentrated
D. Others
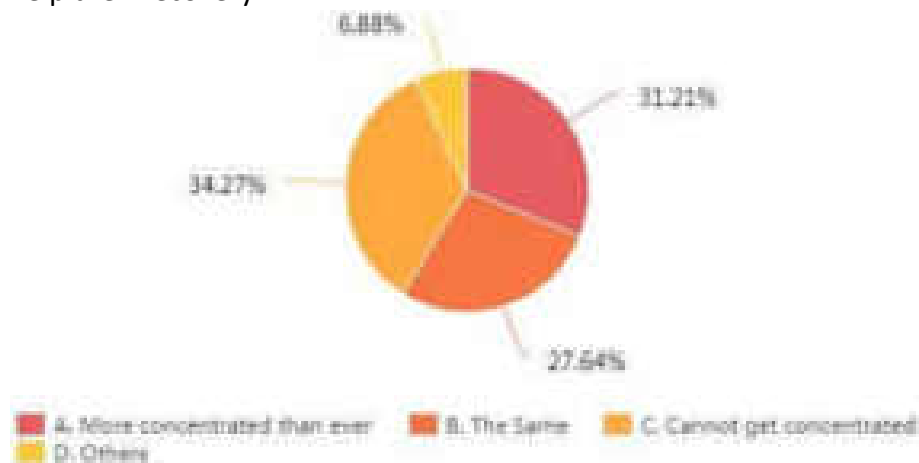
Fig. 8   The respondents' concentration on learning/work and life

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[1] Hoff, Lee Ann. People in crisis: Clinical and public health perspectives. Jossey-Bass, 2001.

[2] Weathers, Frank W., et al. "The PTSD checklist for dsm-5 (pcl-5)." Scale available from the National Center for PTSD at www. ptsd. va. gov 10 (2013).

during the pandemic

1.2.2 Behavioral patterns: home quarantine

The pandemic has broken down the existing way of peoples' life and behavior and caused an enormously psychological impact on people. Due to the breakout of the previous life pace, people need to quickly adapt to independent learning/working and traditionally collective life from an early age, the extension of vacations and home-based learning make them feel isolated, lack timely feedback, face-to-face communication and collaboration among teachers and students themselves. At the same time, for many teachers who are accustomed to classroom teaching, they not only need to learn new network tools for teaching but also online teaching further blurs the boundaries between scientific research, teaching and life. And many face the challenge of reconciling and adapting their own life.

1. Most respondents choose to stay where they are

In response to Question 11, "*If you are in a serious pandemic country/region and you have a chance to go to a safer country/region will you leave?*" 38.85% say they would not choose to leave, while 33.12% were unsure and 24.71% choose to leave (Fig. 9). When being asked about their concerns, most of the responses were to be concerned about the risks of being infected on the road.
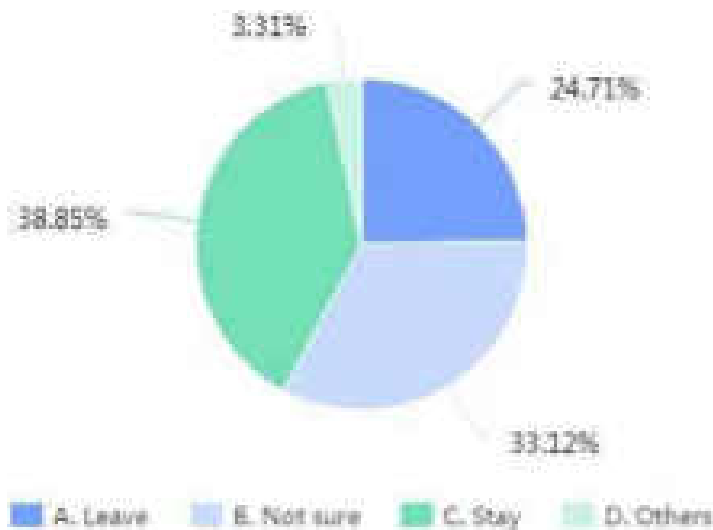
Fig. 9　Attitudes of leaving a serious pandemic country/region with a chance to go to a safer country/region

2.   Most respondents are learning at home

During quarantine at home, the top home activities were: learning (1013), reading (970), watching TV plays/films (821), cooking (628), communicating with the lover and close friends (546), reading online news (Fig. 10), Unlike the researchers' hypothesis, the number of the respondents who played games were less than expected. "*Although I had been depressed before, I still managed to complete all my homework, and the progress of online courses has not been slowed down*" (from a Chinese student studying in South Korea)

Fig. 10   Activities during quarantine at home

3.   Learning/work at home negatively affects most respondents

As for home learning/work caused by the pandemic, 36.9% of respondents say it had a serious impact on their learning/work and life. 49.62% say it had a slight impact on them while only 8.15% say it did not affect them (Fig. 11). This can be attributed to the above

psychological state: 56.88% of the respondents who answered "unable to focus" in the psychological part thought that their learning/work and life had been seriously affected. It shows that "attention deficit disorder" caused by anxiety and other emotions, directly affects their learning/work and life. On the other hand, it can be attributed to the change of learning methods: different from the face-to-face teaching, home-based learning also puts forward higher requirements for both teachers and students, such as increasing the cost, adapting to the new way, etc. In the follow-up question related to online teaching, 60.78% of the respondents who consider online teaching is "ineffective", believed that the pandemic had a serious negative impact on learning/work and life. "*The network teaching is very complicated. In order to use Zoom software, I spent a lot of effort to study, but I still made a fool of myself in class*" (a Japanese teacher).
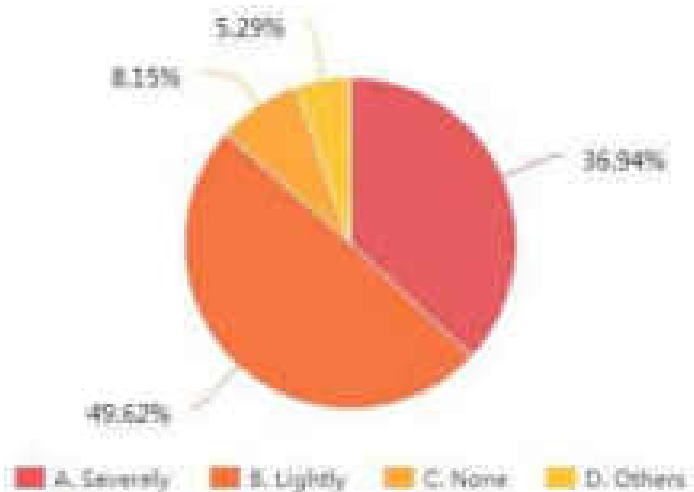
Fig. 11   The impact of the pandemic on the respondents' learning/work and life
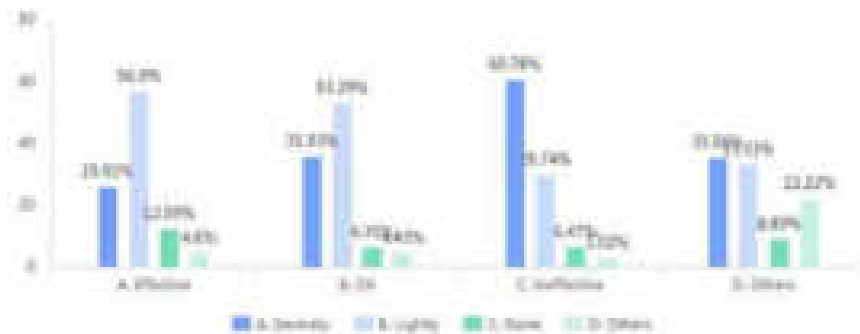
Fig. 12   Cross analysis on the effect evaluation of online teaching and

the impact of the pandemic on learning/work

4.   The impact on daily lives in the USA is particularly obvious

It is worth noting that 72.73% of respondents in the United States (US) say the pandemic has a serious negative impact on their learning/work and life, well above the average (Fig. 13). As of June 14, 2020, more than 2 million people had been diagnosed with COVID in the USA and more than 115,000 people died.[①] The serious situation in the US, the Trump administration's questionable responses, the emerging economic crisis, the social crisis and so on, have all had a more serious psychological impact on people in the USA.
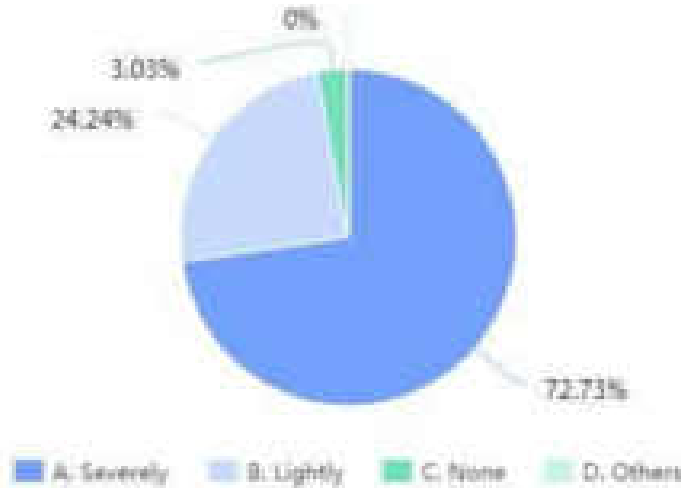
Fig. 13   Negative impact of American respondents affected by the pandemic

Of the respondents from North America, 70.37% say the pandemic had a "severe" negative impact on them, while 25.93% say it had been slightly affected, only 3.7% were unaffected. The proportion of those who are severely affected was well above the average in other regions (Fig. 14).

[①]Centers for Disease Control(CDC).   Cases in the U.S, Last updated on June 14, 2020,
https://www.cdc.gov/Coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/cases-in-us.html
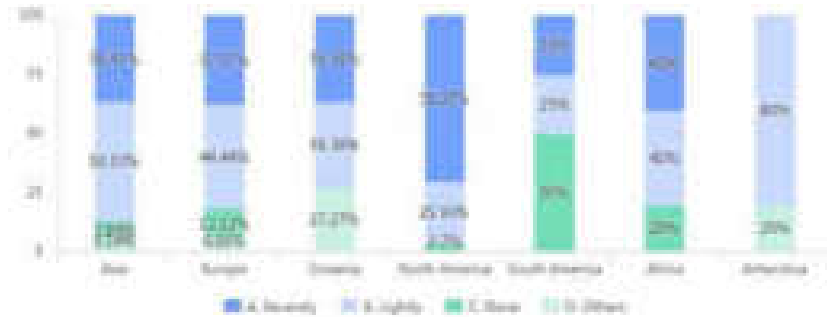
Fig. 14   Negative impact from 7 continents affected by the pandemic

1.2.3   Life attitude: cherish life

The COVID pandemic has a major impact on people's daily life but also has an impact on people's world outlooks and perspectives as well as life attitudes. Familiar daily life is no longer there, many people began to rethink their own opinions on life and others, in the effort to adjust and adapt to the new change.

1.   Facing the pandemic people cherish life more

60.7% of the respondents say they cherished life more than ever since the outbreak of the pandemic (Fig. 15). We noticed the respondents who think their lives are more seriously affected by the pandemic are more likely to cherish their lives more.
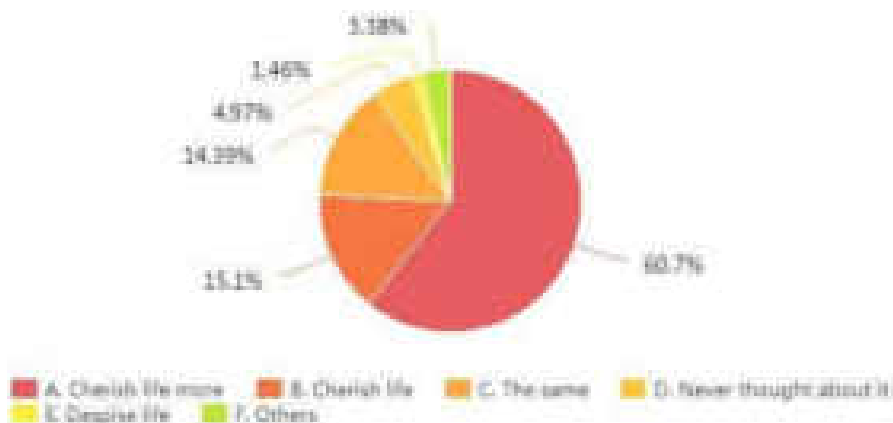
Fig. 15   The respondents' attitudes towards life
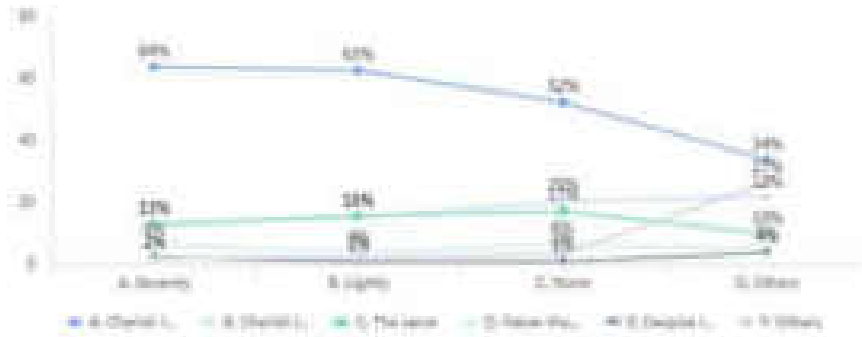
Fig. 16   A cross-analysis of the respondents' attitudes towards life and the degree to which life is affected

2.   Care for the confirmed patients

In response to the question "*If your relatives, colleagues, classmates or friends are unfortunately infected with COVID-19, what is your psychological reaction?*" 51.85% of the respondents say they would be worried, while 25.16% say they would be concerned, while only 0.57% thought they would be indifferent (Fig. 17). The pandemic has swept the world, bringing the shadow of death and illness to many families. Being aware of the seriousness of the pandemic not only makes many people start to reflect on their attitude towards life but also cherish life to others and care about the safety of relatives and friends around them.
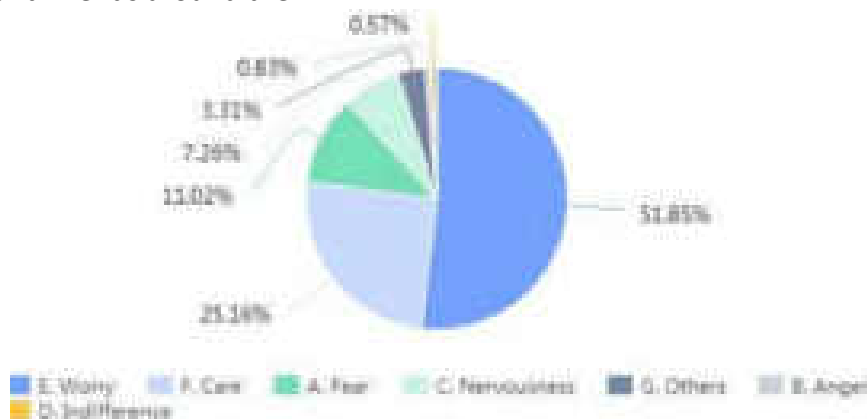
Fig. 17   Attitudes of the respondents if the relatives and friends are unfortunately infected with COVID-19

3.   Insufficient awareness of labeling/stigmatization

Nearly half of the respondents (47.64%) disagree the

labeling/stigmatization of COVID (Fig. 18).
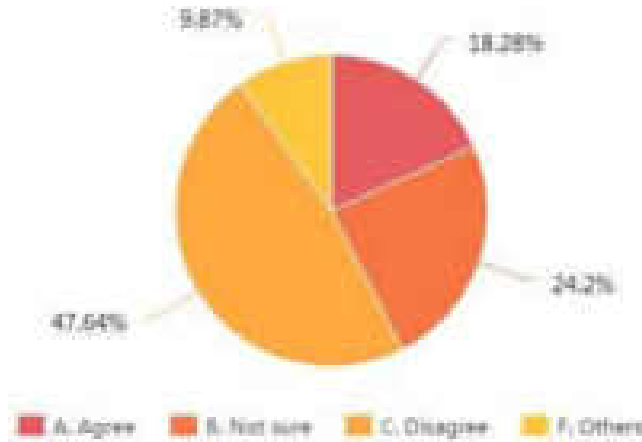
Fig. 18   The respondents' attitude to COVID labeling and stigmatization

Labeling/stigmatization is not conducive to real understanding and solving problems, but on the contrary it leads to more contradictions. One research points out, the pandemic outbreak may cause great fear to the public or specific communities, cause discrimination and insult to the infected and related communities, and delay the time for related groups to seek medical help, which may result in even worse consequences.[①]In this process, timely effective assessment and anti-discrimination measures are very important. 18.28% agree with stigma. Explain that there is still a lot of people around the world who do not have sufficient awareness of the negative social impact of stigma and labeling, in which case scientific and effective public education on disease and stigmatization is necessary.

"*When I went to the supermarket to buy vegetables, I was abused by a local person on the way, saying that I brought the virus and asked me to go back to my country, which is very hurting*" (from a Chinese student in Australia). In addition to being discriminated against because of Asian peoples, the interviewed teachers and students also mentioned that they were accused of wearing face masks.

It is worth noting that in this survey, 24.2% of the respondents

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[①] Person, Bobbie, et al. "Fear and stigma: the pandemic within the SARS outbreak." Emerging Infectious Diseases 10.2 (2004): 358.

are not sure about their attitude towards labeling/stigmatization, while 18.28% agree with labeling/stigmatization. It shows that in the world, there are still many people who do not have enough understanding of the negative social impact of labeling/stigmatization. In this case, it is necessary to carry out scientific and effective public education on COVID labeling/stigmatization.

1.3 HEIs' responses and actions to the pandemic

As HEIs are densely populated, the prevention and control of the COVID pandemic should be more stringent. Once the pandemic outbreak on campus, it will have a huge impact on each HEI and the whole society. Fortunately, almost all HEIs around the world have taken measures to protect the safety of students from different angles.

1.3.1 Crisis intervention: full action

Based on HEIs' own actual situation, such as the number and composition of the students, department setting, geographical location, building quantity and usage, HEIs should make responsive plans in line with the actual situation accordingly. HEIs should explore their own emergency management model, and establish the short-term as well long-term mechanism for emergency management of public health emergencies.

1. Extensive health data collection in HEIs

78.34% of the respondents say that their HEIs collected health data. Most of the information collected was conducted in the form of online surveys. In terms of regional location, the highest proportion of health information collected is from Asian respondents (80.06%), followed by those in North America (77.78%), while those in Europe (58.59%) and Oceania (36.36%) with the lowest proportion (Fig. 19). [①]

Regarding the specific information collection, one administrator

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[①] Since the samples are unevenly distributed on each continent, there may be large errors, and information is supplemented here only.

told the research group that the HEIs' health center is responsible for health data collection, not only for the collection and updating of health information for students/teachers but also giving detailed information descriptions, questions and recommendations on its website for COVID pandemic and other health needs.
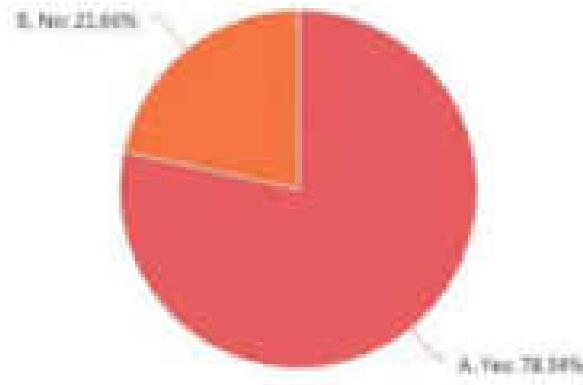
Fig. 19   HEIs collecting health data on the respondents

2.   Great support to HEIs' prevention for the pandemic

Facing the sudden threat of COVID-19, HEIs around the world have taken preventive measures to avoid large numbers of people gathering on campus by way of stopping face-to-face teaching and carrying on online courses and online services, in order to avoid cross-infection because of a large number of people gathering on campus. At the same time, through the wide dissemination of COVID information, medical guidance and others, students can understand the pandemic prevention from a more scientific channel, and reduce rumors and panic.

In this research, we found that the vast majority of the respondents (83.63%) expressed great support for their HEI's prevention actions, but 6.05% say they did not care. 1.85% said they opposed it (Fig. 20). Overall, HEIs' responses to the pandemic were greatly approved by students.
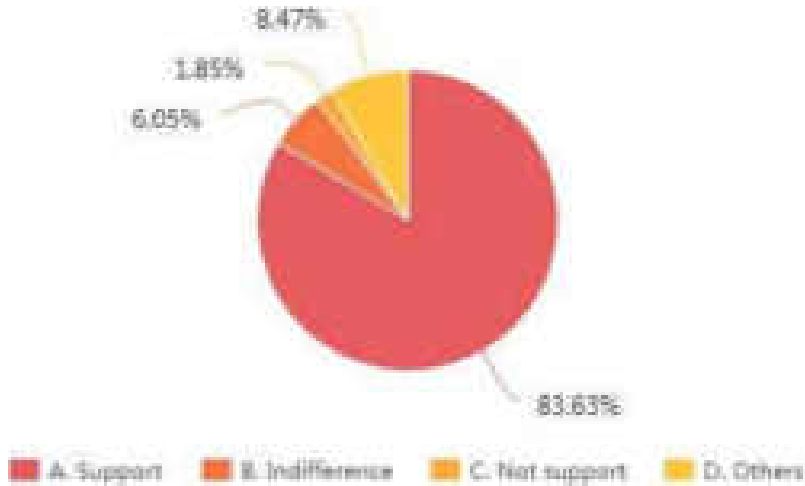
Fig. 20   The Respondents' attitudes to HEIs' prevention actions

3.   HEIs needs further improvements in comprehensive control

During the pandemic breakout, HEIs not only need to actively participate in pandemic prevention as important social organizations, but also need to maintain the basic functions of higher education as education and research organizations, and give necessary services and guidance to students when they need. As for question 24, "*from the overall perspective, do you think your HEI has done a good job in crisis management and responsive measures at the critical stage of public health emergency such as COVID-19*", 61.91% say HEIs are good, while 30.96% think that their HEIs only reach the average, and 2.68% choose "poor" (Fig. 21). When being asked about the shortcomings in HEIs' crisis intervention and measures, the widely criticized items include administrative efficiency, unskilled teachers, timeliness of replies, equipment of online classroom, etc.

D. Others: 4.46%
C. Poor: 2.68%
B. Average: 30.96%
A. Good: 61.91%
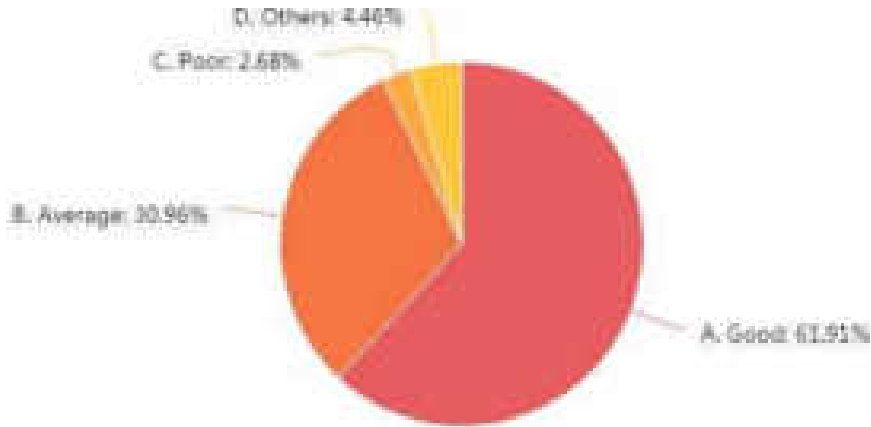
Fig. 21   Respondents' overall assessment of their HEIs' performance

1.3.2   Teaching guarantee: online teaching

1.   Online teaching ensures HEIs' basic functions

In order to ensure that HEIs can maintain the teaching and service functions during the social quarantine stage of the pandemic, HEIs have taken a variety of coping methods. 90.25% of the respondents say their HEIs have adopted teaching online. Online services (50.51%), free online open courses (48.22%), online research (36.5%) and other measures were also taken (Fig. 22). Only 6.43% say that their HEIs conduct "free open virtual/simulation experiments", which is a kind of technical achievement which uses virtual reality technology to let the experimenter simulate the experiment program and give relevant feedback through the program or/and network. [1]

A. Online teaching	1417		90.25%
B. Online scientific research	573		36.5%
C. Online services	793		50.51%
D. Free and open online courses	757		48.22%
E. Free open virtual/simulation experiments	101		6.43%

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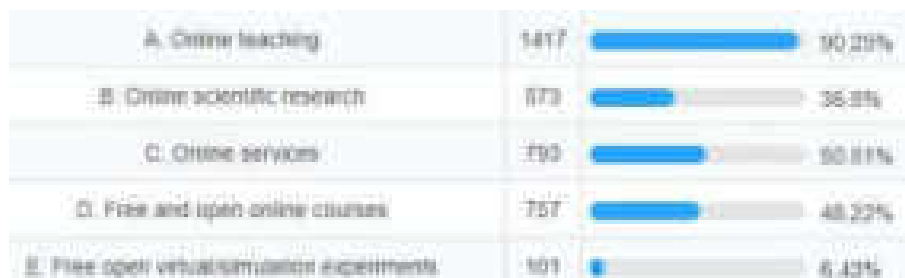
[1] Ferrero, Alessandro, and Vincenzo Piuri. "A simulation tool for virtual laboratory experiments in a WWW environment." IEEE Transactions on Instrumentation and Measurement 48.3 (1999): 741-746.

Fig. 22   HEIs' actions taken for "campus lockdown without stopping learning"

2.   Blended teaching (online +offline) is most popular

In terms of the teaching methods that HEIs can carry out during the pandemic, 71.78% favor blended teaching (online +offline), the most popular measures taken. At the same time, "limit the flow of people in libraries, lecture halls, laboratories, and other teaching places" (57.07%) and "teachers and students wear masks and other protective measures" (55.67%)are also welcomed and recognized by over half of the respondents. "Carry out "off-peak teaching' in a different time, venues and classification" (44.14%) and "student self-study while teachers answer his/her individual questions" (44.71%) are also supported. The number of respondents who choose "continue teaching as usual" is the fewest, accounting for only 15.48% (Fig. 23).

Fig. 23   Teaching methods to be taken during the pandemic

3.   Overall satisfaction with online teaching is not high

In terms of evaluation of online teaching, more than half of the respondents say that online teaching is "effective" (53.18%), 26.31% say it is just "OK", while the percentage of dissatisfied respondents is 14.68%, and 5.73% choose "others" (Fig. 24).
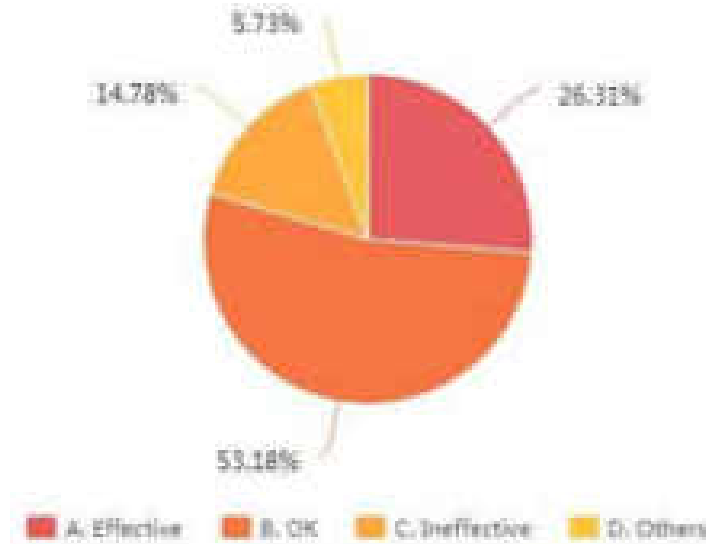
Fig. 24   Respondents' opinions on the efficiency of online teaching

The respondents' dissatisfaction with online teaching is mainly due to the following reasons:

1) Device failure: the students and teachers mentioned that due to network instability, the problems of cameras, computers and other devices, their classroom participation was interrupted to a certain extent. "*No matter how hard I tried, the computer at home can't open Microsoft Stream (video streaming service). Only after the course began for a long time, could I successfully open the course on the mobile phone.*"

2. Increased tasks: due to the nature of the online class, class discussion, testing, teacher's board book, experimental class are difficult to achieve. "*For my professional major where memory and thinking requirements are very high, no group discussion is really hard to be used to.*" Because of the lack of the efficiency of knowledge delivery and the timely examinations of the results, many classroom contents can only be changed into the way of homework after class to ensure the learning results. As a result, students generally complained that the task of homework increased: "*I only had three reports to write in a week, but after the online class, it became 10. My eyesight decreased.*"

3. Application use problems: many teachers complained that the use of distance courses and live-streaming software has become a big obstacle to online courses. Many of the teachers interviewed agreed

that remote video tools troublesome. Online learning have increased learning cost and failed to realize some basic functions of off-line learning, such as in-class interaction, course-ware screening, or collaborative discussion. One teacher said that because the PPT screening and online explanations were stuck at the same time, he had no choice but to record his own explanation in PPT and sent it to students in advance for learning.

1.3.3 Fighting the virus: solidarity as one

1. Stopping face-to-face teaching as the most supportive initiative

In terms of the measures taken, the largest number of the respondents choose "stopping face-to-face teaching" (71.27%) and "opening online courses" (69.04%). "Campus lockdown" and "transparency on COVID information news" were supported by more than 40%. It is well known that the global initiative is "online teaching" instead of "face-to-face teaching", which is generally supported by students and teachers in HEIs.

Fig. 25   Effective methods taken by HEIs during the pandemic

2. Quarantine at home is the most effective anti-pandemic measure

For effective measures to prevent the pandemic, 90.57% of the respondents choose "no going out, indoors/ quarantine" (1422

people), more than 80% are as followings, "being sure to wear a face mask when going out to prevent droplet infection", "paying attention to personal hygiene, wash your hands frequently", "no going to crowded places, cancel unnecessary gatherings", "opposing wildlife trade,avoid contact with wild animals" and "paying attention to my own health, for early detection, early quarantine and early treatment". Some (236) also choose "quarantine those who came back from the pandemic area in time"(Fig. 26).
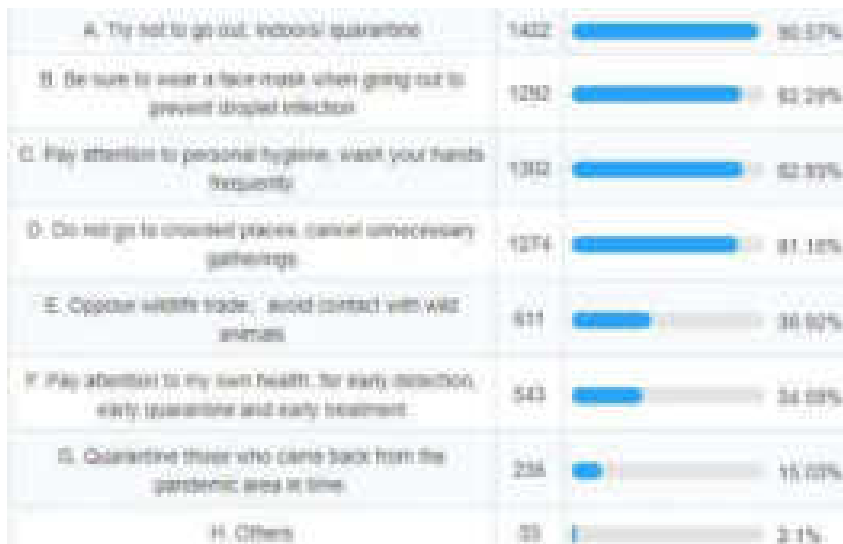
Fig. 26   The methods to effectively prevent the infection of the pandemic

1.4   HEIs' actions: sustainable development

As mentioned at the beginning, Max Friedman reinterpreted the abbreviations "B.C." (before Christ) and A.C.(after Christ), as "B.C." (before COVID-19) and A.C.(after COVID-19). That is to say, COVID -19 has divided the world into two different worlds before and after the pandemic. No matter we want to admit or not, the pandemic has profoundly changed the world we live in.

1.4.1   Risk control: being cautious

As the main battlefield to cultivate talents for higher education,

both the multiple geographical location of the persons and the feature of the open campus, make the persons' mobility more complex. So if HEIs make the decision for students to return to campus, the first importance premise is to make sure that the pandemic risk level in the region has been reduced to a safe degree, and must be equipped with effective medical resources and crisis intervention mechanism, in order to maximize the safety of teachers and students and eliminate the risk concerns of students and parents.

1. COVID carriers are considered the greatest risk factor

If returning to campus and resume classes normally, the greatest risk factor identified by the respondents is "potential COVID carriers" (77.52%, 1217 persons). "Large crowds gathering" (72.29%, 1135 persons) ranks the second place. 40.13% worry about "inadequate supply of medical resources" and 35.8% care about "inadequate sanitation and disinfection measures"(Fig. 27). Therefore, an important prerequisite for\ campus re-opening is that HEIs are well prepared for pandemic prevention, crowds control, medical resources and the improvement of crisis mechanism. At the same time, through appropriate publicity means, HEIs must ensure that relevant measures are understood and implemented by teachers and students.

Fig. 27   Awareness of back-to-campus risk factors

2. Half respondents cannot accept the returners from high-risk countries/territories

As for Q. 25, "*What is your reaction to the returning students from the regions/countries with a high risk of a pandemic to continue*

learning or return to campus?" the majority of the respondents say it is "unacceptable" (44.71%), 37.13% are "acceptable" while 7.9% are "indifferent"(Fig. 28). In order to restore the daily functions, HEIs need to fully consider the concerns of teachers and students in this aspect, provide necessary instructions, rules or guidance to ensure the smooth development of teaching and research, and to avoid the stigmatization of some communities to the greatest extent. For example, according to the prevention rules of the local community, HEIs must carry out necessary and periodic medical tests and quarantine, require teachers and students to wear protective measures, carry out popular science education on COVID infection and protection, etc.
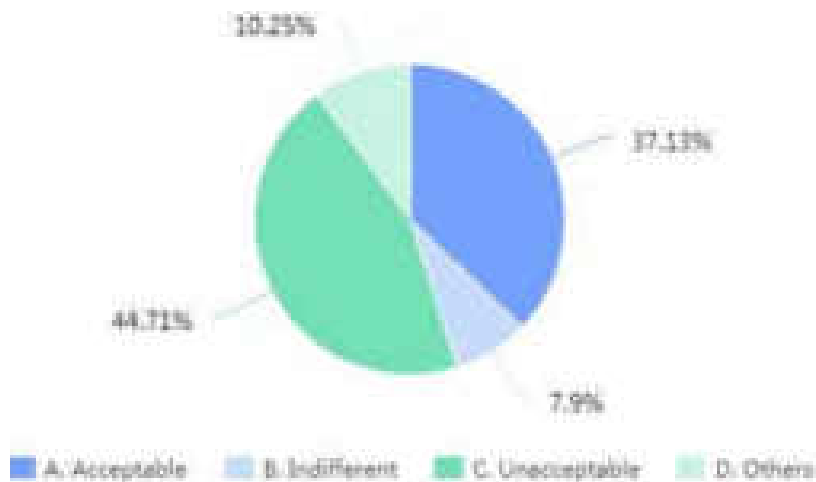
Fig. 28   Acceptance of the returners from the regions/countries with a high risk of the pandemic

1.4.2   Recovery function: guarding against the unexpected

1.   It is necessary to provide PTSD counseling

For everyone to be able to learning/work and life in a better state, HEIs must consider the psychological impact on students and teachers after the public health crisis, and it is essential to provide psychological counseling to those in need.

As for Q. 29, "*do you think it is necessary for HEIs to take*

measures to the students with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)", 74.14% think it is "necessary", 16.88% think it may be "not really necessary", only 2.99% think it is "not necessary"(Fig. 29). Some people will have serious psycho-physiological and behavioral reactions after going through a public health crisis. They often have more personal experience of the crisis or have trauma. Their traumatic experience will lead to psychological diseases such as PTSD and severe depression. In this case, professional psychotherapy is necessary.[1]
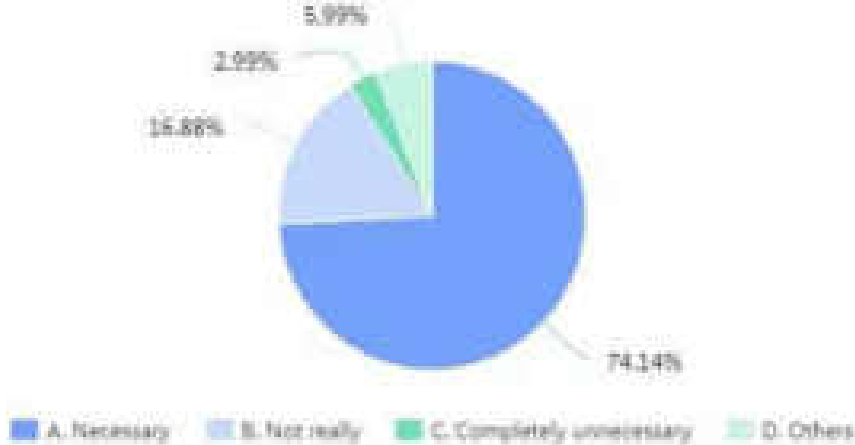
Fig. 29   Opinions on the necessity for students' PTSD counseling

It's worth noting that 93.94% of respondents from the U.S. say it's necessary for HEIs to take measures to the students with PTSD, which is higher than the average survey (Fig. 30). It is consistent with the above-mentioned fact that U.S. respondents say that their learning/work is more affected by the pandemic, and severely affected U.S. respondents may be more likely to need psychological treatments associated with it. At the same time, psychological therapy in the U.S. is more popular than that in Asian countries/territories.

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[1] Friedman, Matthew J., et al. "Considering PTSD for DSM-5." Depression and anxiety 28.9 (2011): 750-769.
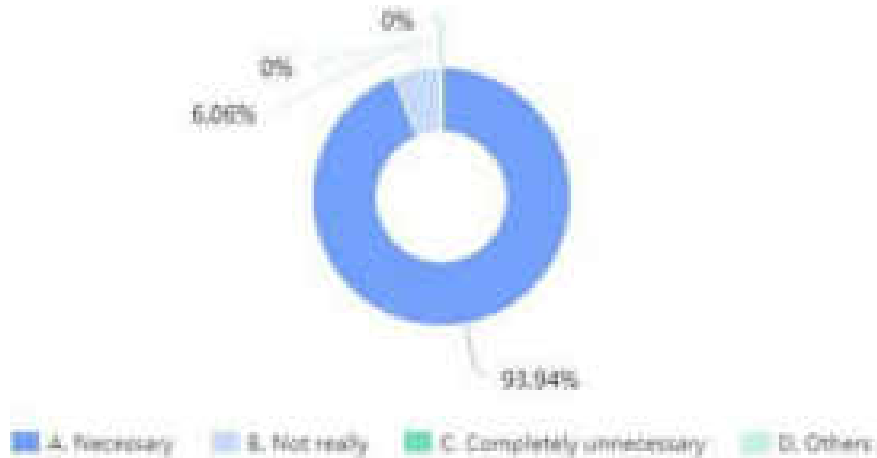
Fig. 30   U.S. respondents' thought of the need for PTSD counseling

2. Combination of continuous pandemic prevention and offline education is widely recognized

If HEIs re-open campus for usual teaching in the post-pandemic era, it is necessary for HEIs to take crucial preventive measures to ensure that the normal learning/work and life do not bring health risks to the teachers and students in the HEIs. In terms of the measures to be taken, most respondents choose "Overall deployment: continuous measures to fight against pandemic" (73.69%), "strongly encourage blended teaching (offline + online)"(72.55%). Over half of the respondents choose "online management, ability-building of public health emergencies" (67.01%). "ensure an adequate supply of medical material" (64.9%) and "pay attention to students' psychological state, provide psychological consultation and online consultation services" (57.39%) (Fig. 31).

Fig. 31   Measures should be taken by HEIs in the post-pandemic era

In the post-pandemic era, HEIs not only need to fully consider the needs of teachers and students in the physical and mental health needs of teachers and students, equipped with pandemic prevention measures, crisis intervention mechanisms, reasonable and effective medical services but also need to respond in teaching. For example, for students unable to return to campus due to travel restrictions to provide appropriate solutions or certain online teaching and service channels to ensure their rights and interests. [1]

At the same time, the extensive online education practice also provides an empirical basis for the next step of teaching reform in HEIs. "We can never ever return to the original state of teaching and learning before the pandemic outbreak because online teaching integrated with "Internet +' "intelligence +' technology has become an important development direction of higher education in China and even the whole world."[2] In the post-pandemic era, online teaching needs to emphasize 5 keywords: quality, open, share, responsibility and love. These 5 keywords are the unified standard for us to build an international online teaching platform for higher education in the future.

1.4.3   Looking into the future: a difficult and long

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[1] Statement by the Ministry of Education of China ()

[2] Wu Yan, general director of the Department of higher education of the Ministry of Education in China. To accelerate the transformation of online teaching from "freshness" to "new normal" [EB / OL]. 2020-04-28, source: Xinhuanet, http://edu.hebnews.cn/2020-04/28/content_7817736.htm

journey

1. Internationalization of education faced new

challenges and opportunities

Internationalization of higher education has been attacked in the short term, but not in the long term. During the pandemic, with the widespread adoption of online forms of teaching and it is nearly at the end of the semester, many overseas students choose to return to their home country for such reasons as safety concerns and reuniting with their families. In this case, 64.45% say the pandemic will impact the internationalization of higher education, 30.64% of respondents think it will "yes in the short term, but not in the long term" while 4.71% do not think there will be any impact (Fig. 32).
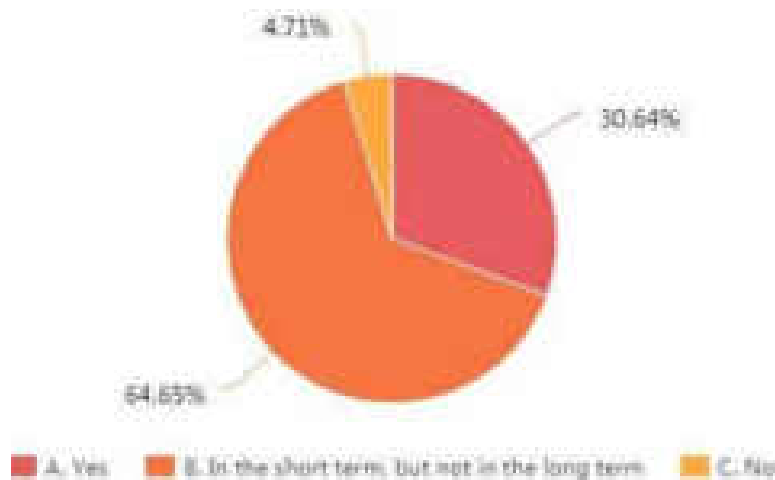
Fig. 32   Opinions on COVID-19's impact on internationalization of higher education

The research team believes that the pandemic not only reminds us of the importance of online education but also shows us the unprecedented international cooperation, international exchanges and the importance of international education. With the wide spreading of the pandemic, in many countries there emerge socioeconomic crisis, nationalism, populism, "anti-globalization", which not only has caused negative experiences to many communities but also brought new impacts to the world's cooperation, competition and population mobility. The post-pandemic era may lead to the

restructure the political landscape and reorganize the Geo-strategy.

These new variables are bound to affect the internationalization of higher education in the following 5 aspects. First, extensive cooperation and information exchange among countries have played a very important role in the fight against the pandemic, mankind is a closely linked community of destiny, in order to more effectively prevent and control the world health crisis in the future, scientific and technological cooperation and information exchange in HEIs is very necessary. Second, quarantine and restrictions of population mobility brought by the pandemic prevention, to a certain extent, will have a short-term impact on HE internationalization, but after the pandemic, with the re-opening of student mobility, HE internationalization should increase and in the long run. Third, the extensive practice of online education has opened up a new path for global resource sharing. MOOCs and online courses relying on online platforms are facing new development opportunities. Fourth, from the perspective of teaching content, international understanding and world citizenship education are crucial to the cultivation of ideal, responsible, cooperative young talents. Fifth, in the scenario of "anti-globalization", active public education and social support are also necessary for HEIs' sustainable development in the post-pandemic era, in order to ensure that students are treated fairly and justly in campus life.

At a Webinar on the internationalization of higher education, Peggy Blumenthal, senior counselor to the President at the Institute of International Education (IIE), emphasized that online education is important, but campus life is essential to the learning experience of international students. The associate vice president at Melbourne Deakin University said, "the pandemic outbreak reminds HEIs to create a reliable image of education providers, build good reputations, especially to show diversity, openness and humanistic care for international students." [1]

2. HEIs' timely responses to prevent public health crisis is critical

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[1] CCG Webinar. How will COVID change international education? 2020-04-18, CCG.

HEIs' role in preventing and controlling public health crisis should not be underestimated. As for Q. 30, "*What do you think HEIs can do during the prevention and control of public emergencies like COVID-19*?" most students believe that HEIs should respond promptly, "to require students to stay indoors, ensure they are not getting infected" (79.75%). "Establishing prevention guidelines to educate students" (73.12%) ranks the second place. "Conducting scientific research to combat COVID-19"(58.92%) and "Medical teachers and students actively participate in front-line prevention and control work"(47.9%) are also supported by the respondents(Fig. 33).

Fig. 33   HEIs' actions to be taken during the prevention and control of public emergencies

3.   Higher education plays an important role in responding to public health crises

In the Open Question section, to the question of "*What do you want to say facing public health emergency such as COVID-19?*", most respondents gave positive answers such as "Together", "Go, Go, the whole world" "Cheer up" "Stay Strong" "Come on" "Calm" and so on (Fig. 34). The role and responsibility of higher education that should be borne in the pandemic are also widely mentioned.[1] Crisis education, health education and others are also the key words widely mentioned. Many respondents say that in response to similar public health emergencies, HEIs have the right and obligation to start with

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[1] Education-related teachers and students are the largest professional source of the sample

education so that more students can protect themselves more scientifically and effectively and reduce panic and other psychological problems caused by the crisis.

Fig. 34   Word cloud of the question about the opinions facing the COVID pandemic

1.5   Survey finding's and reflections

1.5.1   Survey founding on the COVID impact

Through the survey and in-depth interview in HEIs, this research analyzes the individual and HEIs' impact of the COVID pandemic, and draws the following three brief conclusions:

1. The impact of Individual Psychological and Behavioral Responses during the pandemic is wide and enormous. **First, the mental state of individuals has dramatic changes**: 1) "fear" is the first reaction to most people; 2) the respondents have crisis awareness and care about others' safety; 3) the mentality of half respondents is in a normal state; 4) 30% of the respondents are still unable to focus on learning/work and life due to stress. **Second, the individuals' behavioral patterns are home quarantine**: 1) most respondents choose to stay where they are; 2) most respondents are learning at home; 3) learning/work at home negatively affects most respondents; 4) the pandemic impact on the respondents' daily lives in the U.S. is particularly obvious. **Third, the respondents' life attitude it to cherish**

life more: 1) facing the pandemic people cherish life more; 2) they care for the confirmed patients; 3) they have insufficient awareness of labeling/stigmatization.

2. HEIs' responses and actions to the pandemic are active and supported. First, HEIs' crisis interventions are in full action: 1) HEIs actively collect extensive health data and information; 2) great support to HEIs' prevention for the pandemic; 3) HEIs need further improvements in comprehensive control. **Second, HEIs' teaching guarantee is online teaching**: 1) online teaching ensures HEIs' basic functions; 2) blended teaching (online +offline) is most popular; 3) overall satisfaction with online teaching is not high. **Third, to fight the pandemic HEIs are united as one:** 1) stopping face-to-face teaching is the most supportive initiative; 2) quarantine at home is the most effective anti-pandemic measure.

3. HEIs' actions in the post-pandemic era is sustainable development. **First, the risk control is cautious:** 1) COVID carriers are considered the greatest risk factor; 2) half respondents cannot accept the returners from high-risk countries/territories. **Second, the recovery function is guarding against the unexpected:** 1) it is necessary to provide PTSD counseling; 2) the combination of continuous pandemic prevention and offline education is widely recognized. **Third, looking into the future is on a difficult and long journey:** 1) internationalization of education faced new challenges and opportunities; 2) HEIs' timely responses to prevent public health crisis is critical; 3) higher education plays an important role in responding to public health crises.

1.5.2 Reflections for HE sustainable development

The COVID pandemic pressed the "pause button" to suspend our learning/work and daily life and at the same time also open the window of reflections. We have seen the advantages, disadvantages and potentiality of HEIs in dealing with public health emergencies. It can be seen that this public health emergency has brought negative impact to people, but also brought us deep self-reflection, so that people pay more attention to mental health, life safety, care lives and social justice.

In the future, we must deeply reflect on what HEIs and individuals acted before COVID (B.C), what they are acting during COVID (D.C.) and what they will do after COVID-19(A.C.). We keep an open and

inclusive mind, effectively play the special role of higher education, and make contributions to the sustainable development of higher education.

1. To make future plan to improve educational governance capacity in the "Post Crisis Era", and make modern system of educational governance to cope with the public social crisis. In response to this pandemic, the responsive measures of national education systems and national ministries of education in various countries are temporary and unconventional to a large extent, which reflects that different educational governance in different countries do not have the ability to deal with the public social crisis, including the ability to warn and respond to the crisis. **First of all**, we should enhance the ability to judge and research education crisis. **Second**, we should improve the ability to cope with education crisis. **Third,** higher education should give full play to crisis awareness and crisis ability to deal with the public social crisis. Only in this way, can education governance change from fuzzy to clear state, from uncertain to definite condition, can we highlight the characteristics of legalization, institutionalization and standardization of education governance system, and establish a normal crisis response mechanism for future sustainable development.

2. **HEIs must cultivate talents with "macro-education concept" from the perspective of the whole society**. The COVID breakout reminds HEIs to think about education reform and development from the perspective of the whole society, and to set up "macro-education concept", which is, to "observe education outside HEIs and education". The function and value of education is not only to accumulate human capital, but also to cultivate social civilization, establish scientific and global perspective, possess scientific knowledge and global citizen consciousness. Education contents should not only include book knowledge, but also the inheritance of human civilization and moral education. Education forms should not only be campus education, but also social education, family education, etc. Education venues should not only be in classrooms on campus, but also be in "virtual classrooms in the air" and in various educational providers. Therefore, HEIs must cultivate talents with "macro-education concept" from the perspective of the whole society in terms of teaching purposes, contents, forms, venues and others.

3. Higher education must further strengthen "education

community of shared future for mankind". The COVID outbreak in the world reminds everyone that the world is an inseparable whole. Virus is the common enemy to all mankind, without national boundaries nor nationalities. No country can stand outside and be independent. The rapid spread of the pandemic in the world has rung the alarm bell. Many countries that fail to respond in time and take preventive measures pay a huge price and experience great pain. Globalization connects people all over the world, let us share both prosperity and sufferings. The fate of mankind is closely intertwined with both happiness and bitterness. HEIs need to strengthen the global vision of "global village citizens" and "a community of shared future for mankind".

Let's call for responsibility and solidarity, let's fight against COVID for a better tomorrow!

II. Survey of the COVID Impact on Quality Assurance Agencies

Project Title:

APQN Survey of the COVID Impact on Quality Assurance Agencies (QAAs)

Leader:

Galina Motova

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Consultants:

Jianxin Zhang, Galina Motova, Jagannath Patil, Deepthi Bandara, I-Jung Grace Lu, Farida Nurmanbetova, Pingping Liu*Fund supporter:*

The Project was funded by the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (Code No.: APQN2020-02).

Duration:

April to July, 2020

Executive summary

The education system like many other spheres faced unprecedented challenges in the times of crisis. When it became clear that COVID was spreading fast throughout the world, countries rang the alarm and started to close enterprises, schools and universities. National education authorities also experienced complicated problems concerning stabilization of the educational process in HEIs; and quality assurance agencies (QAAs) had the issues with maintaining the education quality.

In May APQN initiated a project on studying practices and possible approaches to maintaining activities of accreditation agencies and HEIs in the time of COVID19.As a participant of this project NCPA developed and delivered a survey of QAAs of the Pacific region and European countries. The survey was sent to 62 European (ENQA and CEENQA members) and 71 Asian QAAs (APQN members). 34 European and 32 Asian agencies responded to the survey.

The survey gave an opportunity to make certain conclusions about the possibilities of the maintenance and development, advantages and disadvantages of the current working conditions.

2.1   Introduction

The education system like many other spheres faced unprecedented challenges in the times of crisis. When it became clear that COVID was spreading fast throughout the world, countries rang the alarm and started to close enterprises, schools and universities. Within several weeks tens of thousands of higher education institutions (HEIs) ceased their regular activities and sent hundreds of millions of students home, many of whom switched to online classes. Universities and colleges were urged to migrate to the unknown work mode and spend a significant amount of money on transfer to online studies. All over the world HEIs canceled international travels and exchange program mes that led to the halt of research. Many of them

faced the problem of learning outcomes assessment, cancellation or postponement of graduation exams, and applicants' admission for the next academic year.

National education authorities also experienced complicated problems concerning stabilization of the educational process in HEIs; and quality assurance agencies (QAAs) had the issues with maintaining the education quality. The following two issues require an early resolution in times of isolation: how to maintain quality of educational programmes delivery and educational process in whole, and how to provide quality of the review and accreditation of higher education institutions and programmes.

On March 26, 2020, the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) published a statement on COVID pandemic, where peculiarities of work of the association and accreditation agencies during the pandemic are explained. ENQA encourages its members to show flexibility in their own review processes, adapt their current activities where necessary and seek ways to support higher education institutions, who are facing an unprecedented disruption to their normal operations.

The associations of accreditation agencies (INQAAHE, ENQA, APQN, CHEA) have also committed to help their members to keep their activities and have shown good practices using the opportunities of the Internet (webinars, online conferences). Such a support is especially important for those agencies whose sources of financing are accreditation and project activities. It is necessary to not only maintain the education quality, periodicity and quality of accreditation procedures, but to keep the staff of accreditation agencies.

In May APQN initiated a project on studying practices and possible approaches to maintaining activities of accreditation agencies and HEIs in the time of COVID19.As a participant of this project NCPA developed and delivered a survey of   QAAs of the Pacific region and European countries.

34 European QAAs   32 Asian QAAs
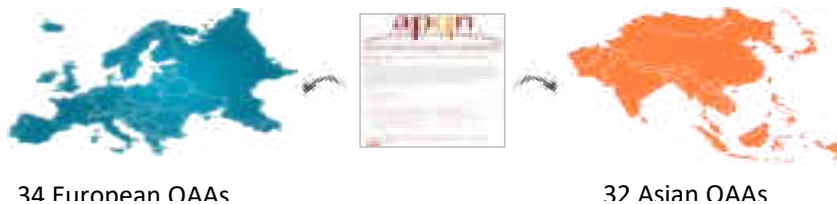
A questionnaire containing a list of questions on agencies' activities during the pandemic was developed for the study. Multiple choices as well as own responses were available for each of the questions. The outcomes are presented in tables and diagrams. The findings were a basis for a more thorough analysis of the agencies' performance. The survey was sent to 62 European (ENQA and CEENQA members) and 71 Asian QAAs (APQN members). 34 European and 32 Asian agencies responded to the survey. Since only a half of the participants responded to the survey, the obtained results cannot be considered comprehensive. However, the survey gave an opportunity to make certain conclusions about the possibilities of maintenance and development, advantages and disadvantages of the current working conditions.

2.2 Results of the survey

2.2.1 Impact of COVID on the work of QAAs

Since offline activities became impossible, the majority of the organizations switched to online work, and quality assurance agencies were not an exception. The results of the survey show that more than a half of the institutions are working remotely (73.5% - Europe, 51.6% - Asia). Some have combined office hours and remote work, and a few temporarily suspended their activities.

Europe

Options	Responses	Percentage
We are working remotely	25	73.5%
Other option	6	17.6%
We continue working in the office	2	5.8%
We temporarily suspended our activities	1	2.9%

Asia

Options	Responses	Percentage
We are working remotely	16	51.6%
We continue working in the office	7	22.5%
Other option	5	16.1%
We temporarily suspended our activities	3	9.6%

2.2.2 The biggest challenges QAAs are facing

The agencies were asked about the biggest challenges they face when working remotely, and most of them noted that it is difficult to ensure quality of education while conducting external reviews remotely (45.1% - Europe, 37% - Asia) and communication with coworkers became harder (38.7% - Europe, 44.4% - Asia). The participants also reported that the tools and technologies became an issue. Only three institutions in total noted that they do not face any challenges while working remotely.

The answers to the "*other options*" included:

- enabling   all stakeholders to participate;
- no external review is conducted at the moment;
- national regulations require site visits;
- in some cases online site visits are used;
- preparation for the site-visit is more time-consuming and there are elements which are difficult to be assessed remotely, for example, resources;
- educational organizations suspended their self-assessment during quarantine;
- we are working more than schedules.

2.2.3   COVID Impact on financial sustainability of QAAs

In order to understand the impact of the virus on the financial sustainability of the agencies, they were asked about the sources of financing. Most of the European respondents are state financed (73,5%) and most of the Asian providers are self-financing (67,7%).
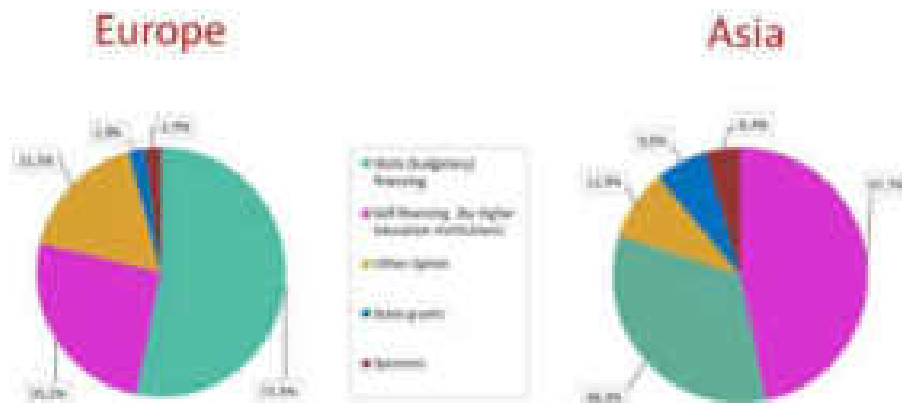
As many events were canceled and activities of the agencies were restricted, the virus influenced their financial sustainability. For the majority of European providers the incomes remained unchanged (50% - Europe, 45.1% - Asia), and for most of the Asian institutions the incomes decreased (41.1% - Europe, 48.3% - Asia). One of the Asian providers noted that the incomes even increased during the

pandemic.
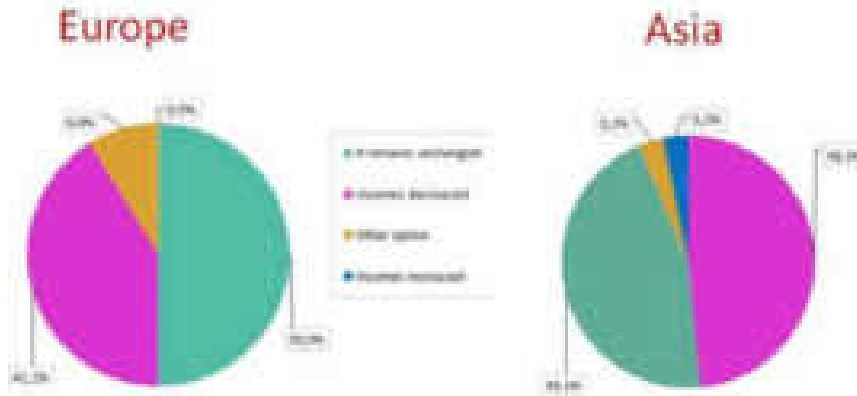
2.2.4 Ways of conducting external reviews in the current situation

Accreditation of higher education institutions requires site-visits, which became impossible due to the restrictions, and online site-visits are more complicated in organization, which is why most of the agencies temporarily suspended external reviews (35.2% - Europe, 41.9% - Asia), while others decided to conduct the reviews remotely (32.3% - Europe, 16.1% - Asia). Some of the agencies will conduct follow-up site visits to the institution within a reasonable period of time after remote reviews (5.8% - Europe, 12.9% - Asia). The general answer for the "*other option*" was that some external reviews are conducted remotely (for example, those that do not require international experts) and some are postponed for a safer period.

Europe

Options	Responses	Percentage
We temporarily suspended external reviews	12	35.2%
We conduct external reviews remotely	11	32.3%
Other option	7	20.5%
We conduct site-visits observing all safety precautions	2	5.8%
We will conduct follow-up site-visits to the institution within a reasonable period of time after remote reviews	2	5.8%

Asia

Options	Responses	Percentage
We temporarily suspended external reviews	13	41.9%
We conduct external reviews remotely	5	16.1%
Other option	5	16.1%
We conduct site-visits observing all safety precautions	4	12.9%
We will conduct follow-up site-visits to the institution within a reasonable period of time after remote reviews	4	12.9%

2.2.5 Tools for conducting external reviews remotely used by QAAs

Modern technologies have become a great solution to the problem of conducting external reviews in the current conditions. The agencies use video conference calls, e-mails, document reviews, phone calls, and a few have developed new tools and policies. Others do not employ any tools as they temporarily suspended external reviews. As for the "other option" section, agencies hold web-conferences of peers/experts before the session with a HEI and are thinking on the options for the future.
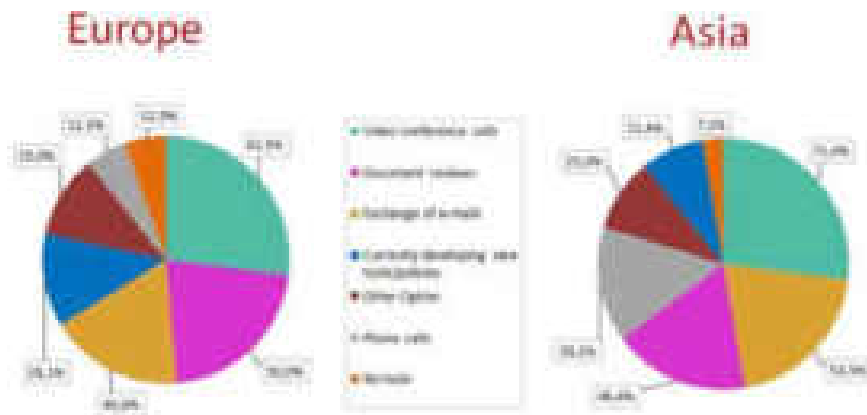
Europe

Options	Responses	Percentage
Video conference calls	20	62.5%
Document reviews	16	50%
Exchange of e-mails	13	40.6%
Currently developing new tools/policies	9	28.1%
Other option	8	25%
Phone calls	4	12.5%
No tools	4	12.5%

Asia

Options	Responses	Percentage
Video conference calls	20	71.4%
Exchange of e-mails	15	53.5%
Document reviews	13	46.4%
Phone calls	11	39.2%
Other option	7	25%
Currently developing new tools/policies	6	21.4%
No tools	2	7.1%

2.2.6 Measures taken by QAAs to cope with the challenges

When organizations were asked about the measures they take to cope with the challenges, almost all of them answered that they canceled major events, which, obviously, cannot be held in the

current situation. Agencies additionally inform their employees on the ways of avoiding infection, halt business travel and adopt new health and safety precautions (i.e. hand sanitizer, masks, gloves), provide staff with the office computer equipment. Some respondents also mentioned remote work as a way of coping with the issues.

Europe

Options	Responses	Percentage
Canceling major events	33	97%
Halting business travel	32	94.1%
Adopting new health and safety procedures (i.e. hand sanitizer, masks, gloves)	26	76.4%
Informing employees on the ways of avoiding infection	25	73.5%
Other option	6	17.6%
No measures taken	1	2.9%

Asia

Options	Responses	Percentage
Adopting new health and safety procedures (i.e. hand sanitizer, masks, gloves)	26	83.8%
Informing employees on the ways of avoiding infection	25	80.6%
Halting business travel	24	77.4%
Canceling major events	22	70.9%
Other option	5	16.1%

No measures taken   0   0%

2.2.7   Status of accreditation decisions made

remotely during COVID outbreak

Ensuring quality of education while conducting external reviews remotely has become the biggest problem for the agencies. This raises the question of whether the accreditation decisions made remotely are valid. More than a half of the European agencies (58.8%) consider them valid, while Asian agencies consider them valid with some restrictions (45.1%). Those who chose the "*other option*" noted that they do not make any decisions as external reviews are not conducted.
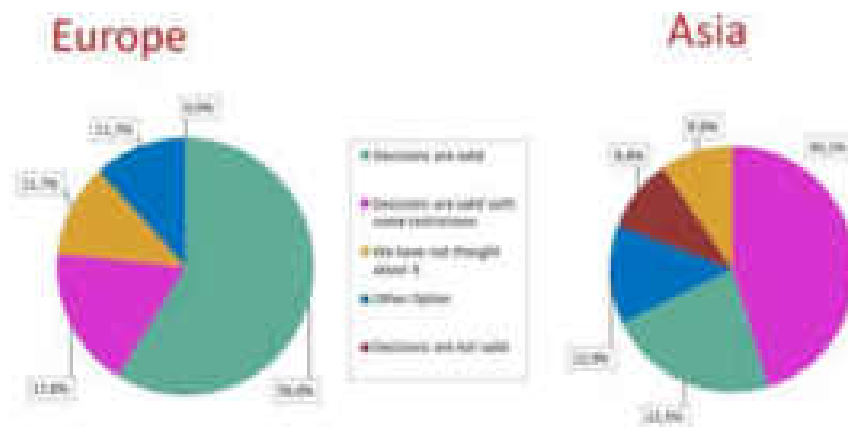
Europe

Options	Responses	Percentage
Decisions are valid	20	58.8%
Decisions are valid with some restrictions	6	17.6%
We have not thought about it	4	11.7%
Other option	4	11.7%
Decisions are not valid	0	0%

Asia

Options	Responses	Percentage
Decisions are valid with some restrictions	14	45.1%

Decisions are valid	7	22.5%
Other option	4	12.9%
Decisions are not valid	3	9.6%
We have not thought about it	3	9.6%

2.2.8   QAAs plans in case the COVID Impact goes beyond 3 months

The agencies were also asked about their plans for the future in case if the COVID Impact goes beyond 3 months from the time changes were implemented in the agency. The majority noted that they are developing short term (3months) interventions to continue work (35.2% - Europe, 29% - Asia). Some will continue as they are doing now, others are developing medium and long term interventions to continue work. One of the agencies is developing short term (almost weekly) interventions to continue work following the government decisions.
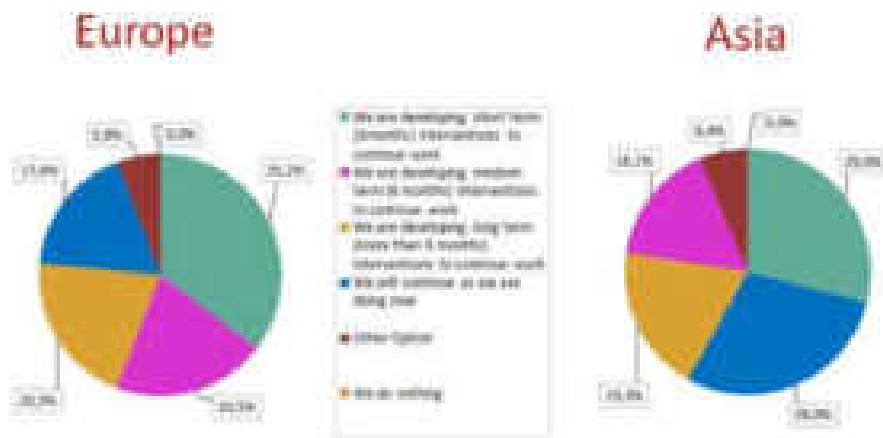
Europe

Options	Responses	Percentage
We are developing short term (3 months) interventions to continue work	12	35.2%
We are developing medium term (6 months) interventions to continue work	7	20.5%
We are developing long term (more than 6 months) interventions to continue	7	20.5%

work

We will continue as we are doing now	6	17.6%
Other option	2	5.8%
We do nothing	0	0%

Asia

Options	Responses	Percentage
We are developing short term (3 months) interventions to continue work	9	29%
We will continue as we are doing now	9	29%
We are developing long term (more than 6 months) interventions to continue work	6	19.3%
We are developing medium term (6 months) interventions to continue work	5	16.1%
Other option	2	6.4%
We do nothing	0	0%

Conclusion

The COVID pandemic has become a challenge that no one could expect and no one had time to prepare for. Quality assurance agencies have been forced to quickly switch to online accreditation. It has resulted in new issues and the use of other methods and tools to carry out evaluation activities. The main problem is that it is more difficult to conduct external reviews in the current situation as it is time-consuming, requires a lot of preliminary work, and offline site-visits, which give a lot of information about a HEI, cannot be conducted. The quality of the review heavily depends on technologies and equipment (Internet, quality of connection). There is also a risk of decline in demand for accreditation procedures due to economic consequences of the pandemic. Another matter of concern is whether online accreditation would be used in the future and whether accreditation decisions made during the pandemic would be considered fully valid as they were considered before the virus

outbreak. However, the situation does not have only negative consequences. The survey shows that the majority of QAAs managed the situation quite successfully despite all negative consequences. Modern technologies allowed agencies to continue their activities, though in a completely different way. The whole situation could lead to some changes in the sphere of quality assurance, and the tools that are currently used by the agencies could be also applied in the future.

III. Survey of the Effectiveness of Online Teaching in the HEIs

Project Title:

Survey of the Effectiveness of Online Teaching in the HEIs during the COVID Pandemic

Leader:

Jianxin Zhang

Authors:

Jianxin Zhang   Panpan Huang   Zhijie Xiang

Consultants:

Jianxin Zhang, Galina Motova, Jagannath Patil, Deepthi Bandara, I-Jung Grace Lu, Farida Nurmanbetova, Pingping Liu*Fund supporter:*

Duration:

June to October, 2020

Executive summary

In 2020, the COVID Pandemic swept the world mercilessly. Higher education institutions (HEIs), in strict accordance with the requirements and deployment of education authorities, actively build online teaching platform, and strive to minimize the impact of the pandemic on teaching. However, the "rush to start" of online teaching has led to worrying teaching effectiveness. Therefore, the Education Committee of China Democratic League (CDL) in Yunnan Province in China, supported by Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN), carried out a survey of the effectiveness of online teaching in HEIs during the COVID Pandemic. Based on the survey data of 4650 valid respondents from 23 provinces/regions, we analyze the effectiveness of online teaching during COVID pandemic. The results show, there exits such effectiveness problems as "insufficient preparation before class, teaching accidents in class and lack of feedback after class". Therefore, we put forward 5 suggestions to improve the effectiveness of online teaching: (1) students' autonomous learning ability; (2) teachers' information literacy; (3) new teaching idea between teachers and students; (4) blended teaching mode, and (5) teaching assessment methods, which aims to provide useful reference for improving online-teaching quality during public emergencies in the post-pandemic era.

3.1 Introduction

From the beginning of 2020, the COVID Pandemic swept the world overnight, which has a great impact on world education. In order to maintain normal teaching-learning activities, online teaching has been carried out all over the world. In China, in response to the call of the Ministry of Education of "*stop face-to-face classes but never stop teaching, stop face-to-face classes but never stop learning*", the

HEIs have organized online teaching with the largest scale, the largest number of online courses and the largest number of students in history in a very short period of time.

Teaching is a teacher-led teaching and student-centered learning activity. It is a bilateral activity between teachers' teaching and students' learning, in which teachers and students (referring as "T&S") are the two key elements of teaching success. The "hasty online teaching" is an emergency measure forced by the COVID pandemic. We can say, it made the popularization of online teaching advance for decades. Its mode and system have been presented to the "emergency stage" before it is fully perfected. T&S are also "forced to accept" the transformation of teaching-learning form without adequate preparation. Naturally, the effectiveness of online teaching has been questioned in such pandemic context.

Therefore, the Education Committee of China Democratic League(CDL) in Yunnan Province in China, supported by Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN), carried out a survey of the effectiveness of online teaching in HEIs during the COVID Pandemic. This paper analyzes the effectiveness of online teaching from three dimensions: before class, during class and after class; later on it discusses how to ensure and improve the effectiveness of online teaching in the post-pandemic era.

3.2   Survey data from 23 provinces/regions in China

The research group used Delphi Method (also known as "expert survey method") to design the questionnaire. Through the steps of "sorting → inducting → summarizing → feedback → re-consulting → re-summarizing → re-feedback → consensus", the research group successively consulted the opinions of relevant experts for three times, and completed the questionnaire, which consists of four parts in 28 questions (Table 1).

Table 1   Dimensions of the Survey of effectiveness of online teaching during the COVID-19

Primary dimension	Secondary dimension	Third dimensions	Survey No.
Basic information		age, discipline/subject category, identity, professional title and HEIs' type	1-5
Facts	Before class	problems in the use of Internet platform, HEIs' support services for T&S, communication between T&S	6-8
	In class	composition of online class, online teaching mode, learning engagement	9-11
	After class	students learning outcomes(SLOs), assessment of T&S, teaching reflection	12-16
Attitude	Assessment	online curriculum design, teachers' teaching behaviors, students' learning behaviors, impact factors of online teaching, advantages of online teaching, disadvantages of online teaching, effectiveness of online teaching	17-24
	Suggestion	online teaching in the post-pandemic era, teaching measures to guaranty effectiveness, suggestions to improve the effectiveness of online teaching, suggestions to teachers' online assessment	25-28

From July 13 to 31, 2020, the research group carried out a "*Survey of the Effectiveness of Online Teaching during the COVID Pandemic*" in the HEIs in China, and got 4650 valid respondents. The Survey has four features: (1) the number of the survey respondents is large and wide, with 4650 valid respondents from 23 provinces/regions (Fig. 1); (2) most of the respondents are young people under 30 years old; (3) the highest proportion of the respondents are from economy major; and (4) the proportion of students in higher vocational colleges is large.
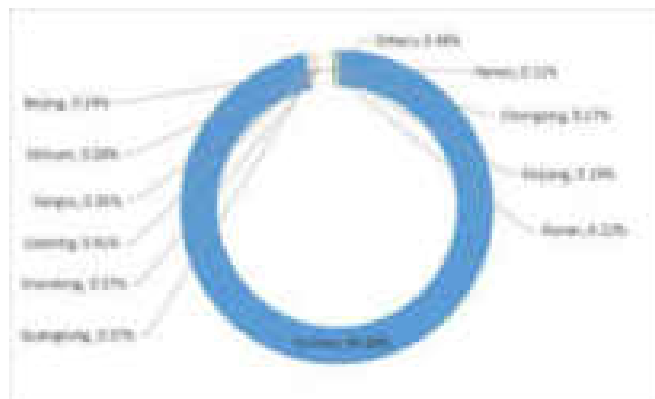
Fig. 1   Network IPs of 4650 valid respondents

On the whole, the survey covers a wide range and has a certain representatives, which can truly reflect the effectiveness of online teaching during the COVID pandemic.

3.3   Effectiveness of online teaching is unsatisfied

Online teaching in China was launched in a hurry overnight, which is an emergency measure to deal with the COVID pandemic, but it is also a great challenge for T&S. All students and teachers "touch the line" and have experienced a real and thorough "Internet + teaching practice". However, only by accepting simple IT training or without training, T&S immersed into online teaching[1] Due to the lack of preparations and experiences, online teaching has various problems before, during and after online class.

3.3.1   Preparation is imperfect before class

Pre-class preparation is the basis to ensure the effectiveness of online teaching. In order to adapt to the new form of online teaching, some HEIs provide T&S with "Online Teaching Operation Guidance", including electronic teaching resources, online teaching platform, online teaching skills training and other support services. However, the pre-class stage of online teaching still showed obvious problems of insufficient preparation.

1. Communication before class is not enough

The communication between T&S before online teaching mainly includes "teachers inform students of curriculum arrangement and curriculum requirements (81.25%)", "establishing QQ group, Wechat group and other contact channels (79.12%)" (Fig. 2), which alleviates the problem of communication between T&S to a certain extent. However, facing the new teaching forms, teachers should use more IT

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[1] Wu Daguang, Li Wen(2020). Periodic characteristics of large-scale online teaching in Chinese universities: an empirical study based on the survey of students, teachers and academic administrators [J]. Journal of East China Normal University (Education Science), 2020 (07): 1-30.

to communicate with students more frequently and deeply, not just limiting to informing the notices and materials.
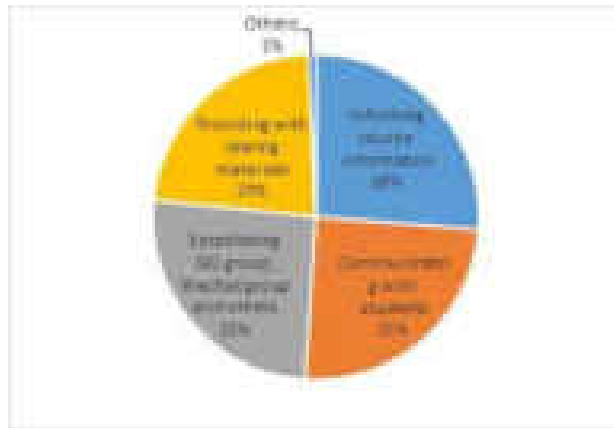
Fig. 2   Communication between T&S before online teaching

Facing the large-scale implementation of online teaching, how to skillfully use the online teaching platform and reasonably arrange online courses is a great challenge for both T&S. Teachers should actively respond to this problem, so that the success of online teaching class has a solid foundation.

2. **Teaching platforms and network problems occur frequently**

The survey results show that T&S consider, among the "problems encountered in covering 61.1%the use of online teaching platform", "network instability" ranked first, covering 85.81%; "high IT cost" ranked the second, ; and "using teaching platform too much" is at the third place, covering 52.22%.It can be seen that the use of online teaching platform has brought many problems to both T&S. However, these problems are under control. T&S should be prepared to deal with these problems before class, so as to lay a foundation for the smooth implementation of online teaching.

3.3.2   Many accidents occurred in class

Teaching is the most important part of online teaching, and it is also the most challenging part for T&S. The survey data analysis shows that many problems occurred in the implementation of online

teaching, including five aspects: imperfect curriculum design, monotonous teaching method, lack of teaching innovation, low engagement of T&S in class, and blocked communication between T&S, which decreases the effectiveness of online teaching.

1. Curriculum design still needs to be improved

62.49% T&S believe that the introduction of online teaching course can greatly arouse students' learning interests, and consistent curriculum design can supports students to achieve learning objectives. However, some curriculum designs are not different from those of offline teaching, which ignores the characteristics of online teaching. Therefore, all aspects of online teaching curriculum design still need to be further strengthened to help learners better participate in class.

2. Teaching method is monotonous

77.85% T&S consider that the most frequent step of online teaching is still "one-sided teaching by the teacher". It can be seen that online teaching is the same as that of traditional face-to-face class teaching, and teachers' teaching is still the main part. However, teachers' unilateral teaching may make the effect of "back-to-back" online teaching unsatisfactory.

3. Teaching mode needs to be innovated

In the survey of teachers' online teaching mode, the top two are: "live + recorded teaching" (covering 72.19%) and "providing students with materials for self-study" (63.35%). This teaching mode based on live teaching, recorded teaching and students' self-study reduces the communication between T&S, which is a great challenge for the learners with poor autonomous learning ability.

4. Engagement of T&S in class is reduced

Compared with offline teaching, 43% T&S chose "reduced engagement" and 39% chose "almost the same" in the online teaching class. It is worth noting that, 55% teachers consider that their online teaching engagement is "improved" while 45% students consider that their engagement is "reduced". There is a significant difference between T&S. At the same time, T&S consider that the most influential factor of online teaching is "attitude and learning

engagement to teaching" (covering 25.31%), followed by "students' active participation" (23.77%) (Fig. 3). It can be seen that in the process of teachers' online teaching, especially students' class involvement is reduced, which is exactly the key to the effectiveness of online teaching.
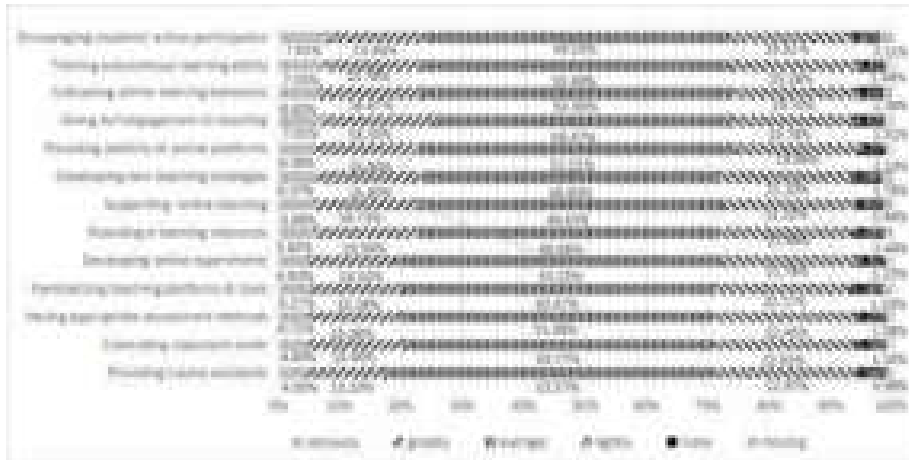
Fig. 3   Assessment on the influencing factors of the effectiveness of online teaching

5. **Communication and supervision are blocked in online class**

The survey found that T&S not only encountered problems in the whole process of online teaching, such as difficulty in focusing attention, difficult to change teaching ideas and habits, and blocked communication and interaction; but more difficulties, such as "lack of teachers' on-site guidance and supervision", "teachers unknowing students' learning state" and "teachers unknowing students' learning results" (Fig. 4).This problem has also been confirmed in the assessment survey of students' learning behavior. Students can complete their basic tasks and requirements such as completing coursework and obeying discipline. But without the supervision and encouragement, their attention and autonomous learning ability in the class is not satisfactory.
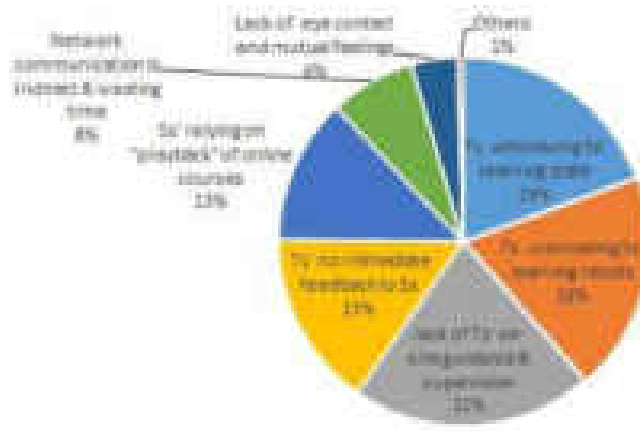
Fig. 4 difficulties encountered by T&S during online teaching

It can be seen that the difficulties in the process of online teaching cannot be underestimated. T&S have encountered a sense of "powerlessness" and "out of control", which are different from the offline class. Therefore, teachers should pay special attention to students' continuous supervision and effective interaction when conducting online teaching, so as to better control the online class.

3.3.3 Feedback needs to be strengthened after class

Feedback and reflection after class is an important part of improving teaching effectiveness and ensuring teaching quality. Especially during online teaching, T&S should make joint efforts to improve and reflect on the problems existing in the process, including the presentation of students' SLOs, the assessment of T&S and the teaching effect.

1. The presentation of students' learning outcomes (SLOs) is monotonous

During online teaching, the SLOs are still presented in the form of extracurricular exercises (84.6%) and course papers (50.13%). The results of team cooperation and student reports are relatively low. It can be seen that during online teaching, the SLOs are presented in a monotonous way, which is a "one person's task", and reduces the cooperation and communication between T&S.

2. The assessment methods of T&S still need to be improved

During online teaching, new changes have taken place in teachers' assessment methods. The top three assessment methods are "teaching workload and teaching time", "assessors sitting in class" and "students' assessing teachers", while students' assessing methods are coursework completion (79.89%), class attendance (78.82%) and class Q & A behaviors (72.52%). It can be seen that the new assessment methods pay more attention to the assessment of the teaching process. However, in the survey, some students considered that the proportion of assessment content was inappropriate, and the final coursework score of the course still cover a high proportion, which affected the students' concentration and attention to the online teaching process.

3. Overall effect of online teaching needs to be improved

According to the survey results, 34.13% consider that the effect of online teaching is almost the same as that of offline teaching, and 33.55% consider that the effect of online teaching is poor. The differences between T&S are mainly reflected in the two dimensions of "very poor" and "almost the same". 58.48% teachers, 63.64% administrators and 30% students consider the effect is poor. It can be seen that to a certain extent the group differences in the assessment of online teaching effect between T&S reflects the lack of communication after class, and the lack of timely inquiry and reflection of teaching problems, so that the follow-up classes are "as usual", and affect the improvement of teaching effect.
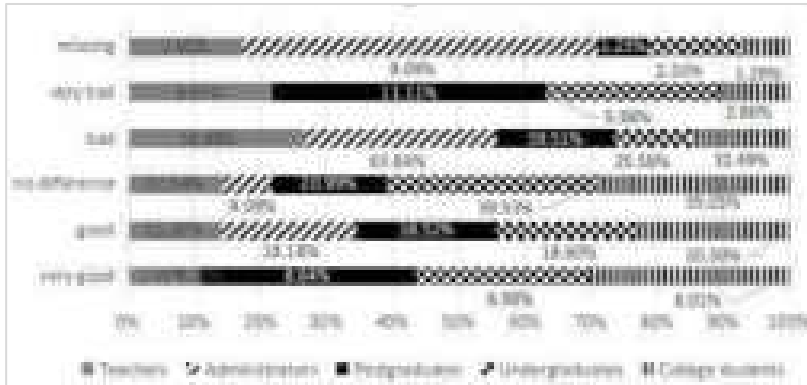
Fig. 5   Assessment of online teaching effect

On the whole, the efforts made by teachers, administrators and students to carry out online teaching are commendable. However, there are still some problems of online teaching before, in and after class, showing the effectiveness of online teaching is unsatisfied, and its effectiveness still needs to be further improved.

3.4   Suggestions on improving the effectiveness

Based on the summary of the problems occurred in large-scale online teaching during the COVID Pandemic, the research group put forward suggestions to improve the effectiveness of online teaching from the following five aspects.

1. Improving students' autonomous learning ability

Teaching is an activity that both T&S contribute together, and students are the main important subject of teaching. Only when students improve their autonomous learning ability, develop good learning habits, play their subjective initiative, and actively participate in the class, can the effectiveness of online teaching be further improved.

2. Developing teachers' information literacy

Online teaching shows the advantages of information technology application in education and teaching, but it also puts forward higher requirements for teachers' class control ability. Both

HEIs and teachers themselves should take measures to improve teachers' information literacy, so as to better carry out online class. At the same time, the education system is producing a large number of data related to students' learning behavior and results, mining the potential value, improving teaching decision-making and practice also requires the improvement of teachers' information literacy.

3. Constructing a new teaching idea between T&S

Online teaching has changed from "face-to-face communication" to "screen-to-screen communication", which reflects not only the distance between T&S, but also reflects the lack of emotion and the reduction of human feelings and greatly hinders the communication between T&S in the teaching process. Teaching is a bilateral activity between T&S. During online teaching, curriculum design, teaching methods, interactive mode, assessment and feedback should all focus on students and build a new teaching idea between T&S.

4. Exploring blended teaching mode

In the post-pandemic era, the government and the HEIs should take measures to strengthen the information construction of the HEIs, carry out more comprehensive and systematic online teaching for T&S, make use of IT advantages of online and offline teaching, and strive to build a blending" teaching mode of online and offline, in-class and extracurricular convergence, traditional and innovation integration.

5. Innovating teaching assessment methods

Reasonable assessment standards and methods are the "touchstone" to reflect and guarantee the teaching effect. Compared with the traditional teaching, online teaching assessment method presents different characteristics and problems, and also needs some reforms and innovations. It adopts multiple assessment methods, such as student self-assessment, mutual assessment, teachers' assessment, and pays attention to the combination of formative and summative assessment.

Conclusion

From being accustomed to face-to-face teaching to suddenly changing to online teaching, the efforts made by the HEIs, administrators, T&S are worthy of affirming and praise. According to the survey results of the research group, the effect of online teaching during the COVID pandemic is not satisfactory. There are a lot of problems waiting to be solved before, during and after class respectively. However, we can't rush to make a conclusion about the effectiveness of online teaching. The alleviation of pandemic is not the end of online teaching. The improvement and guarantee of online teaching effect still need to be tested by practice and more research by more researchers.

IV. Review of APQN 2020 Online Forum

Title:

APQN 2020 Online Forum of APQN

Leader:

I-Jung Grace Lu

Authors:

I-Jung Grace Lu   Zhijie Xiang   Panpan Huang

Forum Committee:

Jianxin Zhang, Galina Motova, Jagannath Patil, Deepthi Bandara, I-Jung Grace Lu, Farida Nurmanbetova, Pingping Liu

During:

September 28, 2020

Executive summary

Education systems worldwide have been hit hard and abruptly by the COVID pandemic. This article presents the review of the 8th APQN Online Forum and the six presentations given by the board directors of APQN. This article summarizes the event into three parts: the overview, actions of APQN, and discussion on the influence of COVID on Quality Assurance. In the third part of the review,   the discussion is divided into six sections:Regional Organization for Quality Assurance, Governments as the Key Players for Higher Education Quality Assurance, The new normal of internationalization of QA, Quality Education, Outcome-Based Teaching and Learning and Digitization of Quality Assurance.

The COVID pandemic has had unprecedented impacts on all countries of the world, especially in the higher education sectors. Student mobility, international research cooperation, and other academic development are limited by the closing of borders and transportation restrictions which are in place to control the outbreak of the pandemic among different countries. Experts, scholars, teachers, and students from all over the world gather through different "cloud forums" to discuss the possible solutions for this global issue. On July 27, 2020, APQN also set out and held the 8th APQN Online Forum to discuss COVID-19's impact on quality assurance of higher education and to highlight APQN's mission and shoulder its responsibility to fight the COVID together with other agencies around the world. Overall, 32 representatives from 9 countries and regions around the world participated in the online forum through the Webex. This forum is hosted by APQN, led by Dr. I-Jung Grace Lu (from HEEACT), and co-organized by HEEACT. All board directors also facilitate different talks on various topics on the impact of COVID on Higher Education, including the topic of the government as a key player for higher education, the new normal of internationalization of quality assurance (QA), outcome-based teaching and learning, and digitization of QA. The following sections present an overview of the online forum.

Around 12 years ago, in 2008, the first APQN online forum was formed. The initiative of starting the online forum is to reduce general costs for all participants, such as travel expenses, to provide more equal opportunities for member agencies from different financial backgrounds to participate in the international forum and to work corporately with each other. This year due to the COVID Pandemic, the APQN Academic Conference in Singapore was postponed until next year, and APQN Global Summit was also suspended. In this situation, the 8th online forum plays the critical role of providing an international platform to brainstorm, to discuss "the COVID impact on the quality assurance of higher education", and to predict the "new normal of higher education 4.0" in the era of post-COVID crisis.

4.1 Overview of the APQN online forum in 2020

At the beginning of the online forum, Prof. Jianxin Zhang, the 5th and 6th President of APQN made a simple opening ceremony. In the opening presentation, Prof. Jianxin Zhang elaborated on the damage COVID has done to the quality assurance of higher education around the world and summarized the activities of APQN in fighting the pandemic. Since March this year, APQN, as the largest and most influential education quality assurance network in the Asia-Pacific Region, contributes to the world in its unique way.

After the brief opening ceremony, 6 APQN board members, Prof.Jianxin Zhang, Prof. Galina Motova, Dr. Jagannath Patil, Prof. Deepthi C. Bandara, Dr. Farida Nurmanbetova, and Dr. I-Jung Grace Lu gave presentations on the 6 sub-topics of the online forum respectively. Attendees expressed their views and insights, and the 6 board members' presentations stimulated heated discussion during the online forum.
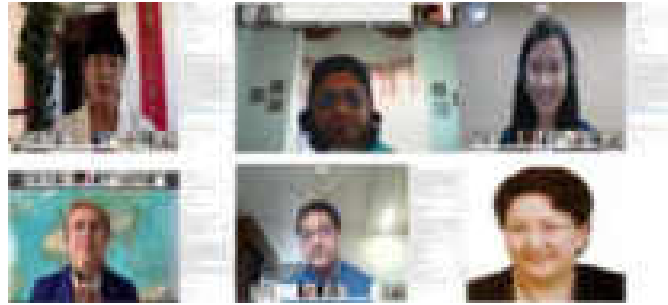
Fig. 1 6 APQN board members share their views in the online forum

Experts and participants jointly discuss "How would APQN support the quality enhancement of online learning at the institutional level", "Will there be any guidelines on good practices for quality assuring online programs" and "online external review experiences in the Asia Pacific region" and so on. Finally, under   Dr. Jagannath Patil's summary, the 8th APQN Online Forum was successfully concluded.

4.2   APQN actions as the regional quality network

At the end of 2019, the COVID pandemic outbreak shocked the world. This outbreak has been one of the most serious disasters since World War II. It has brought hitherto unknown impact to all countries /territories in the world[1]. As for higher education, almost overnight, the traditional face-to-face teaching was completely stopped, and all HEIs faced great challenges of carrying out quality education through alternative ways such as online teaching all of the sudden. Higher education and its quality assurance are facing a great challenge and reform opportunity, that has never been experienced before. Over the years, APQN has been committed to improving the quality of education in the Asia Pacific region and has made an outstanding contribution to the quality assurance of education in the Asia Pacific region. Thus, under the impact of COVID-19, it is APQN's responsibility to understand the influence of COVID on Quality Assurance.

As a regional education cooperation organization composed of members from education quality assurance (QA) agency, educational evaluation and research units, and higher education institutions in the

Asia-Pacific region, APQN has made full use of the regional communication platform in the past 12 years and holds regular academic seminars and online forum. Activities such as information dissemination, personnel training, subject research, and consulting services have effectively strengthened the exchanges and cooperation between education QA agencies in the Asia-Pacific region and effectively ensured the quality of education in the Asia-Pacific region. In the opening presentation of the APQN online forum, president Jianxin Zhang reported on APQN's progress in many aspects in the past year: Firstly, APQN survey of the COVID impact on higher education institutions (HEIs), which got 1570 respondents; Secondly, APQN Survey of the COVID impact on quality assurance agencies, which got 32 respondents; Thirdly, interview with APQN Board Directors on the COVID impact on the Quality of Higher Education. In response to participants' questions: "How would APQN support Quality Enhancement of online learning at the institutional level during and after this crisis?" President Jianxin Zhang said that APQN is conducting a study on the effectiveness of online teaching and has received more than 4,600 responses. She pledged that all members of APQN would do their utmost to improve the quality of online teaching and contribute to the Asia-pacific region and the world.

4.3   Discussions on COVID impact to QA

4.3.1 Key players for HE quality assurance:

governments

The governments in the Asia-Pacific Region, especially in Asia, have always been the key force to guide and influence higher education quality assurance. It is of great significance to explore the important role of the government in solving the COVID crisis. In Prof. Jianxin Zhang's presentation, she uses the following three modes to describe governments' roles in quality assurance of higher education under the Impact of the COVID Pandemic(Fig. 2):

Fig. 2 three modes to describe governments' roles in QA under the Impact of the COVID Pandemic[1]

1. Government-Control Mode

Its characteristic is a top-down process, in which the government actively takes mandatory measurements, such as administrative orders and laws. The government has strong authority while universities are under the government's direct leadership, and China is a typical example.

2. Government-Supervision Mode

Its characteristic is a process of top-down-combination process, the governments propagandize, take preferential and flexible measures. The authority of the government is weak, and its regulation of universities is in-direct, while the authority of university presidents, academic groups, and professors is greater, and the USA is a typical example;

3. Government Non-action Mode

Its characteristic is a bottom-up process, the governments confirm law and the legal registration. The authority of the government is passive and even absent, and its regulation of universities is in the background, while the authority of university president, academic groups, and professors is larger. In her opinion, no country matches this mode[2].

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[1] Jianxin Zhang. Government as Key Players for Higher Education Quality Assurance under the Impact of COVID [Z]. Presentation at the 8th APQN Online Forum 2020,2020-07-27.

[2] Jianxin Zhang. Government as Key Players for Higher Education Quality

Thomas Friedman believes that the COVID Pandemic will become "our new historical divide: B.C. and A.C." We all know that after COVID-19, the role of the government has changed. This change requires our attention.

4.3.2 Digitization of quality assurance: the new normal for QA

Nowadays use of the digital technologies is an integral part of the activities of many Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (QAA). The higher education institutions have canceled all face-to-face classes and moved their courses online. The most significant challenges currently facing higher education institutions are how they can continue to provide quality education to students during the COVID pandemic as well as the student instruction and counseling for effective student academic and mental health support.

According to recently published Reports, Survey's findings and conclusions shared experiences and panel discussions on the Webinars of the International Organizations, Associations, and Networks in Quality Assurance in Higher Education the threat of COVID has presented the challenges for QAAs that are common for all of them. Dr. Farida Nurmanbetova's presentation is focused on the new approaches and values, the practical implication of the digital technologies in external quality assurance, and consideration of how Quality Assurance Agencies use these technologies to appropriately respond to the challenges presented by the COVID outbreak. Due to the threat of COVID-19, higher education institutions are facing challenges on how to continue teaching and learning while keeping their faculty, staff, and student's safety and well-being during this difficult time(Fig. 3).

Assurance under the Impact of COVID-19. Presentation at the 8th APQN Online Forum 2020,2020-07-27.

Fig. 3 how Quality Assurance Agencies use these technologies to appropriately respond to the challenges.[1]

The digital environment will remain a crucial aspect of the 'new normal' and how quality is maintained is an important discussion. There is a possibility that a hybrid approach to Quality Assurance would become normal in the future. We need to carefully evaluate how the performance of HEIs after an online site-visit compares to HEIs performance after standard QA procedure. It is possible that analysis and comparison of them would guide us to areas of QA that could be done online without negatively affecting the result, or even provide better results. This is an important area to focus on at the moment.[2]

However, even if we go back to standard Quality Assurance procedures, we need to analyze if there are ways of improving them using our online experiences. More evidence and its analysis are needed for a more precise answer.

4.3.3 The new normal of internationalization of QA: Opportunities and Challenges

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[1] Farida Nurmanbetova. Speech Digitization of quality assurance: will this be the new normal for QA? [Z]. Presentation at the 8th APQN Online Forum 2020,2020-07-27.

[2] Farida Nurmanbetova. Speech Digitization of quality assurance: will this be the new normal for QA?. Presentation at the 8th APQN Online Forum 2020,2020-07-27.

Prof. Jagannath Patil mentioned in "Reflections on new Normal and strategies for quality assurance in emerging out of COVID pandemic": "How to ensure internationalization with the flow of ideas and trust in the times of closed borders?"[①] It is hard to discuss the internationalization of higher education and quality assurance when the borders of the countries and the doors of Higher Education Institutions are closed. As Prof. Galina Motova said: "The principles of internationalization are openness, transparency, and trust. These principles facilitated integration processes in higher education. They brought about the establishment of Higher Education Institutions networks, mobility of students and staff, delivery of double diplomas and joint programs."[②]

In QA the processes of internationalization have called to existence QA networks: the INQAAHE global network, the regional networks APQN, ENQA, and others. They started international cooperation and initiatives between Quality Assurance Agencies: bilateral agreements, exchange of experts and joint accreditation, staff exchange, and internships. Trust of Quality Assurance Agencies to each other is a condition for the effectiveness of internationalization tools: recognition of QA results and accreditation decisions, and in general – recognition of the quality of the National Higher Education.

Currently affected by the pandemic, many QA tasks need to be performed online, the obvious plus in this situation is the increase in communication, exchange of experience, carrying out surveys, webinars, and online conferences with speakers from any part of the globe. All these serve as an international think tank in the current situation. But the key questions remain: How could we help the Higher Education Institutions preserve and enhance the quality of online education? And how could we help agencies to ensure the quality of external review of new forms of delivery? These issues need to be further explored.

[①] Jagannath Patil. Reflections on new normal and strategies for quality assurance in emerging out of COVID pandemic [Z]. Presentation at the 8th APQN Online Forum 2020,2020-07-27.

[②] Galina Motova. The new normal of internationalization of Quality Assurance. Presentation at the 8th APQN Online Forum 2020,2020-07-27.

4.3.4   Quality Education: Sustainability and Equity

Quality has always been the core of education. Entire humanity and all aspects of life have been undergoing unprecedented challenges setting new normal during each passing day during the COVID crisis, and education, quality assurance, and networking are also highly impacted by the pandemic. The pandemic abruptly disrupted implementation towards many of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and, in some cases, turned back decades of progress. Education systems worldwide have been hit hard and abruptly by the pandemic. It is adversely affecting learning outcomes and the social and behavioral development of children and youth. Several alternative strategies are being explored to counter barriers and bring the situation back on track. Digital and virtual activities are replacing face to face ones where one of the most possible options. This, however, has brought in new challenges of inequalities among those who own digital resources and those who do not. As Prof. Jagannath Patil asked in his presentation "How to address quality issues amidst barriers like inequalities ?"

In response to these challenges and questions, Dr. I-Jung Grace Lu discussed how online education can still be quality assured and how the HEIs can rethink the ways to provide their teaching more sustainably. She also discussed how having equal access to such digital resources can be essential to fulfill equity for all students.

The focus of the quality assurance process still very similar to the traditional ones, including setting educational goals, reviewing its online program design and development, examining the digital infrastructure and learning resources, and also reviewing the learning outcome. (Fig. 4). The accreditation process also needs to be reviewed and re-established. For example, a lot of QA agencies have been using the online desk review and even carrying out a virtual site visit long before the outbreak of the pandemic. It is important to carry forward the good practices of the past of using these techniques but to also rethink more innovative ways to make these practices even more efficient and beneficial to the HEIs. Since different from the previous digital experience in QA, not only the HEIs but also the QA agencies are forced to carry out the accreditation process almost "fully virtual" due to the outbreak.

Fig. 4 the essential elements required for quality education[1]

Besides the process of quality assurance, Dr. Lu also stresses the important role the QA agencies can play during this pandemic crisis through online platforms and pathways. For example, holding webinars and training courses online for all the HEIs to enhance their capacity and create an online hub where they can share their experience. Through these practices, internal quality assurance (IQA) mechanism and a holistic feedback system can be established. Capacity-building among the staff members and also support network can also be set up digitally through active discussion and action online.[2]. Dr. Lu also concluded by readdressing the potential limitation and challenges of the current situation and environment for the HEIs and QAAs. The challenges for establishing sustainable and fair quality education are the limitation of facility, technology literacy, and the lack of motivation to participate in such an online process. So in the future, the HEIs and QAAs will need to consider other potential reforms that can improve the system, such as the hybrid system.

4.3.5 Quality Assurance: Outcome-Based Teaching and Learning

Outcomes are defined as something that follows as a result or

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[1]I-Jung Grace Lu. Innovations in HE accreditation in an era of disruptive technologies [Z]. Presentation at the 8th APQN Online Forum 2020,2020-07-27.
[2] I-Jung Grace Lu. Innovations in HE accreditation in an era of disruptive technologies. Presentation at the 8th APQN Online Forum 2020,2020-07-27.

consequence. Hence students' learning outcomes are described as "written statements of what a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to do at the end of a period of learning" (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (2010)). It is an essential feature that needs to be ensured in effective teaching/learning scenarios[①]. Therefore, university administrators, program coordinators, and teachers have to define outcomes as performance/s in stipulated conditions for an expected standard. In assuring the quality of such outcomes many aspects need consideration. In the current context of the influence of COVID-19, this becomes even more challenging since when HEIs confer qualifications on their students it is a declaration that such outcomes were achieved. In this scenario, it is inevitable that both teachers and learners make extra effort to achieve the outcomes. This, of course, would have to be supported by HEI administrations. In the presentation entitled "Quality Assurance of Outcome-Based Teaching and Learning: the influence of COVID-19" by Prof. Dr. Deepthi C. Bandara, she presents a three-pronged approach involving administrators, teachers and students would be necessary to ensure the learning outcome of the students (Table 1).

Table 1   What do they need to do for outcome-based teaching & learning [②]

Main body	Elements for outcome-based Teaching/Learning
administrators	Ensure the safety and health of teachers and students
	Pivot to online provision for all courses
	Set up Incident management team
	Creation of a resource base and support plan
	Establish an institutional communication strategy
teachers	Retain same learning outcomes
	New Teaching/Learning paradigm

[①] Deepthi C. Bandara. Quality assurance of outcome-based teaching and learning: the influence of COVID-19. Presentation at the 8th APQN Online Forum 2020,2020-07-27.

[②] Deepthi C. Bandara. Quality assurance of outcome-based teaching and learning: the influence of COVID [Z]. Presentation at the 8th APQN Online Forum 2020, 2020-07-27.

	Space and time Other teaching fronts
	Technological tools
	Students as co-creators of knowledge
	5 pillars- master classes, teaching teams, SCL, diversification of content, mentoring
	Assessment-online "Safety net" for student outcomes
students	A new paradigm of"timeless learning"
	Quick access to digital technology
	Feedback analyzed convey
	Engagement with each other

Before COVID-19, many countries have clearly stated the descriptors based on learning outcomes for each level of education. These learning outcome descriptors in higher education are then used as indicators and standards of higher education QA. The assessment strategies of higher education are the rational basis to check the achievement of learning outcomes. Thus, the influence of COVID has posed new challenges in achieving the outcomes and to assure their quality.

Summary

At present, the global pandemic is not over. The global village, the international community should continue to fight the pandemic together as "One" -- with a commonly shared future, to further strengthen national co-operations, to work together to overcome the COVID crisis, and to jointly build a new model of higher education 4.0. for our better future. For APQN, the responsibility for all HEIs in the region, even the world, remains: How could we help the HEIs preserve and enhance the quality of online education? And how could we help agencies to ensure the quality of external review of new forms of delivery? Here standing at the end of the 2020 APQN online forum, we look forward to a brighter future, together, and for all.

V. APQN Board Interviews on HE Quality in COVID Crisis

Project Title:

APQN Board Interviews on HE Quality in the COVID Crisis

Leader:

Jianxin Zhang

Authors:

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The Project was approved by Asia-Pacific Quality Network (Code No.: APQN2020-04).

Duration:

April to August, 2020

Executive summary

All of a sudden, the COVID crisis has brought the whole world into a painful halt. 1.5 billion students around the world are forced to stay away from schools because of COVID-19. This is simply unprecedented in history. The world is one family. With the endorsement of APQN Board, APQN has conducted a research project entitled "APQN Survey Group of the COVID impact on Quality of Higher Education" since March 2020. In this part, the research group interviewed the Board Directors on quality of higher education in the COVID Crisis from April 20 to May 20, 2020. They are Jianxin Zhang, Galina Motova, Jagannath Patil, I-Jung Grace Lu, Farida Nurmanbetova, Deepthi Bandar and Syun Tutilya.

APQN Board Directors are located in different countries and work in external quality assurance agencies (EQAAs) or Higher education institutions (HEIs). They have their own unique experiences and opinions on the impact of the pandemic on the quality assurance (QA) of higher education. In the interview, they shared their experiences and good practices on "the role of Quality Assurance Agencies(QAAs) in quality assurance in higher education", "how to guarantee the quality of online teaching" and "the impact on the internationalization of higher education quality assurance", and put forward their own suggestions on APQN "dissolving boundaries for a quality region" and "devoting to supporting the internal and external quality assurance of higher education in the Asia-Pacific Region".

Based on the interview of the above 6 Board directors and one special guest, the findings are as followings: (1) the role of the QAAs is ensuring internal quality in HEIs; (2) QAAs' has taking measures to guarantee internal QA during online teaching; (3) The COVID Impact on the internationalization of higher education is huge; (4) APQN has taken Actions in Supporting both Internal and External QA in the Asia-Pacific Region.

5.1   Forum introduction

All of a sudden, the COVID crisis has brought the whole world into a painful halt. 1.5 billion students around the world are forced to stay away from schools because of COVID-19. This is simply unprecedented in history. The world is one family. With the endorsement of APQN Board, APQN has conducted a research project entitled "APQN Survey Group of the COVID impact on Quality of Higher Education" since March 2020. In this part, the research group interviewed the Board Directors on quality of higher education in the COVID crisis from April 20 to May 20, 2020. They are Jianxin Zhang, Galina Motova, Jagannath Patil, I-Jung Grace Lu, Farida Nurmanbetova, Deepthi Bandar and Syun Tutilya (Table 1).

Table 1: List of the 7 Interviewees of APQN Board Directors

Name &APQN position	Country	Organization
Jianxin Zhang (President)	China	Yunnan Higher Education Evaluation Center (YHEEC)
Galina Motova (Vice-President)	Russia	National Centre for Public Accreditation (NCPA)
Jagannath Patil (Board Director)	India	National Institute Academic Degrees Quality Enhancement Higher Education (NIAD-QE)
I-Jung Grace Lu (Board Director)	Chinese Taipei	Higher Education Evaluation Accreditation Council of Taiwan(HEEACT), Chinese Taibei
Farida Nurmanbetova (Board Director)	Kazakhstan	Eurasian Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Health Care (ECAQA)
Deepthi Bandar (Board Director)	Sri Lanka	University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka
Syun Tutilya (Special Guest)	Japan	National Institute Academic Degrees Quality Enhancement Higher Education (NIAD-QE)

APQN Board Directors are located in different countries and work in external quality assurance agencies (EQAAs) or Higher education institutions (HEIs). They have their own unique experiences and opinions on the impact of the pandemic on the quality assurance (QA) of higher education. In the interview, they shared their experiences and good practices on "the role and role of Quality Assurance Agencies(QAAs) in quality assurance in higher education", "how to guarantee the quality of online teaching" and "the impact on the internationalization of higher education quality assurance", and put forward their own suggestions on APQN "dissolving boundaries for a quality region" and "devoting to supporting the internal and external quality assurance of higher education in the Asia-Pacific Region".

5.2   Role of the QAAs in ensuring internal quality in HEIs

Affected by COVID-19, HEIs have moved from traditional education to distance learning. This is both an opportunity and a challenge for HEIs.

5.2.1   HE Quality is Combined with both Internal QA and External QA

As an EQAA, APQN has been keeping close contact with HEIs. APQN believes that in the context of COVID-19, QAAs should further strengthen cooperation with HEIs. Quality of Higher education is combined with both internal QA from the HEIs and external QA from QAAs. It is in the best interest of university leadership and external regulators overseeing their performance to realize quality as the only knight in shining armor that can protect and nurture the dyadic relationships between graduates and their alma mater (Jianxin Zhang). The QAAs should cooperate with HEIs in order to identify and address current needs and analyze the COVID impact (Farida Nurmanbetova).

5.2.2   Developing the Role of External QAAs to

Support HEIs

Internal QA from the HEIs and external QA from QAAs have always assumed different responsibilities for quality assurance and jointly maintained and improved the quality of education. In the context of COVID-19, HEIs is facing great challenges. APQN believes that external QAAs should help and support HEIs with their unique advantages and characteristics.

1. The Promoters of the Change of Quality Concept

In the past, we said "external QA as the leading role and internal QA as the main body" over and over again, but frankly speaking we did not make it real happen. Today, for the first time, external QAAs cannot conduct site visit, neither site review, nor other site QA activities, we have to promote the real change of this quality concept. Today, we finally realize that the principle of dialectical materialism is right: "the external cause is only the condition of change, while the internal cause is the key to change." We all know that no matter how hard we try to hatch, stones can never become chickens, but only eggs can become chickens. External QA must promote the quality concept of internal QA, which is the foundation stone in the long journey of seeking excellent quality (Jianxin Zhang).

2. The Participants of Quality Management and Quality

Standard Setters

As an EQAA, APQN believes that the relevant responsibilities of external QA from QAAs should be further clarified in the current period.

1) Quality standard setters

Before Coronavirus, universities adopted a single method: traditional "face-to-face teaching"; during Coronavirus, universities have to adopt "online teaching"; after Coronavirus or at "post crisis era", teaching model is not a "single choice" of online or offline teaching, but a blended teaching, including both online and face-to-face teaching. Similarly, external QAAs must adopt a blending evaluation model. We must reform a series of blueprints, plans, concepts, contents, methods, technologies, standards and others. For

example, six criteria should be adopted to evaluate online teaching: 1) teachers' course rate; 2) students' attendance rate; 3) teacher-students' communication and interaction rate; 4) teaching satisfaction; 5) learning satisfaction; and 6) administration effectiveness (Jianxin Zhang).

At present, the emergency response measures of HEIs around the world are not satisfactory. We have to admit that QAAs are not really ready for this great change.

2) The participants of quality management

During online teaching, teachers' control of the teaching process directly through homework, daily quiz, examinations and other ways, has been greatly reduced. Such educational and teaching management system as constraints and limitations on students' home-based learning, has been immensely cut down. "Face-to-face management" has become "back-to-back management". How to ensure teaching quality? external QAAs must be the participants of quality management in 3 major tasks: (1) evaluate and approve standards and technical specifications of online courses, such as discipline, academic and professional specifications; (2)put forward the suggestions and opinions on the construction of online teaching platform, such as Internet access, interface requirements, etc.; (3) organize consultants and experts to conduct consulting services, such as guideline of network communication, IT teaching design, etc. Since April, APQN has conducted two online surveys: one for universities, the other for QAAs in the globe (Jianxin Zhang).

5.2.3 Providing Relevant Information and Guidelines to Support HEIs

As a quality standard setter and the participant of quality management, EQAAs should support HEIs with their special status and functions.

1. Setting Guidelines to Respond to the Pandemic

At present, the response mechanism of colleges and universities around the world is not satisfactory. Few HEIs are fully prepared for the COVID Crisis, and there is no relevant experience to deal with the COVID Crisis at present. EQAAs have made use of their advantages

and functions to develop relevant guidelines for responding to the epidemic:1)Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in distance learning and academic integrity. 2)The guidelines for monitoring of implementation distance learning (Farida Nurmanbetova). 3)Future research should be conducted in order to understand the challenges and issues the HEIs and QA agencies may face and also develop relevant guidelines, methods, and support for the HEIs (I-Jung Grace Lu).

2. Developing a Methodology of QA of Online Learning

QAAs offers a wide range of educational courses in the webinar format for the HEI management and academic departments covering the issues of the development of internal quality assurance systems, designing new educational programmes and developing new assessment methods of student leaning outcomes. The webinars are accessible in the off-line mode for the convenience of users. Should the pandemic situation stay for a long period of time, QAAs are planning to develop a methodology of quality evaluation of study programmes online and offer it to HEIs as a component of their internal quality assurance system (Galina Motova).

3. Providing Information Support and Realizing Resource

Sharing

At this difficult times, a challenging task for QAAs is not to overburden HEIs with ensuring the quality of education delivery but to support them with providing relevant information and knowledge about best practices. 1) QAAs are carrying out the search for information and monitoring of the mass media about the current situation in HEIs, undertaking and publishing thematic analysis. QAAs are following all regulatory documents issued by the Government, the Ministry of Education and other governing bodies and duly informs the HEI community through social networks (special educational resources have been set up for this purpose in Telegram and Facebook) (Galina Motova). 2) QAAs form an emergency group in responding to the outbreak and supervise the operation of QAAs in advance of the potential outbreak, in order to make sure that the operation of the QA process remains with high quality. 3) We also need to increase the usage of online conference meetings through Zoom and Webex in

terms of having discussions with the universities and the reviewers to reduce the risk of traveling. Presentations of the accreditation processes and guidelines of different QA projects are also well prepared and are ready to be shared with the HEIs and reviewers, even the public through the internet(I-Jung Grace Lu).

5.2.4 Encouraging and Improving Online Learning

Currently HEIs are facing unprecedented challenges as a result of the COVID crisis outbreak globally. Most of the traditional assessment systems based on paper have also been gradually replaced by a more modern system based on an online system. The HEIs also follows this pattern of using fewer paper documents and material in their courses. Thus, when it comes to organizing and distributing the information through an online system, most of the HEIs should be ready (I-Jung Grace Lu). 1)In the short term, quality assurance procedure will have to endorse the quality of the learning outcomes expected from the students' experiences in the COCVID-19 circumstances as equivalent with or superior to those in the past. 2)We believe the online teaching and learning will in principle enhance students' opportunities for learning and empower teachers to teach in a wider variety of methods (Jagannath Patil). 3) During the review process, the reviewers are encouraged to ask about how the HEIs use their online system and also to examine the students' feedback system. It is crucial to have a strong feedback system to monitor the learning of the students(I-Jung Grace Lu).

5.3 Measures to guarantee internal QA during online teaching

As country after country decrees partial or total lock downs from the COVID pandemic, the number of HEIs closing and switching to e-learning has soared. However, few of these HEIs are well prepared for this sudden, disruptive move. The resilience of modern universities has never been tested as thoroughly as during the current crisis. A lot of scrambling and improvisation are occurring as administrators, instructors and students struggle to implement

broad-based online learning. The scale of the COVID outbreak is unprecedented in the lives of nearly everyone involved (Jianxin Zhang).

5.3.1 Standards for High-quality Online Teaching

The internal quality assurance mechanisms in distance learning at the HEIs should meet the same requirements of traditional education as well as some additional requirements to ensure the faculty training, course instruction and links to clear descriptions of the technical support offered and how to obtain it (Farida Nurmanbetova). Experience has shown that high-quality online learning requires that the teaching material is prepared by a professional instructional designer, that the lecturer is pedagogically trained for delivering the programme and the students are equally exposed to the pedagogy of online learning (Jianxin Zhang).

5.3.2 Important Considerations for HEIs

As for the HEIs struggling with the sudden shift to online education, some considerations are urgently important for institutions engaged in this transition.

1. Developing New Learning-assessment Procedures and

Criteria

Aligning learning-assessment procedures and criteria with the new online curricular and pedagogical approaches. Some HEIs have already moved to a pass/fail approach, eliminating grades for the rest of this academic year. Designing online assessment methods to fit these emerging modes of teaching and learning will take significant effort, but it will help to assure the quality of learning and validity of final assessments (Jianxin zhang).

2. Increasing Academic and Psychological Support for

Students

This effort will become ever more crucial as growing numbers of students struggle to adjust to new teaching and learning approaches – not to mention their fears and concerns about the pandemic. Careful reliance on data and predictive analytic can help support staff identify

struggling students early on and can also help pinpoint the areas in which these students might require extra support.

3. Factoring COVID Crisis into Strategic Planning

All HEIs must factor this crisis into their strategic planning, undertaking thorough risk assessments and mitigation processes to anticipate the medium- and long-term consequences of the pandemic – including the expected economic recession (Jianxin Zhang). In the long term, those ad hoc measures to cope with the sudden emergence of the situation will have be evaluated and incorporated in the QAA's standards and review procedures (Syun Tutilya).

4. Developing Multimedia Technologies for Acquiring

Certain Practical Skills

Online teaching and learning cannot fully replace traditional forms of education, which involve practice and laboratory classes. A longer period of quarantine will call for developing multimedia technologies for acquiring certain practical skills and will expand the share of student independent work (Galina Motova).

5.3.3   Measures to Ensure the Quality of Online

Teaching.

1. Establish the status of online teaching

In long run increased use of online learning may be cost effective for both learners and institutions . So initial investments would be worth future benefits. Of course, if government can fund or subsidize for cheaper connectivity, it would boost the process (Deepthi Bandara).

2. Improve infrastructure

HEIs must make sure it has the infrastructure in place to conduct online teaching/learning (Deepthi Bandara).

3. What the country should do

Initial indications show the following types of measures are needed at the national level: 1) financial stimulus packages and student loan

moratoria, 2) flexibility in quality assurance requirements and 3) capacity-building initiatives to ease the transition to online learning (Jianxin Zhang).

4. What the HEI should do

(1) Teachers

HEIs need to figure out how many teachers are conducting online activities at present and how successful they are. This group needs to be given support to continue. HEI has to ensure all teachers are able to go online at a certain time. HEIs should introduce methods of ensuring that tutors trained and skilled to deliver support to students effectively.

(2) Students

For those who are lagging in online teaching activities, much support should be given in training them as quickly as possible - by hands on training opportunities. It also has to make sure that students can access online activity. Some measure has to be taken for all students to be involved and engaged in online activities. Periodic surveys would have to be conducted by the HEI to make sure that students are learning and whether the level of learning is satisfactory (Deepthi Bandara). HEIs could also consider setting up at 24-hour helpline for students in order to give them adequate advice and reassurance during this difficult time. HEIs should provide academic support services and resources that can help student succeed in the online course (Farida Nurmanbetova). HEIs would need to setup pedagogy and technology innovation units, if they don't have it already (Jagannath Patil).

(3) Administrative staff

Apart from the teachers and students, immediate training should be done for the administrative staff to go online as much of these activities are halted at preset slowing down administrative procedures significantly. It is necessary that HEIs communicate with connectivity vendors in procuring connection at subsidized rates for the students and staff (Deepthi Bandara).

5) What the external QAAs should do

Even now in order to motivate students and enhance the quality of teaching new interactive forms of content delivery are being developed. New assessment methods using multimedia technologies

and various forms of getting feedback, such as proctoring technologies, are being tested (Galina Motova). Strengthen academic and student support services by increasing efficiency and transparency (Jagannath Patil).

5.4 COVID impact on HE internationalization

The outbreak of COVID has brought unprecedented obstacles to higher education–as well as the internationalization of higher education QA around the world. Universities have been closed, with teaching and conference canceled or put online in many countries. The overseas educational journeys of teachers and students have been affected to varying degrees .International human movement has been greatly suppressed. Academic networking and changing international educational interaction have become unstoppable trends these days. How to promote the international QA of higher education has also become an important issue.

5.4.1 Reducing Mobility of Global Personnel

Before COVID struck, around five million students were undertaking degrees outside their home country. Now thousands of students who returned or began studying abroad have been affected by the epidemic. The figures released on 14 April by Study portals, the Dutch-based global study choice platform, show that 40% of potential international students responding to their latest survey said they were changing their plans.

For 20 years, China has been one of the largest exporters of international students. However, English proficiency examinations such as IELTS, GRE or GMAT for Chinese students to apply to foreign universities have been canceled nationwide under the COVID Impact outbreak. There is likely to be a significant temporary decline and longer-term, more modest decrease, although China will remain the largest single sending country for the foreseeable future (Jianxin Zhang). Parents would think twice in sending their children overseas for education for a while - at least till some kind of normalcy returns in the world in Sri Lanka(Deepthi Bandara). Similarly, it is highly likely that this year will see a critically low admission of foreign students in

Russian HEIs and there will be fewer outgoing Russian students. Even those students who are currently studying in Russia can postpone their education or even give it up (Galina Motova).

On the other hand, this is also a big challenge for the cooperation of teachers, implementing joint projects, exchange visits and conferences. For example, faculty members have been asked not to travel to infected countries–or to avoid foreign travel entirely. It's no doubt that mobility of global personnel will reduce for a year or so.

5.4.2   More Diversified International Educational Interaction

As a result of travel restrictions and social isolation measures, international education exchanges and cooperation have been hampered. APQN has canceled and rescheduled APQN academic Conference, Global Summit and AGM. Many international congress and overseas projects have also been affected in the rest of the world.

Nevertheless, thanks to technology, international interactions, and cooperation between QAAs around the world still carry on. Several international events of Higher Education Evaluation Accreditation Council of Taiwan (HEEACT), Chinese Taibei, important QAAs' conferences and networking events have also been canceled or postponed due to the outbreak of the COVID-19, but HEEACT kept in touch with several QAAs and invite them to participate in future academic events (I-Jung Grace Lu.)

We have been made so aware of the future of digital communication over the Internet due to COVID-19. International education is closely linked to network technology and online system. So we may be able to envision a more diversified set of ways of educational interaction across borders in the future (Syun Tutiya) .

5.4.3   Taking Measures to Promote the International QA of Higher Education

During the fight against the epidemic, large-scale online courses have played a huge role. If the pandemic stays for a long time, various forms of distance international cooperation are bound to develop: open online courses, online platforms for communication of students and teachers, information resources, social networks, etc. However,

online communication cannot fully replace face to face interaction. While online teaching would be an inevitable alternative to survive, how to guarantee the quality of online courses and promote the international quality assurance of higher education has become a problem that cannot be ignored.

1. Strengthening the QA of Online Courses

It is not hard to foresee that better QA models and mechanisms developed for the online courses and micro-credential after the COVID pandemic passes. The EQAAs need to develop online materials and resources for the HEIs to support their QA mechanisms. Besides, the EQAAs need to develop online materials and resources to support the faculty, students, stakeholders, and also develop guidelines to support the HEIs in their transition to online learning (I-Jung Grace Lu).

2. Promoting Localization and Internationalization of

Education

The outbreak of COVID exposed the excessive financial dependence of some universities on international students. The crisis might signal that seeing international education mainly as an income generator is undesirable from many viewpoints. It is important for higher education to learn from this pandemic how to achieve a healthy balance between globalized and localized economies. Academic work must be globally connected, but in a sustainable way (Jianxin Zhang).

3. Enhancing Cooperation between QAAs

In order to ensure the quality of educational content at the international level, we need even tighter cooperation (bilateral and networking) between accreditation agencies. The main issue here is trust to HEIs and organizations developing online courses and trust in the work of accreditation agencies that ensure their quality (Galina Motova) QAAs and networks should hold a conference focusing on the application of educational technology and the QA model for online education.

In addition, a few innovative international quality assurance practices would have to be worked out to ensure the Quality of

Higher Education in the future - this might be an area the APQN Board can work on collectively (Deepthi Bandara).

5.5   APQN's actions in supporting both internal and external QA

As a regional organization of higher education quality assurance, APQN serves as a bridge to improve the Quality of Higher Education in the APR. In the COVID crisis, APQN did and is conducting many activities to realize its goal of "Dissolving Boundaries for a Quality Region" and "to be committed to the Quality of Higher Education and is supportive of both internal and external quality assurance in the APR" And there are also a lot of work and activities to be done.

5.5.1   Forming an Online Support Network

In the conditions of student and teacher self-isolation, isolation of whole counties, APQN could form an online support network for all QAAs in sharing their challenges and experiences with each other, such as choosing online technologies of teaching, assessing and recommending open online courses, methods of evaluating online study programmes, which could promote good practices of response of QAAs during COVID crisis (Galina Motova, I-Jung Grace Lu and Jagannath Patil).

1. Conducting the Research on the COVID Impact on HEIs and QA Systems

In order to strengthen communication and communication between regions and assurance the quality of higher education, APQN has conducted the research on the COVID Impact on HEIs and QA systems.1) APQN Survey of the COVID Impact at Higher Education Institutions(HEIs); 2)APQN Survey to QAAs; 3) Interview with APQN Board Directors during COVID (Jianxin Zhang).

2. Organizing and Participating in Online Seminars

To further facilitate the flexibility of online support networking platforms, we can also set up a social network for APQN members on the example of ENQA.

We might also find useful organizing some webinars for informing APQN members on the situation in different countries, for example and online conferences, for example, (Galina Motova) Furthermore, similar activities can be done for institutional members focused on internal QA (Jagannath Patil).

In addition, professor Zhang attended an international seminar on behalf of APQN to enhance international communication, including CHEA/CIQG Webinar on Sustaining and Enhancing Institutional Autonomy: The Role of Quality Assurance on April 16, 2020; UNESCO'sCOVID Educational Response Webinar 4 on Managing high-stakes exams and assessments in the COVID Crisis on 9 April 2020 and CCG Webinar on How is COVID impacting international education on April 17, 2020.

Both online seminars organized by the APQN itself and other international conferences are effective at breaking regional boundaries and help to support internal and external quality assurance during the pandemic.

5.5.2   Providing Short-term and Long-term Guidance

to APQN Members

So far, the epidemic has resulted in the suspension and termination of quality assessment, which has been greatly challenged and affected by the work of higher education institutions and quality assurance institutions, such as financial difficulties, online quality assessment and so on. As a solution to the current problems, the APQN directors made their own suggestions.

1. Providing Financial Support

The reduction of fees in consultation or even free consultation through the online platform could also be provided to support the QAAs who are members of APQN. Even some of the financial support shall be provided to the QAAs if they are really greatly impacted by the pandemic, such as the reduction of membership fees. The relevant guideline shall also be provided in order to guide them through the time of crisis in supporting their HEIs (I-Jung Grace Lu).

2. Manuals on Distance Learning

APQN should consider the development of manuals for course conversion from traditional to distance learning, including assessments and teaching methods, and programme evaluation. It would be helpful for HEIs for revision of organizational transformation and improve strategies related to distance learning. It could also beneficial to establish contact with HEIs in order to identify their current challenges and involve APQN in their solutions, where possible (Farida Nurmanbetova).

3. Drawing Up Key Quality Parameters

APQN can draw up key quality parameters (about 10) that would be valid for all in the Asia Pacific region. For each parameter draw up the states it can be in when ensuring quality. e.g. Connectivity to go online - a. very good, b. good c. satisfactory d. poor. Work out what should be done to bring the HEIs to the acceptable quality standard. Some communication would be necessary with the HEIs concerned. Provide advice of possible options to realize the identified quality standard. Assist in providing the possible option - advice, financing, making connection with the right parties Monitor progress and troubleshoot Once quality standard is reached – certify (Deepthi Bandara).

As quality-assurance workers in higher education, APQN directors have made many efforts to reduce the impact of the outbreak of COVID-19, and their views and practices have brought new perspectives and directions to the quality assurance of higher education and APQN. The challenges posed by COVID will eventually be solved and the future of higher education quality assurance will also face new problems and difficulties, but the soldiers will fight fire with water. APQN and higher education quality assurance workers will continue to strive to support the quality assurance of higher education in the APR and even the world.

VI. Qualitative Research on Effectiveness of Online Course during COVID

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Duration:

June to December, 2020

Executive summary

In 2020, the COVID pandemic relentlessly spread all over the world, online teaching appeared overnight led to in-effective teaching. How to improve the effectiveness of online teaching has become a difficult problem globally. Adopting qualitative research method such as observation and interview, this research focuses the live online Course of "Qualitative Research Methods" of the postgraduates in Yunnan University. It describes three problems before live online course, the experiences co-created by teacher and students, and the course assessments. Finally, this paper put forward four aspects to improve the effectiveness of the live online course: online platform, the multi-frequent interaction: the four-level management and e multiple assessments, which aims to provide a useful reference for quality assurance of online teaching during public emergencies and post-pandemic era.

6.1   Introduction

The pandemic of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in the globe has had profound impacts on education. Inexperienced online teaching leads to in-effective teaching. How to ensure the effectiveness of online teaching has become an urgent problem to be solved. "Qualitative Research Methods for Primary and Secondary School Teachers" (hereinafter referred to as "QRM course") is an extremely important course for graduate students, which has to move from face-to-face teaching to online, from traditional face-to-face teaching to modern network teaching in the COVID pandemic. This paper describes the QRM live online course taught in "Tencent Conference" by Prof. Jianxin Zhang in Yunnan University to 54 on-the-job graduate students majoring in Education Administration

from June 20 to August 30, from three stages: before, during and after the live online course, and focus on the effectiveness of online courses during the COVID Pandemic, which aims to provide a useful reference for quality assurance of online teaching during public emergencies and post-pandemic era.

6.2 Entering the live online course: 3 questions before course

Online teaching is a great challenge for both teacher and students. According to Wu Daguang's "*Survey Report on Online Teaching of University Teacher during the Pandemic*", about 80% teachers in China have never, ever carried out online teaching before. Therefore, when being told that the QRM course will be taught online, the teacher and students communicated a lot on the following three questions: 1) should we have live online course? 2) what to teach? and 3)how to teach?

6.2.1 Should we have live online course?

The QRM course as a method course, the most important thing is that students need to practice, which need students' constant practices, coursework after class and feedback to teacher to improve their ability to use the QRM step by step. Can the live online teaching achieve such an effect? How many students are willing to learn this course online? First of all, the teacher asked the monitor to make a small survey to all the students on two questions: "Do you want to take QRM course？" "Which do you prefer, online at present or offline after the pandemic？" (Fig. 1).
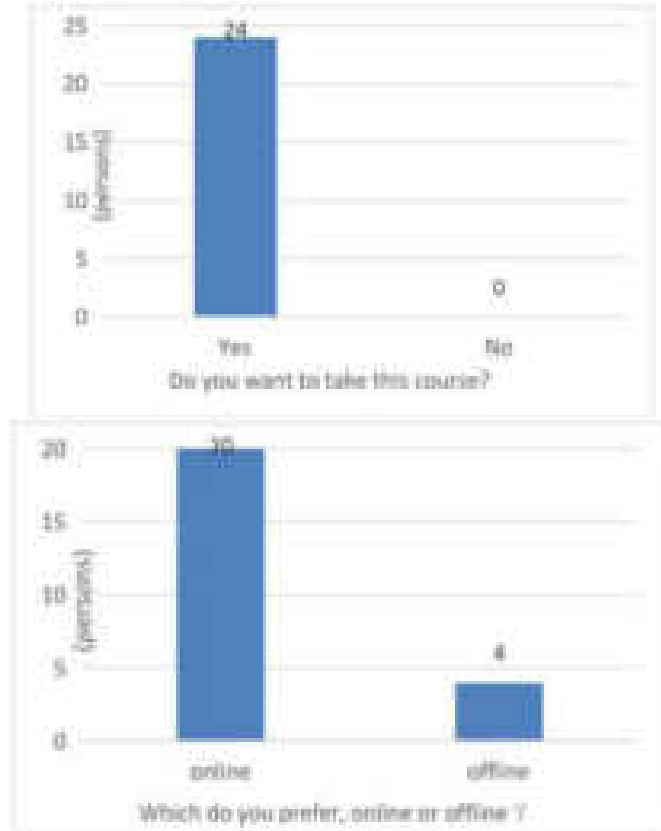
Fig. 1   Students' willingness about the live online QRM course

The figure above shows, among the 24 respondents, 100% of them were willing to take QRM course (the actual participators was 54 after the course began). This shows that no matter how serious the pandemic is, students still have a strong willingness to learn. 83% respondents (20 in total) chose "online teaching", which shows that the students have high acceptance of live online teaching, and consider that online teaching is more convenient during the pandemic, more economical and applicable for on-the-job graduate students, and online teaching can meet the curriculum requirements of   the QRM course.

But the teacher is much more worried than the students. In an interview with Prof. Zhang, she mentioned that: "*The QRM course needs students to practice and act in class during the whole process, just like learning swimming in the water, and spoon-feeding teaching and learning by rote are not allowed. Can live online courses achieve that goal in the live online course without face-to-face teaching and learning? I'm worried…* " It can be seen that there are some

difficulties in using online platform for teaching method course, and students cannot complete the most important thing of qualitative research online: field/case study.

6.2.2　How to teach？

As a new form of teaching, live online teaching puts forward higher requirements for both teacher and students. How to take this live online course? The teacher and students had a full exchange and discussion on this issue, and finally reached the following consensus.

1. "Participatory learning": Lecture + discussion +

coursework + course paper.

As a method course, the most important of the QRM is "participatory learning". So the teacher refuses "the traditional spoon-feeding/ cramming teaching", adopts participatory teaching and learning method, and tries to diversify the course compositions, such as presentation of the students' coursework The teacher mentioned in the interview, *"the QRM course needs a lot of practices and actions. If the students "could not swim in the water', then the effect of this course is very bad."* Except the role of teacher's lecturing and guide, the teacher believes that it is very important for student teams to conduct qualitative research, focusing select "real questions".

2. "Double work at one stoke": in-class activities +

extracurricular activities

In-class activities mainly include 3 items: teaching, discussion and practice in class while extracurricular activities mainly include extracurricular reading and team research projects (Fig. 2).
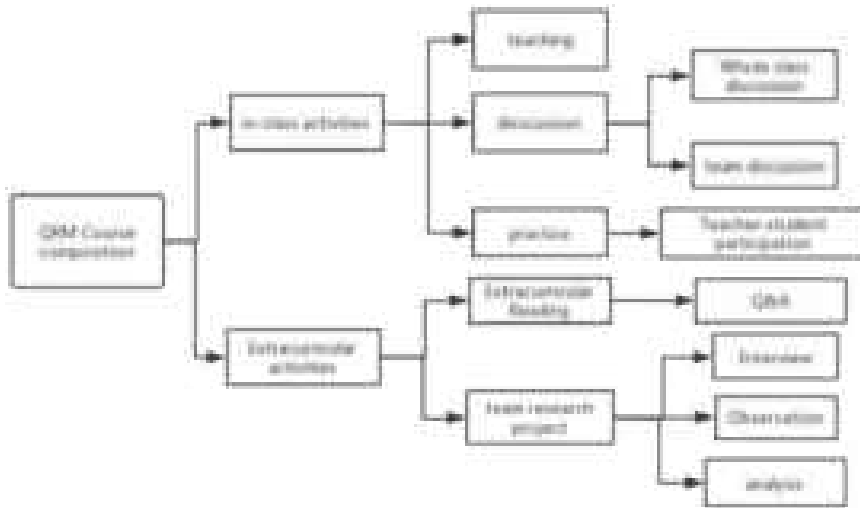
Fig. 2   the Composition of the QRM Class

From the course composition of the QRM course, we know that class teaching is only a small part, and it is more about discuss learning, practical operation, accumulation and improvement. The course composition is diverse. In the active class atmosphere, students' thinking is mobilized, and discussion and practice are the main methods. The combination of in-class and extracurricular activities focus on the content of the course.

3. "Individual responsibility": clear team work and no more fake credit

The teacher attaches great importance to team cooperation in the QRM course and clearly requires that "*six students form a group, select the team leader, and divide the responsibilities one by one, so as to complete the research report of the team after the each lecture.*" At the same time, in the live class, each team reporter must take turns reporting each time. As the teacher said: "*it is forbidden if students just want to "fool' the teacher to get the credit! Although the assignment is submitted in group, but the team work must be marked with each student's he contribution part.*" In the form of team work

and individual assignment, each student in the course can learn knowledge and contribute to each assignment.

4. "Multiple assessment": diverse and flexible assessments

The QRM course assessment is made up of three parts: (1)students' participation and individual work; (2) extracurricular team work and reflection; (3)and final research report. As a method course, the QRM   require students' learning effect is directly reflected in students' research report, so team work has become an important assessment basis. At the same time, in the live online class the interaction between teacher and students is particularly important, so students' participation and mutual assessments of all teams have become an important part of the assessment.

6.2.3   What to teach？

When designing the teaching content, the teacher should focus on both the teaching content suitable for the QRM course and the teaching methodology of live online teaching. Face-to-face teaching method cannot be followed in the live online class, while the QRM course focuses on practices and actions. How to reconcile the two contradictions?   How to make up for the loopholes that the live online class cannot actually happen? The teacher designed the following course content (Fig. 3).
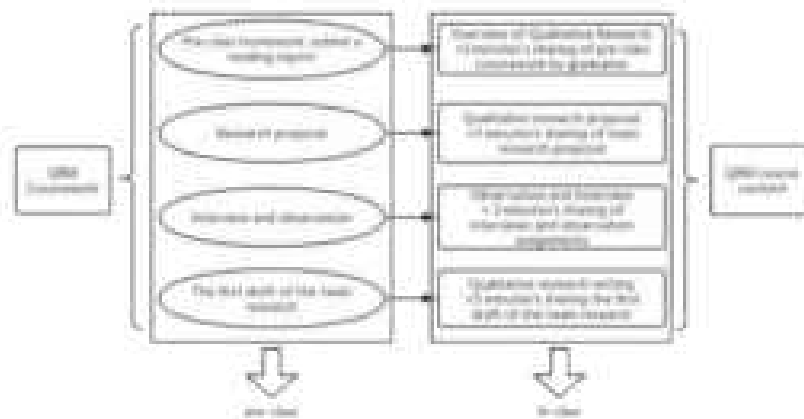
Fig. 3   the Content of the QRM Class

One of the most prominent features is: offline work + online feedback. The course content is closely linked with the course assignment. As a method course, coursework is the direct feedback of students' learning effects. The content of the QRM course is divided into 4 major themes, and each corresponds to a different assignment. The combination of the 4 assignments is the final research report. Students must complete offline field interview, observation and other tasks, and the coursework is the practice of what they learned in live online class. This can ensure that students can also perform practices to ensure the effectiveness of the online course. When students complete their coursework, they are gradually learning how to use qualitative research methods to conduct their own research. As the teacher said: *"it's difficult to verify the attendance rate of online live teaching because phones or laptops could be online but the students might not be at the scene. But compared with traditional teaching, as long as students come to this online class, I believe they will learn something."* In order to make up for the decrease of attendance rate caused by line online teaching, the teacher adopts the form of offline coursework + online feedback to ensure that students "can learn something in this course".

In a word, before class, the teacher and students have shown a variety of new online teaching forms that they have never met before. However, the teacher and students communicate with each other on above "three questions", and reach a consensus before class in order to make joint efforts to ensure the effectiveness of online teaching.

6.3   Experiencing live online class: co-creation of both

As part of the students in the live online course, we used participatory observation method to observe and record the teaching process of the QRM course. In the process of experiencing the live online class, we found that this course is a "big stage" jointly created by the teacher and students. The teacher and students discuss the content of the course in a relaxed and active atmosphere.

6.3.1 Basic situation of live online class:

teacher-student cooperation

1. "Jointly creative class" of both the teacher and students

In the QRM course, the teaching is a "team report → teacher feedback → teacher teaching → teacher-student discussion" process. The whole course is composed of both the teacher and students. The team reporter summarizes the offline practice work of the team and reports to the teacher and classmates in class. The teacher gives feedback on the results of each team one by one. After the feedback, the teacher will teach the content of the course. During the teaching, students must record the relevant methods and content (otherwise it is difficult to complete the coursework after class), put forward their own questions, and finally, teacher and students discuss together.

2. Four level of strict supervision system

As the teacher said in the interview, "*I can guarantee the class quality through a strict supervision system. First of all, the monitor is responsible for checking in; secondly, the team leader tracks the attendance of the students in their group, and then summarizes the data to the monitor. The monitor will give me an attendance sheet after class…In one online class, the teacher, the monitor, the team leader, the secret supervisor are all monitoring.*"

3. Queuing for advice: frequent interaction between the

teacher and students

In this live online course, the frequency of interaction between the teacher and students is very high, including Q&A, discussion between teacher and students, team report, teacher feedback and so on. The following figure shows team 7 reports their coursework on their research topic "*Case Study with the outstanding impact on the children of the Divorced Families*" (Fig. 4).
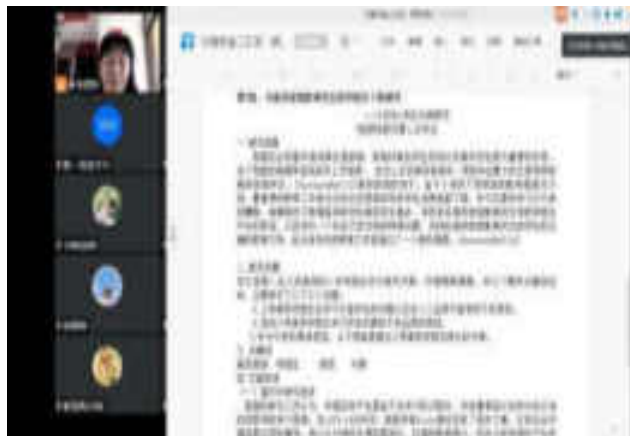
Fig. 4   The students from Team Seven report on team coursework

Frequent interaction is not only a way for teacher to test students' state in class, but also a good way to mobilize students' thinking activity. As the teacher said in the interview, *"it is necessary to design some small strategies or methods to make students "alert' to be called by the teacher, such as spot check and calling the students to answer questions randomly."* At the same time, due to the fact that students need to conduct practical research after class, students must actively ask the teacher for relevant questions for further information and feedback from the teacher in tight class time, otherwise the coursework cannot be completed. According to our observation, the students are very enthusiastic. Queuing for teacher's advice is a common phenomenon. Many students volunteered to stay in the online class after class time ended in order to ask the teacher for advice. The most typical one was that the "Tencent Conference" studio could not be closed after 62 minutes of the class time, which fully shows that the teacher-student interaction of the QRM course is good.

6.3.2   Accidental "disturbances": the process of gradual adaptation

Although the QRM course is carried out smoothly under the careful design of teacher and the active cooperation of the students, there are still some "small disturbances" occasionally in class because of the new teaching form. The following is part of the "small disturbances" in the observation table:

Table 1   Observation record of violation (on July 4th, 2020)

Field Notes	Personal Notes	Theoretical Notes
At 2:30 PM, class began, but 5 students have not checked in the live online class	We are wondering whether they forget the class or didn't care.	The punctuality of students seems to decrease in the live online class
At 2:40, the teacher summarized that only one team submitted reading coursework on time, three teams submitted coursework overtime, and one team has not so far.	We know the reading assignment is easy to complete and am wondering whether the students have the habit of procrastination.	In online teaching, students seem to be less efficient at completing their coursework.
When one student reported the reading coursework, her speaking was broke because of the unstable network. While sharing the screen to all, another student could not be heard.	We feel, unfamiliar IT techniques greatly affect the class effectiveness and waste time.	The instability of network and IT techniques are the main issue of online teaching.
Two students forget to turn off the microphones and make lots noises and the teacher criticized them and made their names known to all.	We feel irritated. How dare they affect others if they don't want to learn?	The management of live online class is more important than that of the face-to-face class.
One student turned on the camera accidentally when she wanted to speak, which showed she was sitting in a car.	Online teaching does not require students to be in class, but students should still study in a quiet and suitable place.	The space and environment of students' participation in live online class may have an impact on the teaching effect.

According to our observation notes and personal experiences in live online classes, the main problems are as follows: (1) Students often carelessly make strange noises during the course, which affects teaching. (2) It is difficult for teacher to control the learning state of each student. (3) At first, the teacher did not know how to solve the IT techniques, later on she has gradually mastered the IT technology. The teacher said: "*The university recommended quite a few types of online course, but no training to teachers, what I can do is groping forward*". (4) Some students often have problems with their Internet. One student said: "*I was in my hometown when I was in class. The network there was not very good, which caused me to listen intermittently, and greatly affected my learning state and effect.*"

Generally speaking, the live online class of the QRM courses has many twists and turns that the teacher and students never met before. But with the joint efforts of the teacher and students, the difficulties have been solved soon and the course has been successfully completed.

6.4 Reflection on live online course: quality assurance

The core of the QRM live online course is to guarantee quality and train students' ability to apply qualitative research method. In the process of reflection, it fully embodies the "student-centered" education concept.

1. Students learning outcomes (SLO) show "real knowledge comes from practice"

The QRM is a course in which the teacher requires that each assignment must be completed within the specified time to reflect students' learning outcomes. The teacher said: "*I pay more attention to the fact that everyone must complete the coursework. Even if you cannot come to the class, as long as you can complete the qualified interview and observation, I can accept.*" In addition, the reflection of learning outcomes also includes class Q&A and report. The teacher

asks the students to summarize and report on the coursework completed by their teams, and the speaker for each report should be different, which ensures the participation of each student in class.

2. Students' self-and-mutual assessment: discuss together and put forward the assessment rules

The assessment of the students is embodied in 2 tables, mainly carried out through Q&A performance, coursework completion, class attendance rate and online interaction times. Both tables are sent to the student before class. Table 1 is "Assessment score table of each team's sharing in class", and table 2 is the "The total scoring table of the QRM course". All the students, team leaders and the monitor complete them. Finally, the teacher balanced all the scores and gave the final score. This method ensures the completion of the assessment: self-assessment is carried out within the teams, mutual assessments are conducted among the teams. Team self-assessments ensure the participation of each group member.   Besides, the teacher and students "discuss together, and put forward the assessment rules", the process of consultation and discussion embodies "student-centered" ideal.

3. Teaching reflection: "secret supervisor"

Teaching reflection is an important way to improve the effectiveness and teaching quality of live online class. The main forms of teaching reflection are as follows: teacher and students jointly discuss the course components, teacher's communication with the students in view of course effect and existing problems, teacher asking students for suggestions on the course and reflect on teaching effect through coursework, students' actively reflecting learning outcomes. During the QRM course, the teacher ask one student to be a "secret supervisor" to record and supervise each student's listening state, and give the records to the teacher after class, so that the teacher can understand the basic situation of the course. The following is a copy the "secret supervisor" reporting to the teacher (Fig. 5).
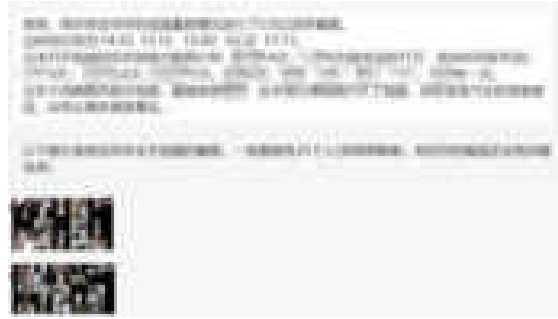
Fig. 5   The "secret supervisor" reporting to the teacher after class

4. Education reflection: "learn to be, then learn to know"

In the assessment to the students, the teacher not only judge the quality of their coursework or performances, but also assess them from the four aspects of " class attendance,   class discipline, academic ethics and commitment" (Table 2). To ensure class attendance and discipline is an attitude problem in live online course. No plagiarism and keeping promise can reflect one's character. Therefore, the teacher's ideal is "*learn to be first, then learn to know*". In addition, according to the characteristics of the live online class, the teacher has also formulated unique scoring standards, such as "to violate class discipline" such as "the open microphone makes noises, deceptive head portraits, the mobile phone online but persons are not at the scene, etc.",   which are quite different from offline teaching.

Table 2   The grading standard of the QRM course

Criteria	Items	Deduction scores
Class attendance	Asking for leave for class	5
	Being late and leaving early for class	2
Class discipline	The violation of class discipline including the open microphone makes noises, deceptive head portrait and the mobile phone online but persons are not at the scene, so on	2
Academic ethics	No plagiarism, similarity of assignment, high repetition rate and other academic misconducts	10/ more
Commitment	Someone who doesn't submit the final report before the deadline agreed	2 (per person per day)

In short, after each class, the teacher uses methods such as "secret supervisor" to control quality assurance (QA) of the QRM course. "Students learning outcomes, students' self-assessment and mutual-assessment, teaching reflection and education reflection" are "four-in-one" quality assurance of the QRM course, which ensures the smooth development and effectiveness of online teaching effectiveness.

6.5 Effectiveness of online course: reflection and improvement

The slowing down of the COVID pandemic does not mean the end of live online teaching. On the contrary, it remains a permanent topic of educational quality. This case study takes the QRM live online course as an example, and reflects on four aspects: online teaching platform and network, multi-frequent interaction, four-level management, and multiple assessments.

6.5.1 Online teaching platform and network: "every skyscraper is built from the ground"

Online teaching platform and network are the basic guarantee for the effective development of live online teaching. Without IT techniques, live online course cannot be carried out; without skillful people in operating online platform, the online teaching will lose its "pillar". However, the lack experiences of teachers and students, unstable network conditions and other un-expetable things often occur in live online classes, which seriously affect the teaching effect. The teaching platform is just like the cornerstone of architecture. Teachers and students should play the role of "construction workers" to make "the skyscraper rise from the ground".

6.5.2 Multi-frequent interaction: "act as a go-between"

Teaching is a bilateral activity of teachers' teaching and students' learning. The interaction between teachers and students is the core element of effective live online course, and it is an important hub to connect all parts of the class. Teachers and students are linked by an Internet screen, but they are still "thousands of miles away" from each other, and teachers cannot directly observe the students' learning state and class engagement. So the multi-frequent interaction and communication act as "a go-between" and stimulate students' learning "vigilance". In the QRM course, what is worth praising is the performance of "three questions" before class, "Q&A" in class, interaction and feedback after class. However, too much interaction may affect the progress and effect of the course, and even increase students' learning tasks. Reasonable and appropriate rate of interactive frequency needs to be further discussed.

6.5.3 Four-level management and control: "be loose but never miss"

In the traditional class, the teacher and monitor are the maintainers of class disciplines. But teachers are helpless when facing the problem of students' distraction and disorder in live online class. The original "four-level control mode" adopted in the QRM live online teaching provides us with countermeasures and helps to maintain the disciplines of live online class. This is the key to ensure the effectiveness of live online class.

6.5.4 Multiple assessments: the touchstone of teaching effect

Reasonable assessment standards and methods are the "touchstone" to reflect and guarantee the teaching effect. In the QRM live online course, the multiple assessments have been adopted by the teacher including teacher's assessment, students' self-assessments and mutual assessments have certain reference value. It is scientific to adopt a variety of assessment methods in online teaching, but it is also important to allocate the proportion of assessment methods reasonably.

Conclusion

No matter teaching happens online or offline, "effectiveness" is the unshakable bottom line of quality assurance. The QRM live online course ensures the effectiveness of the course to the greatest extent through the teaching-learning co-construction by the teacher and students before class, the teaching co-creation by the teacher and students in class, and the co-reflection by the teacher and students after class. However, many deficiencies and un-expectable disturbances challenge both teachers and students in this new educational form of live online course. The problem of the effectiveness of live online course will continue to exist, and we still have a long way to go, which needs more comprehensive exploration and research by educators.

VII. Academic Review of the 12th Higher Education International Conference

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Duration:

November, 2020 - June, 2021

7.1   Introduction

The 12th Higher Education International Conference on Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance in Higher Education under the Pandemic took place from the 25th to the 26th of November 2020 online. The conference was organized by the Macao Polytechnic Institute (MPI) in cooperation with the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN), and was the sixth conference in the series jointly organist by MPI and APQN. In the words of the conference organizers, in the pre-conference *Call for Papers*:

In response to the impact of the novel Coronavirus pneumonia epidemic, higher education institutions around the world have rapidly transformed traditional face-to-face teaching into online teaching on a large scale. The change in teaching mode will directly affect the future development trend of higher education.

This is a serious issue at a serious time for higher education institutions (HEIs) across the region, as well as globally. According to Professor Huang Ronghuai, the pandemic has meant we are now in *the third wave* of online learning (initially assisted online learning, then on-demand learning); however, this time there has been a sudden paradigm shift: *online education for all*.

The conference featured four keynote speakers, from the UK,

Beijing and Hong Kong, as well as the APQN President, and 22 presentations divided into six parallel sessions. The overarching themes that have come out from the array of presentations and speakers are:

- the nature of online teaching and issues of quality teaching in online contexts;
- the student experience online in HEIs;
- the nature of quality assurance in online contexts.

This review will start by summarizing the four keynote addresses, and then consider these three themes. It will conclude by summarizing the progress made so far and the questions most in need of answers for the near future.

7.2 Keynote speeches

Professor Zhang reported the results of a large-scale international survey of HEIs and Quality Assurance Agencies (QAAs) conducted in the first half of 2020 in the teeth of the COVID storm. [1]Unsurprisingly, most HEIs reported implementing a range of measures to cope with pandemic restrictions, notably online or blended teaching and learning, as well as changes to teacher-student support measures. At the same time, the survey responses also highlighted significant negative impacts arising from the pandemic and associated measures. These included fear, the effects of stress on work and learning, and diminished powers of concentration. In addition, online teaching and learning is reported to be ineffective for many people, which raises serious questions for all stakeholders and have potentially significant implications for HEIs if measures to increase effectiveness are not quickly introduced. Professor Zhang's recommendations to meet challenges include the need for HEIs to adapt, for governance to improve, and for efforts to be made to strengthen our shared community, all with the aim of "continual

[1] Jianxin Zhang. APQN Survey: the COVID impact on Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Key speech at the 12th Higher Education International Conference on Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance in Higher Education under the Pandemic on November 25, 2020.

improvement'.

Mr Blackstock spoke from the point of view of the UK and transnational education (TNE) in this year of "mass transition to online delivery'. [1]He highlighted the very real implications of this for teaching and learning, particularly the need for technical expertise, for reliability of online tools and for managing the student experience. He argued that there was a need for a new method (or methods) for TNE review which can take into account what has changed and what is feasible remotely. Importantly, the emphasis has to be on flexibility of methods combined with a clear focus on student experiences.

Professor Huang compared the different waves of online education—moving from simple "assisted learning' to our current new normal of online education for all—and discussed the quality assurance of online teaching across typical online teaching methods and diverse digital learning resources and tools. [2]Quality assurance will need to take account of all these, as well as various learning promotion activities and evaluations. At the same time, HEIs need to be ready for the issues involved in constructing effective online teaching capabilities, such as network infrastructure, digital resources, teaching innovation and online education policies. Professor Huang pointed out that this third wave of online teaching required a change in education and a change in teaching modes if course quality is to be maintained and improved.

Professor Lo presented advice and recommendations on institutional-wide responses to the sudden shift to online teaching, and how teachers can best be helped to adapt to this so that the student experience and learning remain successful. [3]Professor Lo explained the importance of focusing on the teaching skills needed for

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[1] Mr Douglas Blackstock. Partnership during the Pandemic: The Role of Quality Assurance Agencies. Key speech at the 12th Higher Education International Conference on Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance in Higher Education under the Pandemic on November 25, 2020.

[2] Ronghuai Huang. Building Online Teaching Skills in HEIs through the third Wave of Online Education. Key speech at the 12th Higher Education International Conference on Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance in Higher Education under the Pandemic on November 25, 2020.

[3] Sonny Shiu-Hing Lo. Training Teachers on Online Teaching Skills and Pedagogy: Challenges and Implications. Key speech at the 12th Higher Education International Conference on Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance in Higher Education under the Pandemic on November 25, 2020.

effective, quality online teaching and learning. This is a "huge challenge' which involves not only teaching, but also stimulating student participation. As such, the need is not just for additional teacher training, but also for attitudinal changes by teachers to meet a new paradigm. Moreover, this has to be not only directed towards teachers, but also will involve the concurrent training and changes across institutions—administrative staff, administrators and others. In addition, Lo highlighted the need for changing online assessment and for training of teachers to carry this out, emphasizing the need for adaptability, flexibility and feasibility.

7.3   Nature and issues of quality teaching in online contexts

All conference presenters reported adjusting and adapting to meet new realities in the new "online education for all' context, whether in Macao and China mainland, or in Mauritius, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Indonesia, in the UK, and globally.

Dr Vivian Lei Ngan Lin (MPI Vice-President) discussed how to effectively continue teaching and learning online, and how to ensure quality in both, using MPI's 2020 experiences as an example. [1]This

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[1]   Vivian Lei Ngan Lin. Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance in Higher Education under the Pandemic: A Case Study of Macao Polytechnic Institute. Speech at the 12th Higher Education International Conference on Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance in Higher Education under the Pandemic on November 25, 2020.

has necessitated a transformation in online teaching modes, teaching relationships, and new technology skills and methods. While this brought many challenges to teachers, students, management and academic support units, it has also resulted in a growing institutional understanding of the importance of integrating online and offline education.

Dr Andy Smith (Quality and Standards Manager, QAA) and **Professor Derrik Ferney** (Quality Manager, QAA) highlighted the very real challenge for HEIs in 2020 of getting education provision online while making sure all students have access and promoting academic integrity.[1] Important for this has been the guidance produced by QAA in the UK from March 2020, covering a range of university teaching and learning contexts. This advice and guidance demands flexibility in approaches and the need for teaching to be adaptive as contexts continue to change. It recommends designing carefully, being clear to students how learning outcomes are to be met, and making use of various platforms. In addition, it also makes use of a series of questions that can help guide teachers and teaching providers. Perhaps most importantly, the presentation emphasized the idea of engaging with all stakeholders (including students) and keeping flexible in order to respond as online teaching and learning develops.

WDNSM Tennakoon (Wayamba University of Sri Lanka) reminded us that even before COVID-19, many students worldwide were "out of school', and the current situation continues to disadvantage some students.[2] One recommendation is that assessment is needed to make sure online tools are effective and able to "spot the meagerness of what students actually have. Tennakoon reported on a survey of teachers and learners which found "gaps" in online education for teachers and students due to inadequate digital infrastructure (also reported in the context of Pakistan by Tanveer and Amjad, and in Bangladesh by Genilo). Useful recommendations to deal with this

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[1] Andy W. Smith, Derrik Ferney. How Have UK Providers Quality Assured Their Blended Learning Models during the COVID Pandemic? Speech at the 12th Higher Education International Conference on Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance in Higher Education under the Pandemic on November 25, 2020.

[2] WDNSM Tennakoon. Perceived Quality of Online Teaching: Lessons from COVID 19 Pandemic. Speech at the 12th Higher Education International Conference on Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance in Higher Education under the Pandemic on November 25, 2020.

include having smaller classes for shorter times, providing more training for all, and emphasizing the responsibility of administrators.

Adrian J. Davis (MPI), working from the perspective of Polyvagal Theory and the importance of social engagement for students, presented ways to make students feel safe when in-class learning is socially distanced behind masks (e.g. no smiles seen).[①] He highlighted the need for connectedness and how it remained vital for teachers to bring this into classrooms, for example still sitting in small groups. This can maintain the reciprocal interaction as a crucial aspect of classroom teaching and learning. Among practical tips online, Davis recommended insisting on the video function in Zoom (we need to see each other) and making use of the teacher's voice (prosody) to engage students, as well as providing personalized support for students (also Tanveer and Amjad).

Dr Michael Li and **Prof Gillian Chao** of the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts outlined concrete steps taken to quickly develop online teaching competences, including a series of workshops for teachers, a dedicated teaching and learning website (with lots of video, naturally perhaps in their context), and innovative student performances.[②] Practical steps that ought to be more widely used have included a hybrid orientation week for students, online auditions, and an upgrade of the Wi-Fi (administrators take note).

A similar successful "swift adaptation" in challenging circumstances was presented by **Ms. Saadia Panni** and **Ms Nosheen Naz i**n the context of Fatima Jinnah Women University in Pakistan.[③] This involved a university-wide transformation involving all stakeholders, and included evaluating and reporting on online teaching, online learning and student engagement.

[①] Adrian J. Davis. Teaching and learning during traumatic times: Polyvagal theory and the importance of social engagement. Speech at the 12th Higher Education International Conference on Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance in Higher Education under the Pandemic on November 25, 2020.

[②] Michael Li, Gillian Chao. Challenges and Opportunities in Performing Arts Education during COVID-19. Speech at the 12th Higher Education International Conference on Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance in Higher Education under the Pandemic on November 25, 2020.

[③] Saadia Panni, Nosheen Naz. Quality Assurance for Online Education: A Case Study of Fatima Jinnah Women University, Pakistan. Speech at the 12th Higher Education International Conference on Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance in Higher Education under the Pandemic on November 25, 2020.

Dr Fabrizio Trifiro (UK NARIC) spoke about the need for trust and reassurance for all stakeholders in an increasingly complex and growing challenge for TNE, with the focus on online learning and TNE.[①] While TNE continues to grow, a perceived lack of trust and reassurance remain. Online teaching and learning, however, offers an opportunity to improve trust and confidence with improved policy and regulatory frameworks, including the TNE Quality Benchmark.

Hemant Bessoondyal and colleagues at the Mauritius Institute of Education presented the experiences of teachers teaching online in Mauritius.[②] Of note is that from the outset there was recognition of the need for sharing of best practices, training, and collecting feedback from students to inform remedial measures—i.e. a recognition that students have a key role in monitoring quality and effectiveness. They presented findings from a survey of students which suggested both benefits of learning online (less travel, more independent learning, and so on), but also negatives (less peer interaction, less teacher-student rapport, less collaborative learning). The survey also highlighted challenges students face, not only technological (equipment, reliable internet connection, and lack of technology skills), but also feelings of anxiety and pressures from family and other commitments. Nevertheless, the vast majority of students—over 90% of those who took part in the survey—reported being satisfied or very satisfied with their experience of online teaching and learning.

Presenting solutions in a specific online education context, **Dr Chun Cheong Steve Fong** (MPI) described a virtual internship (practicum) for accounting students to replace the pre-pandemic place-based internship.[③] This not only ensures students are able to

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[①] Fabrizio Trifiro. The Future of Transnational Education (TNE): innovative models of delivery, quality assurance and recognition. Speech at the 12th Higher Education International Conference on Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance in Higher Education under the Pandemic on November 25, 2020.

[②] Hemant Bessoondyal, Shalini J. Ramasawmy, Mohun Cyparsade, Sookhenlall Padaruth, Roodradev Beefun. Teachers' Experiences of Online Education during the COVID Pandemic Period in a Teacher Education Institution. Speech at the 12th Higher Education International Conference on Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance in Higher Education under the Pandemic on November 25, 2020.

[③] Chun Cheong Steve Fong. Virtual Internship for Accounting Practicum. Speech at the 12th Higher Education International Conference on Teaching and

have this important work experience, but has enabled students to develop additional skills in communication, independent working and information technology. Even so, Dr Fong emphasizes the continual importance of face-to-face supervision and peer guidance, which suggests the benefits of a blended approach to teaching and learning for HEIs.

Su Kit Tang (MPI) and colleagues shared their experience and strategy on how to mitigate the impact of the pandemic while maintaining teaching quality in both our BSc and MSc programmes in the Computing field.[1] They have applied several methods in module delivery and their approaches have taken into consideration the different needs of taught and non-taught modules, robustness of online assessment, and quick orientation for students who were unfamiliar with online education. Project supervision and presentation have been performed effectively via online communication tools. All the modules in the BSc and MSc programmes have adopted online teaching and been delivered successfully.

The team from the **Indonesian Accreditation Agency for Higher Education in Health** (IAAHEH) looked at pandemic impacts on teaching and on accreditation in the context of health study programmes across Indonesia.[2] Results from an internet-based survey shows that the forced move online has impacted students' cognitive and psycho-motor competencies (but less for affective competence). Interestingly, there is wide variation across respondents, which suggests that whatever measures are used from now on, flexibility within and across HEIs is essential in order to respond to diverse experiences, for example in choice of distance learning

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Learning Quality Assurance in Higher Education under the Pandemic on November 25, 2020.

[1] Philip Lei, Su Kit Tang, Chan Tong Lam, Rita Tse. Mitigating the Impact of COVID Pandemic on Computer Education, Macao Experience and Strategy. Speech at the 12th Higher Education International Conference on Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance in Higher Education under the Pandemic on November 25, 2020.

[2] Usman C. Warsa, Soetrisno Soemardjo, Elly Nurachmah, Arum Atmawikarta, Sidik Awaludin. The Impact of Pandemic on Learning Activities and Accreditation of Health Study Program in Indonesia. Speech at the 12th Higher Education International Conference on Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance in Higher Education under the Pandemic on November 25, 2020.

methods. And for health study programmes, there are inevitably some competencies that cannot be achieved through distance learning.

7.4　Student experience online in HEIs

Several presenters addressed the HEI student experience in online teaching and learning. **Smith and Ferney** reported how some students like or even prefer online learning, especially if asynchronous, and that online exams reduce stress for students. At the same time, however, they noted that students wanted more face-to-face learning and teaching. Students in Mauritius (**Bessoondyal et al**.) reported mixed preferences for post-pandemic learning—some want to return to traditional in-person learning, but most prefer continuing with either fully online or blended learning. This has implications for how HEIs respond to students after COVID restrictions are lifted, and suggests there is no going back to the "old days"—online learning has now been legitimized and institutionalized. No one online learning environment will suit all student needs, nor will purely online education be sufficient for all learning (e.g. laboratory-based competencies, as noted by IAAHEH).

One important issue is students' access to online education—the internet connectivity, the equipment, the space to learn, and ensuring equal access and learning for students with disabilities. **Tennakoon**, in the context of Sri Lanka, reported how availability of adequate technical infrastructure is either a driver or a constraint on students' learning. In context of Pakistan, **Ms. Nashia Ajaz** (Fatima Jinnah Women University) reported on those students who have been left out of online education and who have no connection (not just restricted connectivity), questioning whether all students have been equally included in the transition to online education.[1]　Ajaz

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[1]　Nashia Ajaz. Teaching the Privileged? Observations on the (Un)Inclusiveness of Online Education During Pandemic. Speech at the 12th Higher Education International Conference on Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance in Higher Education under the Pandemic on November 25, 2020.

highlights three types of exclusion: technological, financial ("digitization demands financial flow") and social (domestic learning environment and lack of teacher or peer support). This provides further evidence of the need for a comprehensive approach to online education which can get students access to online teaching, and then support them in their online learning.

The issue of assessment in online education was also addressed. Assessing students' learning online is more than testing, argued **Prof. Dr. Sina Ercan** and **Prof. Dr. V. Aslihan Nasir** (on behalf of their colleagues in the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council).[①] They reiterated the importance of continuing to assess students' learning online (also recommended by Smith and Ferney, while questioning how we can trust students online in exams), but noted that the online context was a challenge for this as online assessment can and does take many forms, while still needing to be both summative and formative. They reported the findings of a large-scale online survey (over 10,000 respondents from 33 institutions in Turkey) on online assessment methods being used. They found that the three most common forms of online assessment are: (1) written assignments, (2) online tests or exams, and (3) projects. These three methods account for 85% of online assessment (the other 15% being made up of presentations, video recordings and other methods), and these were on a range of online platforms. The presenters reminded us that even without formal paper exams, there were still many alternatives available online, such as assignments, quizzes, discussions, presentations and so on—and that HEIs have to be flexible and adaptable.

Dr Christopher Fulton (E-learning Technology Officer at the Centre for Teaching and Learning Enhancement, University of Macau) showed how data gathered during courses from online activity tracking could help teachers identify students at risk of not completing assignments or the course, or both, and at the same time indicating to the teacher which materials need refining for future

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[①] Sina Ercan, V. Aslihan Nasir. Assessing Students' Learning Online: It's More Than Testing. Speech at the 12th Higher Education International Conference on Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance in Higher Education under the Pandemic on November 25, 2020.

use.[1] While it is acknowledged that this use of data-based decision making has weaknesses, nevertheless it is sure to be increasingly useful for educators (and learners) and will have a positive impact on teaching and learning in online environments. Interestingly, Fulton's students were the most active on Mondays, perhaps, as he suggests, due to the personal reminders sent then.

Also on the theme of data and online education, **Dr Mengyao Jin** shared the experiences at the Education University of Hong Kong in transforming teaching modes in online contexts, and highlighted the need to change educational thinking.[2] This will include making use of big data, cloud computing and artificial intelligence to enhance information technology-based teaching.

7.5   Nature of quality assurance in online contexts

On quality assurance under the pandemic, **Amberin Tanveer** and **Syeda Anna Amjad** (Lahore School of Economics, Pakistan), looking at the impact of quality assurance measures on quality of online education, noted that while both online and in-person teaching programmes were assessed to the same quality measures, online education was considered inferior to in-person teaching and learning in Pakistan.[3] As had already been recommended in a keynote address (Huang), there will need to be a change in teaching mode for online contexts and environments which, in turn, will need to improve course quality and student experience and learning outcomes. This is

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[1] Christopher Fulton. Exploring Student Engagement and the Design of an Online Course and Using Activity Tracking Tools. Speech at the 12th Higher Education International Conference on Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance in Higher Education under the Pandemic on November 25, 2020.

[2] Mengyao Jin. Exploring the Development Direction of "Internet + Education" in Normal Education. Speech at the 12th Higher Education International Conference on Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance in Higher Education under the Pandemic on November 25, 2020.

[3] Amberin Tanveer, Syeda Anna Amjad. The Impact of Quality Assurance Measures on Quality of Online Education at Lahore School of Economics. Speech at the 12th Higher Education International Conference on Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance in Higher Education under the Pandemic on November 25, 2020.

perhaps an issue of "curriculum resilience", noted by **Smith and Ferney**, who recommend a blended learning approach.

Issues of validation and quality were raised by presenters, for example how learning assessment can be carried out if not through traditional examinations (**Smith and Ferney**, **Tanveer and Amjad**). There is a need to rethink and adapt, such as working out how to monitor online exams, or changing assessment formats (e.g. open book, or timed shorter tests).

Dr Alison Felce (QAA) and **Dr Nadeem Khan** (Higher Colleges of Technology, UAE) addressed the topic of assuring institutional quality and how, in the context of institutional assurance by QAA Global, there is the need for external accreditation to adapt and meet current challenges, such as replacing site visits by video and virtual meetings online, with the example in the context of the UAE.[①] However, some accreditation was not possible solely online (as pointed out by **IAAHEH**), so there will still be a need for some site visits in the future.

Institutional quality assurance in the context of Bangladesh was discussed by **Prof Jude William Genilo** (University of Liberal Arts, Bangladesh). Institutional Quality Assurance Cells (IQAC) are used to guiding and persuading teachers and students of the practical aspects of online education and on the quality it provides.[②] IQACs have done this through engaging with stakeholders (such as conducting student surveys), training and guidance, and continuous monitoring and assessment of online teaching to build trust in online learning.

Chun-chi Chih (HEEACT, Chinese Taibei), from the perspective of higher education evaluation and accreditation, compared evaluations of quality in online and traditional education in the US, Chinese Taibei and Malaysia.[③] The comparison highlights the need for training of

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[①] Alison Felce, Nadeem Khan. Assuring Institutional Quality in times of a pandemic. Speech at the 12th Higher Education International Conference on Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance in Higher Education under the Pandemic on November 25, 2020.

[②] Jude William Genilo. Responses to the Pandemic: Institutional Quality Assurance Cells in Bangladesh. Speech at the 12th Higher Education International Conference on Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance in Higher Education under the Pandemic on November 25, 2020.

[③] Chun-chi Chih. A Preliminary Study of Online Education Evaluation of Higher Education Quality Assurance Agencies. Speech at the 12th Higher Education International Conference on Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance in Higher

evaluation committees in making use of online education information, in evaluating the effectiveness of online education for student learning, and in not overlooking the importance of teachers' digital skills and competences.

Summary

This conference has highlighted how, since the start of 2020, HEIs and QAAs have been in a period of swift changes and sudden, necessary adaptation. Writing in March 2020 about the nature of medical expertise and experts in the growing COVID pandemic, Abraar Karan argued that this crisis has shown that the idea of a "single expert" who can guide us through the multiple challenges we are facing is simply not realistic: "Instead of arguing about who is and isn't an expert, I think that one of our duties at this time is to create expertise, not hoard it" (Karan 2020). This conference has clearly demonstrated the need for experts to share together to create expertise in maintaining, improving and assessing online education quality, and has also provided worthwhile means of doing exactly this. The keynote speakers and presenters openly shared their experiences and growing expertise in diverse contexts and different disciplines—as Karan emphasized, "pandemics require interdisciplinary collaboration."

The significant change to online teaching and learning *for all* has thrown up many questions, many of which it is still too early to answer. Nevertheless, we know a lot about quality teaching in previous "normal" circumstances (classroom-based and in-person), though we are at a relatively early stage in evaluating what is quality teaching in online contexts. Similarly, successful student learning outcomes are open to assessment in our traditional classrooms—pen and paper examinations, in-class presentations and so on—and while we cannot yet be sure what leads to successful learning for diverse students in diverse online learning, the expertise in this is growing.

Three essential elements are online teaching, online learning and online assessment (Lo, and highlighted by others). We need to know

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Education under the Pandemic on November 25, 2020.

much more about all these before the evaluation of quality for each can adequately be addressed. In the meantime, Lo's call for auditing agencies to be open-minded sounds like a very good idea. This is part of the overall need for changes in mind-set and attitudes, from individual teachers all the way up to educational systems. As Zhang recommended, we need to "strive for Quality Culture under the pandemic", while at the same time having to "ride the tide" (Li & Chao).

Conference speakers highlighted how adaptability, flexibility and feasibility are all essential at this time. In addition, as Lo stated, there has to be collaboration among staff in an institution to meet challenges and share best practices. How this can be best brought about would be useful to share in future conferences. Perhaps next year we can change Lo's closing words to: "the education sector over the world *was able to* and *has* overcome COVID in a determined and successful way". And this can best be done, in the one word of the survey respondents reported by Zhang, *together*, involving all stakeholders (Tanveer and Amjad; Panni & Naz).

A continuing challenge for all is to construct the effective online learning infrastructure for institutions, teachers and students (particularly highlighted in contexts of Turkey, Sri Lanka and Pakistan). This will inevitably be diverse in scope and nature, and consequently online teaching and learning methods and outcomes will vary. A key message from this conference has been the need to ensure students are able to take part online. This means having technical abilities, equipment and internet accessibility, time with teachers and peers, and personal support. While some research is already providing guidance on how best to support students, obviously much more is needed in order to say with any certainty what motivates and supports students to do well in online learning across such a diverse higher education landscape. This poses a challenge for QAAs as they seek to codify and make reliable quality assurance activities, which will in turn provide the needed support and guidance for institutions.

Some immediate questions in this conference include: What are the tools we should be using now and in the immediate future to optimize online teaching, learning and assessment (Jin)? How can we make use of data, big or small (Jin, Fulton)? How do we not only maintain, but also enhance the quality of teaching and learning, and

provide the necessary supports for HEIs (Lin)? There is a need for more data from students on their experiences (Bessoondyal et al., Fulton) so we can better know what is and isn't working, and what should be changed to enhance learning outcomes and the overall student experience. Issues of privilege, inclusiveness or exclusiveness, and equal access all need to be addressed (Ajaz), such as by seeking out the stories of students who have been left out by online teaching.

Even post-pandemic, a blended approach to education seems likely to continue and to have advantages over a solely in-person approach. Examples from the conference include the reported experiences of students in Mauritius (Bessoondyal et al.), an innovative accounting practicum in Macao (Fong), performance arts in Hong Kong (Li & Chao), and health study programmes in Indonesia (IAAHEH). This will require continuing research into what are or could be best practices in supervision, interaction, teaching and learning, and skill development. If online learning is effective in some areas but not others, a key question for blended learning across disciplines is: What should be done online and what is best done in-person?

Until we are more certain about quality in teaching and learning online, the way forward for quality assurance in this context will inevitably be less certain. As such, it may be necessary for quality assurance professionals to wait for more rigorous findings from current research into large-scale online teaching and learning in as many contexts as possible. Only then can determinations of quality be agreed upon, and only then can quality assurance agencies reliably inform us of the quality of our teachers' teaching, our students' learning, and our institutional quality. The dilemma, though, as highlighted by Tanveer and Amjad, is that effective quality measures are needed now, even as we are adapting, innovating and making all these swift changes. This is the significant challenge for QAAs to deal with right now; how successfully this is done is sure to feature in future conferences.

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VIII. Research on the Meta-Review to the Asia-Pacific Quality Register (APQR)

Project Title:

    Research on the Asia-Pacific Quality Resister (APQR)

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Executive summary

In recent years, the third-party quality assurance agencies (QAAs) and educational review agencies have emerged in endlessly, and the quality of the QAAs is uneven and different. It arouses public concerns about the questions as: "is the QAA qualified?" "does the review conducted by the QAA meet QA criterion?" etc.

"Register" is a new project of global quality assurance(QA) in higher education(HE). The European quality assurance register system is the first attempt and practice. After the establishment of the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) in Europe, the Asia-Pacific Region also learned from its relevant experiences to develop the register system. "Asia Pacific Quality Register (APQR)" refers to an international, non-governmental, self-disciplined constraint and regulation activity for the QAAs. review agencies such as EQAR will recognize or evaluate the QAAs based on the criterion and procedures. After the review, the recognized QAA can be accepted onto "Quality Register". This project endorsed by the APQR Council in 2021, focuses on "meta-review"[①] or "re-examination" of the APQR implementation occurred in the past six years, summarizes the review experiences and explores the sustainable development of the APQR.

8.1   Comparison of eight QAAs accepted onto APQR

APQR officially began its first APQR review in June 23-25, 2015. The three-day site-review was conducted to Fiji Higher Education

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[①] Meta-review, is the review of the review itself, which aims to standardize all kinds of review/evaluation/review activities, find their problems and deviations, and improve the quality and guarantee the quality of the QAAs.

Council (FHEC) by a well-known review panel. This "first milestone review" has opened the way for APQR to carry out the register review system in the Asia-Pacific Region. From 2015 to 2020,APQR has reviewed eight QAAs from six countries (Table 1).

Table 1   List of the eight QAAs accepted onto APQR

#	Country	Name of the Quality Assurance Agencies (QAAs)	Review Time
1	Fiji	Fiji Higher Education Commission (FHEC)	2015
2	Russia	Russian Register (RR)	2017
3	Russia	National Centre for Public review(NCPA)	2017
4	Indonesia	Indonesian review Agency for Higher Education in Health (IAAHEH)	2018
5	Kazakhstan	Eurasian Centre for review and Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Health Care (ECAQA) in Kazakhstan	2019
6	Mongolia	Mongolian National Council for Education review (MNCEA)	2019
7	Kazakhstan	Independent Agency for review and Rating (IAAR) in Kazakhstan	2019
8	Malaysia	Finance review Agency (FAA) in Malaysia	2020

Source: APQN(2018). APQR REGISTER. [Z], Asia-Pacific Quality Network, 2018-12-30.

Based on the 11 review criteria of APQR, this research carried out "meta review" with 8 Self-Review Report (SRR) provided by the 8 QAAs and the 8 APQR review reports completed by the review panel; at the same time, supplemented by a survey entitled "APQN Review Status" and some in-deep interviews.

8.1.1   Review basis: dynamic review under constructivism

The review basis is an important factor for the reliability of the APQR review. In order to make more objective and fair decisions, the review panel uses as much information and records as possible under each criteria to present fuller and more credible results. In the eight

APQR review reports, the review basis of the review results of each criterion are stated as the followings (Table 2).

Table 2   Review basis of 11 criteria of the APQR review

#	Criterion	Evidences
1	QAA Category	Self-Review Report (SRR) Legislative status Review certificate Records of site-review and interviews
2	Operations	Self-Review Report (SRR) Legislative status National laws on review Documents of the QAA's review/evaluation activities
3	Mission and Objectives	Self-Review Report (SRR) Q AA's constitutions or documents Records of site-review and interviews
4	Staff and Reviewers	
5	Independence	
6	Resources	
7	Process and Criteria	
8	Appeals	Self-Review Report (SRR) Appeal legislation Appeal documents Records of site-review and interviews
9	Quality Assurance	Self-Review Report (SRR) Relevant documents Records of site-review and interviews
10	Monitoring and review	
11	Agency Linkages	Self-Review Report (SRR) Documents of the QAA cooperation and linkages Public information available to the Panel,e.g. APQN website Records of site-review and interviews

Source: APQR review panel. APQR Review Report of Certification Association "Russian Register" [Z]. Review materials of the APQR

review, 2018-05.

The APQR review shows the following 3 characteristics:

1. Review concept: constructive review

APQR review has been carrying out the concept of "multi-party construction", and believes that the review is not static, but constantly generated according to the individual characteristics and conditions of the QAA. Therefore, APQR insists on dynamic review, pays attention to the latest documents of the QAA and the historical overview of the QAA at all times when conducting on-site review. Realizing goal of the combination of comprehensive understanding and key elements.[1]

2. Review subject: mutually negotiable review

"Co-construction" is the essence of the fourth generation review concept, and "negotiation" is the process of the fourth generation review concept. Due to the differences of values and positions of all parties, the review based on a single value judgment is often biased and unreasonable. Therefore, in the APQR review process, the review panel not only pay attention to the Self-Review Report (SRR) of the QAA, but also the observations and interviews of the panel during the on-site review, which shows that APQR focuses on the concept and proof of both the QAA and the APQR review panel, so as to obtain objective and fair review results, effectively help the QAAs to improve their quality and realize their sustainable development.

3. Review method: combining quality method with

quantity method

he main basis of the APQR review comes from two aspects, one is the Self-Review Report and related documents; the other is the interview records and supporting evidences during the on-site review. The review not only pays attention to the quantitative data obtained

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[1] Jagannath Patil, Zhang Jianxin. Who will guarantee the quality of the QAAs in higher education? Practical Exploration of the Asia-Pacific Quality Register (APQR)in the Asia-Pacific Region [J]. Shanghai Education review Research, 2016,5(02):47-52.

from the SER and related documents, but also to the qualitative records obtained from the observations and interviews during the on-site review. Combine quality method with quantity method to make efficient and reasonable review decisions. On the basis of quantity method, APQR emphasizes the use of surveys, interviews, observations and other ways to evaluate, and implements the "constructive review concept" in the fourth generation review.

8.1.2 Review focus: openness, inclusive & credibility

In order to reach the goal of combining "standardization" with "flexibility", APQR clearly elaborates the requirements of meeting the criterion. The specific observation points need to be determined according to the Self-Review Report of the QAA and the on-site visit status of the panel. The SERs and documents prepared by the eight QAAs mainly includes the following 11 criterion.

Table 3   key points of APQR review Criterion

#	Criterion	Observation Points
1	Organization Category	1) Legislative status and legal authority 2) The Commission's remit 3) Authorized and recognized status 4) Relationship with the Ministry of Education 1) Broad range of the stakeholders
2	Operations	1) QA principle 2) QA standard 3) QA operation 4) QA period
3	Mission and Objectives	1) Clearly articulation 2) Being open and transparent 3) Common understanding with stakeholders 4) Improvement to quality assurance
4	Staff and Reviewers	1) Selection policy of staff and evaluators 2) Fit of professional background and job 3) Number and performance of staff and evaluators 4) Professional development policy and

		programme 5) Number and effectiveness of professional training 6) International exchange and cooperation 7) Stakeholders' engagement in QA
5	Independence	1) Structure and function 2) Financial independence 3) Evaluators' independence 4) Independence of decision-make
6	Resources	1) Adequacy of human resources and finance 2) Guarantee mechanism for human resources, administration and allocation 3) Information resources, electronic resources, etc; 4) Resource cooperation and sharing
7	Process and Criteria	1) Clarity of review/review procedure 2) Clarity of criteria/ criteria 3) Perfection of review/review procedure 4) Being open and transparent
8	Appeals	1) Stakeholders' understanding 2) Appeal transparency 3) Appeal standardization 4) Appeal independence 5) Appeal and Records
9	Quality Assurance	1) Records and procedures of internal QA 2) Compliance to internal QA 3) Updating the records of the internal QA 4) Improvement of internal QA
10	Monitoring and Review	1) Regularly publication of review/ review reports 2) Platform to provide information 3) Providing consulting services for HEIs 4) Providing information and consultation for experts; 5) Training of evaluators and QA experts
11	Agency Linkages	1) Ideal of exchange and cooperation 2) Policy of exchange and cooperation

		3) Number and regions of cooperating QAAs
		4) Collaboration with stakeholders

From the perspective of the focus of the APQR review, the following 3 characteristics shows:

1. Keep the initial goal in mind: being committed to quality improvement

In the APQR review, all 11 criterion are made with the ultimate goal of improving the quality of education, and the degree to which the QAAs improve the local education quality is observed. For example, when reviewing the criterion of "Operation of the QAA",the panel concerns the cooperation between the QAA and the Ministry of Education(MoE), higher education institutions (HEIs) and other educational providers. When reviewing the criterion of "Organization Category", the panel carefully examines the QA principles, criterion and implementation activities of the QAA. When reviewing the criterion of "Mission and objectives", it is very important to examine whether the QAA aims at quality improvement.

2. All-inclusive: stakeholders' participation

When one educational QAA is reviewed, the review panel pays very close attention to the stakeholders' participation under various review criteria. For example, when reviewing the criterion of "mission and objectives", it emphasizes the value coordination of various stakeholders. When reviewing the criterion of "Staff and Reviewer", the panel emphasizes the importance of stakeholders' participation in the review. Particularly, in the ECAQA site review, students' participation in the quality assurance of higher education was greatly appreciated.[1] When reviewing the criterion of "Appeals", the panel explores the appeal procedure and the right for the stakeholders to know. When reviewing the criterion of "Agency Linkages", the panel pays special attention to the cooperation and exchange of the

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[1] Xiang Zhijie, Zhang Jianxin, Huang Panpan. Research on the participation of ECAQA students in higher education quality assurance in Kazakhstan [J]. Shanghai Education review Research, 2021,10 (03): 42-47. .

supporting evidences between the QAA and various stakeholders.

3. Openness and transparency: establishing and enhancing public trust

As a cross-regional QA review project, APQR requires the QAAs to have credibility. For this reason, APQR specifically requires the QAAs to make information public and update it regularly. For example, when reviewing the criterion of "Mission and Objectives", the panel emphasizes that the content should be open and transparent. When reviewing the criterion of "Process and Criteria", the panel emphasizes the openness of the procedures and criterion of the QAA in their routine QA activities, so as to ensure impartiality. In the review the criterion of "Monitoring and review", it is emphasized that the QAA should disclose its information and regularly issue the updated information and reports as well as to establish a special portal website to disclose information.

8.1.3 Review results: four levels of comprehensive review

The final decision of APQR is determined by the review results of 11 criterion. Only when the QAA meets 11 criterion can it be finally recognized. The results of 11 criterion are classified into four levels. Acceptance onto APQR requires "Substantial Compliance" with these criteria. Each criterion will be judged "Full Compliance Substantial Compliance Partial Compliance Or Non-Compliant"; and substantial compliance with the whole set needs full or substantial compliance with each criterion.

The 8 QAAs mentioned above have all accepted onto APQR. All of the QAAs have been judged as "Substantial Compliance", but have not reached "Full Compliance" at present, which indicates that all the eight QAAs have space for improvement. Among the 11 criterion, most of the 8 QAAs have reached "Full Compliance" at the 2 criteria of "Operations" and "Agency Linkages", which indicates that each QAA is more standardized in internal management, cooperation and communication; while among the 3 criteria of "Organization Category", "Staff and Reviewers" and "Process and Criteria", fewer have reached "Full Compliance", which indicates that most QAAs

need continuous improvement.

8.2　Meta-review of the APQR review based on the survey

Delphi Method (also known as "expert survey method") was used to design "Survey of the APQR Review Status" by soliciting the opinions of relevant experts four times through the research path of "sorting, induction-statistics, feedback, re-solicitation, re-focus, re-feedback, consensus". The survey investigates the 3 main bodies of the QAAs, the review panelists and the members of APQR Council (AC). In total the research got 11 valid respondents among 16 samples. The survey is made up of 5 dimensions: "purpose, standard, procedure, sustainable development and improvement". The questions are mainly matrix ones, and the answers are set with 3 options: "satisfactory, average and unsatisfactory". At the same time, the survey also set up an open question to collect the suggestions for improvement.

8.2.1　Review objectives: the common "initial goal" of both parties.

The survey results show that all review panelists, QAAs and review panelists confirm the 4 review objectives of APQR, but there are "satisfaction" differences.

1. Appropriateness to review objectives

The APQR review is carried out for the purpose of "appropriateness", so it is an important basis to judge the review effectiveness by examining whether the review has achieved the present goal. For the question of "How much do you think APQR review has achieved its goal?", 7 out of the 11 valid respondents agreed "satisfaction", 2 chose "average", and 1 chose "unsatisfied". This shows that not all the respondents agree that APQR review has fully achieved its objectives to some extent. So APQR needs to further consider how to implement the objectives in the future review.

2. Similarity of the QAAs

Only when the goal of APQR is in the same direction as that of most QAAs will it attract more and more QAA s to register for APQR, and APQR can further get developed accordingly. For the question of "Do you think the goal of APQR is in the same direction as that of the QAA ?", 10 agreed "Satisfaction", and only 1 selected"Average". In the interviews of the 3 panelists, only 2 panelists expressed "satisfaction" and 1 expressed "average". This shows that the panelists with their rich professional knowledge and QA experiences, think that APQR should give more consideration to the value of the stakeholders in setting its goals, develop and update the purpose from the perspective of various stakeholders.

8.2.2 Review criteria: identify the "pathogeny to prescribe the right medicine"

For the question of "Do you approve of the APQR review criteria?" and "Do you think the APQR criteria design is clearly oriented to goal?", all the respondents agreed "satisfaction". This shows that 11 APQR criteria have been approved by all the stakeholders. In particular, the recognition of the panelists with rich professional knowledge and QA experiences is even more valuable. However, respondents believe that the criteria still has some space for improvement.

1. Comprehensive and systematic review criteria

To examine the comprehensiveness and systematicness of the APQR criteria from the perspective of various stakeholders, the survey is aimed at the question of"Do you think the review criteria can comprehensively and systematically evaluate the work of your QAA ?". 7 respondents chose "satisfaction", and 4 chose "average", which shows that 3 quarters of the respondents think that the criterion need to be further revised and improved, according to the status and characteristics of the QAAs. In order to comprehensively and systematically review the QAAs, closer consultation and interview with QAAs should be strengthened, and more qualitative review methods should be adopted to obtain more comprehensive and in-depth information.

2. Diagnostic nature of the review criteria

"Promoting the QAA reform by reviewing" and "combining review with guidance" have always been APQR review philosophy. In order to explore whether APQR criteria can effectively and objectively reviewed the QAAs and accurately guide the QAAs, the survey asked the question of "Do you think the APQR criteria reflect the major achievements and shortcomings of the QAAs?". Except for 1 AC member who chose "non-satisfaction", all others expressed "satisfaction". This shows that: (1) APQR has a strong sense of self-reflection; (2) APQR diagnostic ability is unsatisfactory to a certain extent; (3) APQR needs to summarize more good experiences from the QAAs and promote them. In order to strengthen the self-development of the QAAs by reviewing, APQR needs to give more targeted and tailed suggestions for the QAA development in the future

8.2.3   Review procedure: standardized but flexible

The survey results show that the 3 subjects are satisfied with the review procedure. The respondents expressed "satisfaction" with the "overall satisfaction", "objectivity", "systematicness" and "reliability". This shows that APQR review procedure can meet the goal of "objectivity and reliability". During the whole review process, the selection of the review panelists, the quantitative investigation before the review, the qualitative analysis during the review and the constructive feedback after the review have formed a tight and flexible closed loop. APQR review is based entirely on "evidence" and "characteristics", which has maximized the effectiveness of the APQR review.

8.2.4   Review result: sustainable development

1. Combine short-term development with long-term

development

In order to achieve the review of sustainable development, APQR tries to combine the short-term development with the long-term development direction of the QAAs. While reviewing the

"history" of the QAA, APQR make great efforts to devote itself to guide the "future". For the question of "Do you think the review can combine the short-term development with the long-term development of the QAA?" 8 agreed "satisfaction",while still 2 from the QAAs chose "average". This shows that from the perspective of the QAAs, they still think that their short-and-long term development has not reached a satisfactory level. The guiding opinions of the APQR review on the future development of the QAAs need to be further refined and appropriate. At the later stage of the review, more feedback and consultations are needed to ensure that the problems of the QAAs can be solved.

2. Self-examination to sustainable development

APQR review adheres to the principle of "combining review with guidance", which not only requires the review of the development status of the QAA, but also finds out the problems existing in the current development of the QAA, and puts forward more constructive suggestions based on the problems. Therefore, the QAAs reflect on problems and opinions and realize the review of sustainable development. For the question of "Do you think the review and meta-review can promote the self-examination, improvement and sustainable development of your QAA?", except for the 2 QAAs who chose "average", the others all expressed "satisfaction". This shows that in the opinions of the review party (including AI members and the review panelists), the APQR review can promote the QAAs to self-examination and achieve sustainable development. However, the Satisfaction is relatively low. The possible reasons are as follows. (1) The feedback of the problems is not appropriate to the actual situation of the QAA. (2) It is difficult for the QAA to effectively solve the problems. (3) The improvement feedback of the QAA has not been effectively confirmed. APQR needs to consult with the QAA to clarify the problems and improve them.

3. Internationalization of quality assurance in higher

education

Internationalization of higher education is an issue of the times. Internationalization of quality assurance is an indispensable part of the reform and development of higher education. It is not only the

inevitable outcome of the development of globalized society, but also an important symbol of the core competitiveness of higher education. For the question of "Do you think the APQR review can help to promote internationalization of quality assurance in higher education in the Asia-Pacific Region?" Except for 2 respondents from the QAAs who chose "average", the others all agreed "satisfaction". This shows that APQR review should be focused on QA internationalization in addition to review criterion, and more efforts should be made in improvement suggestions, future promotion and quality assurance internationalization of the APQR itself.

4. Combine qualitative method with quantitative method

APQR review has always adhered to the review method of "combining qualitative method with quantitative method", which not only pays attention to the analysis of the report data, but also combines the interviews and observations of on-site review. For the question of "Do you think APQR adopts a combination of qualitative method and quantitative method to help get more real and effective results?" All the survey respondents agreed "satisfaction", which indicates that all think that the method combination is more conducive to the comprehensiveness and authenticity of the review. APQR should maintain and continuously upgrade this review method in the future.

5. Individually tailed characteristic review

"Individually tailed characteristic review" is the advocacy concept of the fourth generation review, and the "co-constructive value" of both parties has become the key element of review. In order to make a more comprehensive review of the QAAs, APQR review follows this development concept and is based on the comprehensive review of the QAAs. APQR conducts tailed characteristic review with 11 criterion to the QAA. For the question of "Do you think APQR emphasizes individually tailed characteristic review?" 7 respondents agreed "satisfaction" while 4 chose "average". It is both new and correct to pursue individually tailed characteristics and weaken the normalization of the criterion. However, in APQR review, regional, national and QA organizational purposes, functions and other characteristic factors should be concerned, and review on the basis of "evidence" and "performance" should be insisted, which is extremely

demanding for the review panelists and even the AC members who are the important and last gatekeepers. It can be said that the characteristic review is a "long-way-to-go" process.

On the whole, the satisfaction of the APQR review is high, except for one APQR review panelist, all the others agreed "satisfaction". This shows that the AC members and the QAAs are satisfied with the overall performance of the APQR review. From a more professional point of view, APQR review still needs to be further improved. Therefore, APQR has many good experiences worth learning from, and it needs to be further improved according to the development of the changing world, such as new methods of quality assurance under the COVID since 2021.

8.3 Analysis of advantages and disadvantages

In order to promote the sustainable development of APQR in the future, it is urgent for APQR to have "meta-review" or "re-examination" to the implementations in the past six years, carry forward the good experiences, find out the shortcomings to improve so as to make contributions to good quality assurance in the Asia-Pacific Region.

8.3.1 Summary: advantages and characteristics of the APQR review

The concept of the fourth generation review emphasizes "development" instead of "confirmation"\. From the analysis of the APQR review itself, the analysis of the APQR review under 11 criterion and the survey, the development of APQR in the past six years has many points worth learning.

1. Review concept: to underline the importance to "developmental review" and emphasize "promoting reforms by review"

The essence of the fourth generation review emphasizes the process

of construction and re-construction, i.e. from "the summative review" focusing on results to "the developmental review" focusing on diagnosis." APQR adheres to the principle of "combining review with guidance" in the whole process. It not only points out the QAA spaces for further improvement under 11 criteria, but also points out the QAA development advantages and the spaces for improvement at the last part of "the APQR Review Report": "Advantages and Suggestions". Therefore, APQR attaches importance to developmental review and emphasizes the developmental function of the APQR review.

2. Review process: multi-parties' participation and equal negotiation

The fourth generation review concept emphasizes the participation of all the stakeholders in the review process, and the review should be taken into account various values. In the whole review process, the decision depends entirely on "evidences" and "performances", which not only attaches importance to the APQR review itself, but also to self-review of the QAAs. At the same time, when APQR conducts the review, the QAAs have a high degree of active participation in the information provision, explanations during the on-site review and wrap-up meetings. It can be said that the APQR review is based on multi-parties' participation and equal negotiation.

3. Review result: being committed to sustainable development

For the QAAs that engage in only educational review, adequate financial guarantee and sufficient projects are the key to their survival. This requires the QAAs themselves to continuously improve their credibility and operational efficiency, so as to ensure the sustainable development of the QAAs. APQR review is also committed to "promoting reforms through review", and makes suggestions on the operations and review activities of the QAAs, so as to realize the continuous improvement of the QAAs themselves and achieve sustainable development.

8.3.2   Reflection and improvements: suggestions for

the APQR review

APQR not only promotes the sustainable development of the QAAs, but also needs to constantly reflect and improve in order to promote its own sustainable development, so as to realize APQN's mission of "enhancing the quality of higher education in the Asia-Pacific Region"(APQN Constitution, 2019). In order to further clarify the problems existing in the APQR review for further improvement, "Suggestions for Improvement of APQR" has been added at Part three of the survey. Based on the results of the survey and the analysis of the APQR reviews, the main suggestions are as follows:

1. To get the supports and permissions from the governments of various countries to improve the APQR relevance in quality assurance

In the survey, the respondents from the QAAs pointed out that APQR should cooperate with governments, HEIs and other stakeholders in various countries as much as possible to improve the recognition and relevance of APQR. This will attract more QAAs from various countries to apply for APQR, to ensure its sustainable development from the implementation.

2. To increase the feedback links after the review and to improve the follow-up procedure

"A review is not the end, but a new beginning." During the review, the APQR review panel analyzed the shortcomings of 11 criterion of various QAAs, and gave feedback on the improvement methods in the future. At the same time, APQR also set the validity period of the review. However, after the review, there is a lack of follow-up procedures to review the improvement quality and status of the QAAs, which leads to a great discount on the initially intended effect of "promoting reforms by review" and development function. Therefore, the APQR Council needs to improve the feedback links after the review and incorporate it into the formal review procedure.

3. To improve the organization category of recognized QAAs

At present, APQR mainly recognizes the the QAAs who are engaged in evaluation/review/accreditation of QA activities. In the survey, some pointed out that APQR should also include other QAAs such as research institutions engaged in educational QA, in university ranking, etc. Thereby expanding the coverage scope of APQR, further realizing the review of sustainable development and improving the quality of higher education in the Asia-Pacific Region.

4. To add the APQR online review

With the outbreak of COVID-19, it is difficult to conduct site visit of the APQR review. The normalization of COVID becomes the biggest obstacle to the development of APQR. In order to achieve sustainable development, APQR needs to add more online review methods as soon as possible. To update the criterion suitable for online review, learn and incorporate more online survey techniques. This is not only a great challenge for AC, but also a difficult problem for the APQR review panelists.

Conclusion

During the 6-year review process, the APQR Council, the review panelists and the QAAs made great efforts to cooperate and negotiate with each other. The concept of "developmental review" based on the fourth generation review yielded numerous satisfactory results. However, with the outbreak and "normalization" of the COVID pandemic, it has brought unprecedented crisis and challenges to APQR sustainable development. This research has conducted "meta-review"/ "re-examined" the APQR review in the past six years, summed up and optimized the good experiences, summarized and analyzed the problems existing in the review, and put forward future improvement suggestions. We believe, with the continuous efforts of all APQR staff, we can continue to contribute to quality assurance of higher education in the Asia-Pacific Region and witness the bright

future of higher education in the Asia-Pacific Region.

IX. APQN Standard for

Online-Teaching Quality Assurance

Project Title:

    APQN Standard for Online-Teaching Quality Assurance

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Duration:

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Executive summary

In the past year (2020), in campus lockdown restrictions as a result of the COVID pandemic, online teaching has emerged onto the global higher education stage as a leading means of "adjusting to new environments" which suggests becoming a "disruption" in higher education where operations are typically embedded in historical constancy.

Naturally, the definition of "quality" in higher education (HE) should be redefined amidst the rapidly changing expectations and conditions brought on by 2020. The question is how do internal quality assurance (IQA) and external quality assurance (EQA) monitor newly online teaching provision in higher education and develop future provision in a reliable and efficient manner? What is the quality of online courses and what are the outcomes of such training? Can we trust the quality of online education and the qualifications of graduates who have been trained online?

The results of "APQN Survey of COVID impact on Higher Education Institutions" conducted from March to May in 2020, shows 68% of the respondents are "not satisfied" with online teaching, while "APQN Survey of Effectiveness of online Teaching" conducted in July in 2020, shows 34% respondents think online teaching is "inefficient". At APQN 8th forum entitled "Influence of COVID on Higher Education Quality Assurance" held on July 28 in 2020, an urgent demand made APQN decided to develop APQN Standard for Online-Teaching Quality Assurance.

After the key elements of standard for online-teaching quality assurance were developed by Delphi Method at the beginning of 2021. Based on the Survey of "APQN Standard for Online Teaching Quality Assurance" was conducted in April, here is the final version of "APQN Standard for Online-Teaching Quality Assurance", endorsed by the 6th Board of APQN.

The principles includes 5 aspects: (1)information principle; (2) "teaching by learning" principle; (3) development principle; (4) validity

principle; (5) objectivity/evidence principle.

Based on 5 principles, APQN standard consist of 5 criteria, 14 indicators and 46 observation points: (1) service, openness, sustainability in criterion 1 embodies "information principle"; (2) teaching design, teaching process and teachers' ICT literacy in criterion 2 and "learning process", "learners" ICT literacy" in Criterion 3, embody "teaching-by-learning principle"; (3) objective achievement and satisfaction in Criterion 4 embodies "development principle";(4) assessment method, assessment mechanism and quality improvement in Criteria 5 embody "validity principle"; and (5) objectivity principle is applied to all 5 criteria.

In order to realize the missions of "Enhancing the Quality of Higher Education in the Asia-Pacific Region" and the final goal of "Dissolving Boundaries for a Quality Region", APQN aims the following 3 aspects: (1) to develop quality criteria for online teaching for HEIs and non-traditional HE providers; (2) to develop a PDCI (plan-do-check-improvement) plan to maintain quality standards for online teaching in HEIs and non-traditional HE providers; (3) to develop a feasible and efficient action plan to implement high-quality online teaching.

9.1   Overview

In the past year (2020), in campus lockdown restrictions as a result of the COVID pandemic, online teaching has emerged onto the global higher education stage as a leading means of "adjusting to new environments" which suggests becoming a "disruption" in higher education where operations are typically embedded in historical constancy. This move to online/ virtual teaching and assessment was done quickly and under extreme pressure, requiring some degree-awarding bodies to enact emergency regulations to cover a range of contingencies to support staff and learners through this period.

Naturally, the definition of "quality" in higher education (HE) should be redefined amidst the rapidly changing expectations and conditions brought on by 2020. The question is how do internal quality assurance (IQA) and external quality assurance (EQA) monitor newly online

teaching provision in higher education and develop future provision in a reliable and efficient manner? What is the quality of online courses and what are the outcomes of such training? Can we trust the quality of online education and the qualifications of graduates who have been trained online?

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The key elements of standards for online-teaching quality assurance were developed by Delphi Method at the beginning of 2021. Based on the Survey of "APQN Standard for Online Teaching Quality Assurance" was conducted (https://www.wjx.cn/vm/PiMFEzV.aspx) in April, here is the final version of "APQN Standard for Online-Teaching Quality Assurance", endorsed by the 6th Board of APQN.

Our intention has been to support the sectors in developing solutions to the unique demands that the COVID scenario has placed on Higher Education providers and the sectors at large, such as Distance Education.

9.2   Purposes of quality standards

APQN Standard for Online-Teaching Quality Assurance are intended to provide a measure of quality insurance for online teaching in order to serve the online-teaching needs for higher education institutions(HEIs), non-traditional higher education(HE) providers. The standard is directed to HEIs that wish to offer online and blended teaching with other online-teaching cooperation for degree programs.

The aims of the project: 1) To develop quality criteria for online teaching for HEIs and non-traditional HE providers; 2) To develop a PDCI (plan-do-check-improvement) plan to maintain quality standards for online teaching in HEIs and non-traditional HE providers; and 3) To

develop a feasible and efficient action plan to implement high-quality online teaching.

9.3   Principles of quality standards

The principles of quality standards for online-teaching quality assurance obey the following 5 principles:

1. **Information principle**

Relied on information technology, guided by modern education and teaching theory, it emphasizes the development of new teaching mode such as online and blended teaching; teaching content has stronger epochal to ICT tendency, and teaching is more suitable for learners' needs and characteristics of the young netizens.

2. **"Teaching by learning" principle**

Online teaching assessment standards focus from "teacher behaviors" to "student behaviors", and its foothold is learning, because the final goal of "teaching" is to serve "learning". Learning needs to pay attention to learning subjects (students), learning contents, learning activities, learning methods, learning assessment and learning effect; while teaching needs to pay attention to teachers, teaching objectives, teaching process, teaching methods and teaching effect, aiming at reflecting the modern student-centered teaching concept.

3. **Development principle**

Focus on the future development of the teachers and learners: (1) Based on both the reality and the future, know the development trend of teaching value; (2) pay attention to both the exploration of teachers' potentiality in teaching and the cultivation of learners' future motivation for sustainable development; (3) the assessors should strive to update their own teaching concepts, and the assessment methods are epochal and foresighted.

4. **Validity principle**

Based on the elements of the educational assessment system,

the following 5 elements should be considered in the assessment process: (1) objective validity: the realization between assessment goal and educational idea; (2) content validity: the appropriateness of the contents or samples to be assessed; (3) cross validity: the consistency of mutual inspection and verification of various assessment methods; (4)subjective validity: the correctness and fairness of the assessment results of assessment subjects to assessment objects; (5) process validity: the effectiveness of the process of collecting various assessment information and data.

5. Objectivity/evidence principle

The assessment result and process should conform to objective reality, respect objective facts, and make correct conclusions based on evidences/proofs in the whole assessment process, preventing the subjective impression from replacing objective measurements.

9.4.　　Criteria of quality standards

APQN Standard for Online-Teaching Quality Assurance is based on 13 criteria from difference countries/organizations such as "Report from ENQA Working Group on Quality Assurance & E-Learning"(2018), "APEC Quality Assurance of Online Learning Discussion Paper" (2017), "HKCAAVQ Approach to Accreditation of Online Learning Programmes" (2018), "IIOE Quality Assurance: Institutional Self -Assessment on Quality Online and Blended Teaching and Learning" (2020), "China Reference Standard for Construction of Online Class"(2019), etc. Based on the 5 principles mentioned above, the framework of quality standards focuses on the 5 key words: environment, teaching, learning, outcomes and QA.
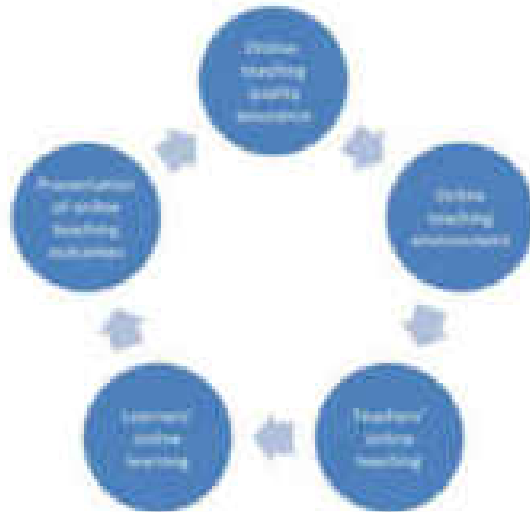
Based on 5 principles, the indicators consist of 14 key features: (1) service, openness, sustainability in criterion 1 embodies "information principle"; (2) teaching design, teaching process and teachers' ICT literacy in criterion 2 and "learning process", "learners' ICT literacy" in Criterion 3, embody "teaching-by-learning principle", (3) objective achievement and satisfaction in Criterion 4 embodies "development principle";(4) assessment method, assessment mechanism and quality improvement in Criteria 5 embody "validity principle"; and (5) objectivity principle is applied to all 5 criteria.

Principles	Criteria	Indicators
1.Information principle	1.Online teaching environment	Service
		Openness
		Sustainability
2. "Teaching by learning" principle as well as Development principle	2.Teachers' online teaching	Teaching design
		Teaching process
		Teachers' ICT literacy
	3.Learners' online learning	Learning process
		Learners' ICT literacy
3.Development principle	4. Presentation of online teaching outcomes	Outcomes of teaching and learning

		Objective achievement
		Satisfaction
4. Validity principle	5. Online- teaching quality assurance	Assessment method
		Assessment mechanism
		Quality improvement
5. Objectivity principle is applied to all		

Quality standard consist of 5 criteria, 14 indicators and 46 observation points.

Criteria	Indicator	Observation point
Online-teaching environment	Service	1. HEIs have at least one online-teaching department with necessary regulations, such as "Guideline for Online Teaching", etc. 2. HEIs have online teaching platform technology, administration and other service supports, including online counseling, teaching, technology, technical training, etc. 3. E-teaching management platforms have availability and reliability, including help-desk for learners, good web response, linkage, navigation and positioning, etc.
	Openness	1. Adequacy of online teaching resources, such as access to online teaching resources (both online and offline),i.e. anyone can learn any course at any time and any place 2. Openness and sharing of online teaching resources, such as access to teaching resources outside campus. 3. Publicity of information, such as the release of reliable, complete and

		up-to-date information on, including qualification recognition, teaching objectives, credits, requirements, assessment methods, timetable, etc.
	Sustainability	1. To create "Information culture" for life-long learning 2. sustainability of online-teaching platforms, materials development and academic approaches 3. Sustainability of teachers and trainers skills, and HEIs' active responses to online teaching
Teachers' online teaching	Teaching design	1. The goals of online teaching are clear, and teaching contents meet learners' needs 2. There are various types of online teaching, such as "online teaching", "blended teaching" (online + offline), etc. 3. Appropriateness of online-teaching media (the most appropriate teaching forms for different types of courses), such as "recorded teaching", "live teaching", etc. 4. Teaching design emphasizes the use of online platform to attract learners' attention, strengthen the interactions between teachers and learners, and highlight "student-centered" education concept
	Teaching process	1. Comprehensiveness of the online-teaching content, covering all teaching objectives, orientation, navigation, schedule and outcomes, such as online activities and assignments are clearly explained. 2. Regularity of online teaching, including the accessibility of courses.

		3. Effectiveness of interactive communication and feedback between teachers and learners, among learners, including the use of platforms, forums, emails, interactive groups and other communication channels, etc. 4. Traceability of teaching platform, including records of learning track, progress, task, etc. 5. Ensure that the teachers are qualified and appropriately trained to deliver high-quality learner supports in the online environment and assessment
	Teachers' ICT literacy	1. Ability of web-based teaching design and innovation of online teaching, e.g. each online course has an open and clear syllabus, which can innovative previous teaching 2. Control ability of online classroom under the web-based environment, e.g. being skillfully use network platform and technology to successfully complete teaching tasks. 3. Ability of online-teaching assessment and reflection in the information age, e.g. ability to analyze teaching effect, making rules for learners to study and to be in exams honestly, and taking the measures to prevent plagiarism. 4. Ability to continuously improve information ethics and information literacy, including academic integrity, moral behaviors, electronic security measures, etc.
Learners'	Learning	1. Offline assignments assigned by

online learning	process	teachers are related to the online-teaching contents and learners' learning outcomes. 2. Learners' initiatives and enthusiasm, being able to regularly know their own online learning rate, browsing frequency, interaction, assignment completion and other information. 3. Assignments can promote learners' critical thinking, self-reflection and problem-solving ability, and the clear scoring rules can help learners know how to score themselves. 4. Learners receive an orientation session to the online environment and technical requirements for studying on the course, prior to the commencement of learning and teaching activities and assessment as well.
	Learners' ICT literacy	1. Ability to acquire, manage and integrate online teaching information by using data technology and communication tools. 2. Assessment ability of online learning, usage of network technology or IT tools to improve their own learning and assessment efficiency. 3. Ability to continuously improve network ethics and information literacy, including academic integrity, moral behaviors, electronic security measures, etc.
Presentation of online-teaching outcomes	Outcomes of teaching and learning	1. Submission of learners' learning outcomes (LLOs), such as course papers, curriculum design, etc. 2. Teaching and learning outcomes

		and qualification recognitions, e.g. SLOs' display, teaching achievement awards, online excellent course, etc. 3. HEI's report on success stories of online teaching to a central office which could share these with other entities in the HEI.
	Objective achievement	1. Realization of online teaching to achieve the expected teaching and learning outcomes 2. Achievement of online teaching outcomes, passing rate, dropout rate and others. 3. Improvement of learners' solve problem-solving ability and learners' own development.
	Satisfaction	1. Learners' satisfaction with online teaching. 2. Teachers' and learners' overall satisfaction with online teaching.
Online-teaching quality assurance	Assessment method	1. Formative assessment, e.g. pre-online teaching, mid-term assessment, online tracking records, etc. 2. Summative assessment，e.g. final assessment at the end of online teaching. 3. Developmental assessment, e.g. assessment results promoting quality of online teaching and the improvement of teachers and learners.
	Assessment mechanism	1. Teachers' mutual assessment online, i.e. a peer assessment mechanism. 2. Supervisors' online teaching assessment, such as supervisors' entering online classrooms to

		evaluate. 3. Learners' assessment online teaching assessment, learners can evaluate each online course.
	Quality improvement	1. HEIs, schools and departments have the mechanism of regularly monitoring and evaluating the online-teaching quality. 2. HEIs, schools and departments publish the assessment results publicly. 3. Both teachers and learners can use the assessment results for future quality improvements for online teaching and learning.

The framework of APQN Standard for Online-Teaching Quality Assurance is as follows:
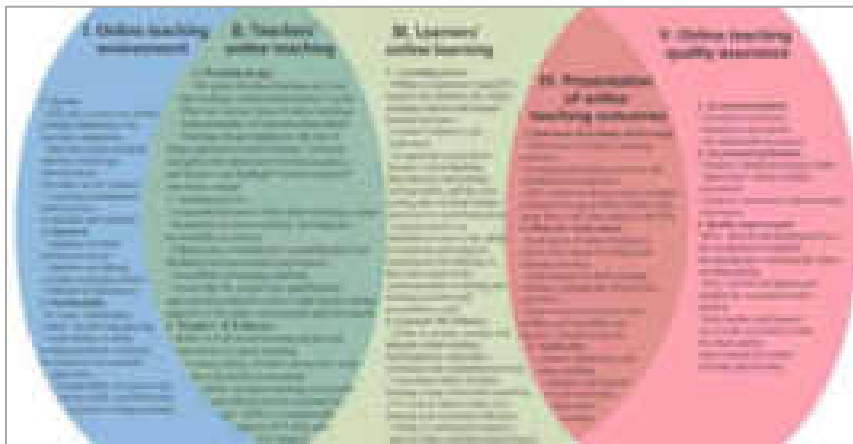
9.5   Process of quality standards

Any HEIs/programs may request APQN to implement the online review of A APQN Quality Label for Online-Teaching Quality Assurance or request APQN and another QAA who has been registered with Asia Pacific Quality Register (APQR) by APQN to implement a joint review.

The APQN Board is responsible for organizing the online review, ensuring good practice in the review process and selecting and briefing the members of the panel to be responsible for the review. The assessment process is below:

1. Expression of Interest (EoI) by the HEI/programme to APQN Secretariat

⬇

2. Acceptance of eligibility by the APQL Council

⬇

3. Self-Assessment Report(SER) by the HEI/Programme

⬇

4. Online desk review of SER by the review panel organized by the APQL Council: 1) validation of SER; 2) qualitative & quantitative assessment

⬇

5. Finalizing the review report by the panel and getting approved by the HEI/programme

⬇

6. Outcome by APQN Council and Board

9.6   Review result

The review result would be four categories: 1) fully achieved; 2) substantially achieved; 3) partially achieved; 4) non-achieved, based on the standards and criteria against the Chiba principal.

The review result will be valid for a period of five years. The APQN Board has the right to cancel the APQN Quality Label if there are circumstances that question the substantial adherence of the HEI/programme to the review criteria. An application for renewal is mandatory after the first five years expire. This application should include documentary evidence of how the quality criteria are being upheld and other improvements are being made. A visit of the expert group can be organized to re-review the status quo.

The award of APQN Quality Label may take place at the APQN Annual Conference and AGM during which the HEIs/programs receive certificates.

The logo of APQN Quality Label is designed as follows:

9.7   Cost

The total cost is 3000 USD: 1500 USD is taken as an indicative figure for the Secretariat's services, as well as income for APQN. Honorarium for 3 reviewers is 1500 USD, each 500 USD as a lump-sum amount. For the whole reviewing process, the costing would be:

S/N	Item Amount	USD
1	Services of APQN Secretariat for APQN Quality Label	1500
2	Honorarium for 3 reviewers (each 500 USD as a lump-sum amount)	1500
	Total (USD)	3000

Note: (1) In case of the site-visit is conducted, the air fare and

accommodation and all related expenses are to be borne by the applicant HEI/programme directly. (2) The reviewers will be chosen from APQN Consultant Database (http://www.apqn.org/services/search-consultants) consisted of 236 consultant from over 53 countries and territories.

Further information

1. The quality assurance agencies who are interested in the international accreditation of HEIs and educational programs with APQN recognition are welcomed to submit a proposal to APQN Secretariat.

2. Any other feedback are welcomed to APQN Secretariat (apqnsecretariat@163.com) and Prof/Dr. Jianxin Zhang, Project Leader (948661302@qq.com).

X. Overview of 2021 AAC on COVID Response Mechanism

Project Title:

Overview of 2021 APQN Academic Conference

Leader:

Jianxin Zhang

Authors:

Jianxin Zhang, Shirun Wang, Wenjing He, Xiaoyin Cao

Consultants:

Jianxin Zhang, Galina Motova, Jagannath Patil, Deepthi Bandara, I-Jung Grace Lu, Farida Nurmanbetova, Pingping Liu

Fund supporter:

The Project was approved by Asia-Pacific Quality Network (Code No.: APQN2021-01).

Duration:

December in 2021 to February in 2022

Executive summary

The COVID has swept the world and brought varying degrees of impacts to higher education institutions, teachers, and students. Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN) held a 2021 academic conference on the online platform of Zoom, entitled "Response mechanism and influence of higher education quality assurance in Asia-Pacific region in the post-epidemic era". There were more than 350 participants in this conference, among whom the organizing committee invited four guests to give speeches, and nine scholars from eight countries or regions gave speeches. In the conference we discussed the difficulties and countermeasures it faces from the internal and external parts of higher education quality assurance. It is pointed out that the quality of education in the Asia-Pacific region should go hand in hand and seek progress while maintaining stability in the post-epidemic era. Consequently, it is not only necessary to base itself on the local and strive for stability internally, but also to look at the world and seek progress externally to ensure and improve the quality of higher education.

10.1 Introduction

Since the impact of COVID-19, different countries and regions around the world have continuously adjusted their teaching models, changed their education strategies and updated their management plans. How to ensure the high-quality development of higher education in the post-epidemic era becomes a new issue. In order to further promote the development of higher education and effectively cope with many challenges faced by the quality assurance(QA) of HE in the Asia-Pacific region after the COVID epidemic, the Asia Pacific Quality Network (APQN) Academic Conference and Annual General Meeting was successfully held on November 25th, 2021 on Zoom online platform. This conference was organized by APQN and hosted

by EDUVALUE, and the theme was "COVID-19-Response Mechanism and Impact on Quality Assurance for Higher Education in the Asia-Pacific Region".

By November 13th, 2021, the APQN Conference Organizing Committee had received 36 papers from 15 countries and regions. There are 16 articles from China, accounting for 44% of the total. 3 articles from Pakistan and Russia, accounting for 8% respectively (Fig.1).
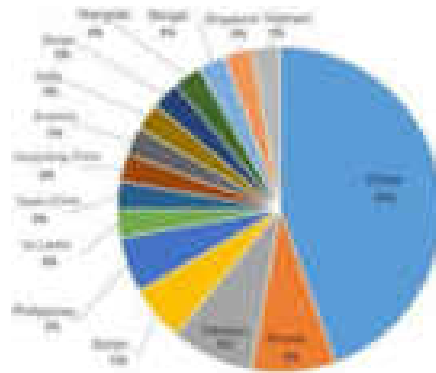
Fig. 1 Distribution diagram of papers submitted by APQN Academic Conference in 2021

Source: APQN Conference Organizing Committee

The opening ceremony of the conference was presided over by Prof. Galina Motova, APQN vice-president. First of all, with the ardent expectation of 350 participants, Mr. Barry Aw Yong, the founder of the EV education group, gave welcome remarks. Then Prof. Jianxin Zhang, APQN president, gave the theme address. On the one hand, she introduced 11 important academic activities of APQN under the background of COVID epidemic, such as the APQN Survey of the COVID impact on higher education institutions(HEIs), Survey of effectiveness of online teaching, APQN standard for online-teaching quality assurance. On the other hand, she pointed out what impacts and changes has COVID pandemic brought us. She also expressed trends of quality assurance for higher education in post-epidemic era. And Dr. Peter J Wells, chief of higher education, gave a keynote speech called Reinventing the Role and Place of Higher Education for a Sustainable Future. Later, three sessions about 1)international higher education QA under the COVID epidemic; 2) online teaching and learning quality QA; 3)innovation path of external QA under the

COVID epidemic were discussed. 9 authors from 8 countries and regions reported the research results for 15 minutes to the participants, and answered some questions about their topic. Finally, the APQN Council made arrangements for the upcoming work in 2022, and Dr. Jagannath Patil, APQN board director, delivered the closing remarks, APQN Academic Conference in 2021 ended perfectly.

10.2   Double dilemma: difficulties in the Asia-Pacific Region

Global higher education has experienced the unprecedented disruption and transformation since the outbreak of COVID at the end of 2019. As of April last year, the number of students affected by school or university suspensions reached 1.57 billion, accounting for 91.5% of the global student population.[1]Online learning became the most popular alternative to traditional face-to-face teaching immediately under the sudden attack of the pandemic.[2]However, due to the lack of internal experience and quality evaluation standards, the Quality of Higher Education is facing great challenges.

10.2.1 HE lacks internal standards

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, many HEIs have adopted online teaching methods to conduct teaching and learning. Therefore, teaching place transformed from classroom to network, but teaching methods lacked interaction, and students' online learning experience was disappointing. According to Arianna Fang Yu Lin's empirical research, a PhD candidate in the Department of Education, National Chengchi University, Chinese Taibei, nearly half of students thought online learning was not as effective as traditional face-to-face teaching. Only 6% of the students were very satisfied with online

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[1] International Centre for Higher Education Innovation under the auspices of UNESCO [UNESCO-ICHEI] (2021). Build back education better in the post-COVID era. Retrieved October 15, 2021, from https://ichei. org/dist/ index.html#/reader?id=190&qk_qishu=1&lang=1

[2] Wang, L. (2020, November 21). Achieving access to quality blended learning for all. University World News. Retrieved October 14, 2021, from https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20201120123658883

learning. Online evaluation was a pressing problem but the best choice to ensure students' learning outcomes.[1] Due to the lack of online education experience in higher education, there are great difficulties to the QA of higher education, which is embodied in the following aspects.

1. The transformation of teaching mode is facing challenges

For most teachers, they are forced to change their teaching mode, just like soldiers going into battle unarmed. All faculty around the globe were given the mission of starting online teaching instantly without appropriate training and supports.[2] Indeed, teachers during this online teaching period required more support than ever to substantiate the quality of their online-teaching.[3] Oman scholars Dr. Wafa AL-Maawali and Ms. Munira Al-Siyabi, put forward that teachers' work environment, teaching style, self monitoring of performance, teacher quality-related practices and initiatives of professional development are factors affecting teaching quality. However, these factors are difficult to guarantee under the special circumstances of epidemic situation.

2. Students are not ready for online learning

First of all, some students are not ready for educational resources. According to statistics, even by 2019, there were still 63% the rural population could not access the Internet at home. The gap of Internet access between rural and urban areas was far larger in developing countries.[4] For students, it was easily to be left behind

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[1] Coates, H. (2020, March 28). Emergency learning requires next-generation assessment. University World News. Retrieved October 13, 2021, from https://www.universityworldnews.com/page.php?page=UW_Main

[2] Rapanta, C., Botturi, L., Goodyear, P., Guàrdia, L., & Koole, M (2020). Online university teaching during and after the COVID crisis: Refocusing teacher presence and learning activity. Postdigital Science and Education,2, 923-945.https://doi.org/10.1007/s42438-020-00155-y

[3] Wafa AL-Maawali, Munira Al-Siyabi. Teacher Role in Internalising Quality Teaching Measures:A case Study of Oman Higher Education[Z]2021 APQN Academic Conference,2021-11-25.

[4] International Telecommunication Union [ITU]. (2020). Measuring digital development: Facts and figures 2020. Retrieved from

with poor internet connections. Secondly, in the process of online learning, students are also meeting great difficulties. 54.2% of the respondents indicated that a lack of interactions with teachers and classmates would be the serious learning problem. In addition to the external environment, 53.6% of the respondents deemed themselves were lacking in self-discipline and 50.1% of the respondents considered themselves were easily distracted by surroundings(Fig.2). Therefore, the quality of students' online learning is not guaranteed.
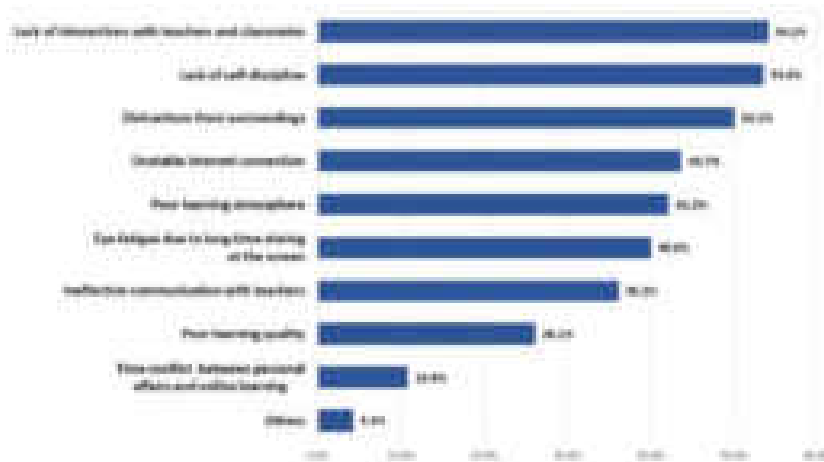
Fig. 2 Major challenges of online learning

Source: Quality and Inequality: Students' learning experiences and perceptions tower online learning amidst COVID-19

3. HEIs suffered a sustained blow

For HEIs, it was challenged to deliver online education without adequate technological equipment.[①] In many developing countries or regions, there is not enough conditions for online education at all. In Ms. Yahan Yang's research, during the pandemic, HEIs not only need to actively participate in pandemic prevention as important social organizations, but also need to maintain the basic functions of higher education as education and research organizations, and give necessary services and guidance to students when they need. Due to

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https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/facts/FactsFigures2020.pdf
[①] Adedoyin, O. B., & Soykan, E. (2020). COVID pandemic and online learning:The challenges and opportunities. Interactive Learning Environments, 1-13. https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2020.1813180

the plague of Coronavirus in 2019, the activities of Pakistan institutes of Technical and Vocational Education and Training(TVET) were blocked, all the recruitment agencies and companies postponed their recruitment process, they also delayed internship opportunities in industries. So the unemployment rate of Pakistan increased at the time of outbreak of COVID-19. According to the survey results of APQN, 30.96% think that their HEIs only reach the average, and 2.68% choose "poor"(Fig.3), and HEIs need to further improve the comprehensive prevention and control. Therefore, the lack of technology in HEI and the backward comprehensive management in emergencies are both internal factors that limit the QA of higher education.
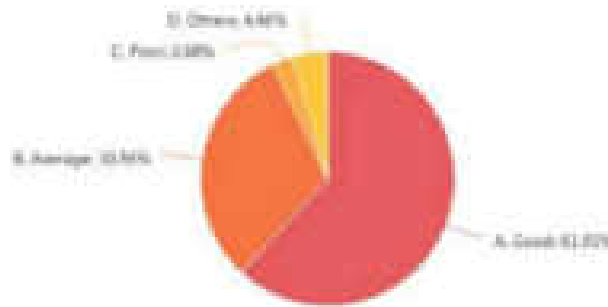
Fig. 3   Respondents' overall evaluation of their HEIs' performance in APQN survey

Source: APQN survey: the COVID impact on Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

10.2.2   QA lacks external standards

The duration of the COVID epidemic is unknown, and the continuous closure between regions makes it difficult for international quality evaluation agencies to maintain normal quality evaluation work. The outbreak of COVID is so sudden that social groups all over the world are not ready to deal with it. The forced online education of higher education is only a temporary solution. After the transformation of educational quality evaluation agencies, how should we adjust the evaluation standards for the HEIs? And how can we cope with new risks?

1. Risky QE transformation

External quality evaluation will transform from traditional evaluation method to online evaluation, just like the change of

education mode transform. Many HEIs are struggling to choose online evaluation to check the quality. Therefore, under the COVID epidemic, the quality evaluation standards of distance higher education have to make technical adjustments, which will pose new challenges to the professionalism of international educational quality evaluation agencies. Ho Dac Hai Mien, vice-director of national center for education accreditation, stressed that in the context of Industry 4.0 and the pandemic of COVID-19, the quality of distance education in HEI has been much concerned by stakeholders.[1]

2. Difficult cross-border education

At present, cross-border higher education has become the most important component of higher education internationalization and one of the most important ways to implement it[2]. Studying abroad, studying in China and Sino foreign cooperation in running schools are the main forms of cross-border education. Online evaluation and qualification certification are important prerequisites for cross-border education. Under the COVID epidemic, online evaluation increases the risk of cheating in qualification certification, which will inevitably cause unprecedented great obstacles to cross-border education. Mr. Fabrizio Trifiro, head of quality benchmark services, Ecctis, expects transnational education(TNE) to continue to grow in strategic importance post-COVID-19, as providers are appreciating the role that TNE operations and international partnerships can play in meeting the education and training needs of students unable or unwilling to travel internationally or long distances.[3] At the same time, Alan Go, the lead strategic researcher in Singapore, also pointed out that this has led to a massive issue in many countries where potential employees submit fake certificates to employers and spurred stakeholders from the educations, corporations, recruitment agencies and governments to actively seek solutions.[4]

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[1] Ho Dac Hai Mien. Quality evaluation for distance higher education programmes in Vietnam: Introduction, Benchmark and Lessons[Z].2021 APQN Academic Conference,2021-11-25.

[2] Chi Hai. Sino-Russia Cross-border Higher Education:Situation,Problem and Reflections[J].Shanghai Journal of Educational Evaluation,2019,8(01):50-54.

[3] Fabrizio Trifiro. Improving the recognition climate for TNE qualifications through cross-border cooperation. [Z]2021 APQN Academic Conference,2021-11-25.

[4] Alan Go. Stopping Fake Certificates and Transcripts-Is Digital and Blockchain

10.3 Dual measures: responses in the Asia-Pacific region

During the epidemic, the QA of higher education in the Asia-Pacific region was beset with difficulties, while HEIs, teachers and students were still facing difficulties. On the one hand, the internal focus is on the experience of teachers and students to cover the lack of experience. On the other hand, the external focus is on ensuring the quality of education to compensate for the absence of standards.

10.3.1 Emphasize internal experience

The internal experience of higher education QA mainly includes teachers, students and HEIs. Firstly, recommend the model of internally driven teaching quality to promote high-quality teaching; Secondly, pay attention to the unequal learning quality of students to reduce cognitive differences; Thirdly, strengthen the strong support of colleges and universities to improve the quality assurance system.

1. Model of Oman's internally driven teaching quality

It is an important driving force for the internal guarantee of teachers' higher education quality, with special emphasis on the quality and effectiveness of teaching. During the period of COVID-19, teachers needed more support to verify the online teaching quality for the supervision process of offline education quality was frozen. Meanwhile, there is a dearth of research on the role of teachers in ensuring the quality of teaching. Consequently, Dr. Wafa Al-Maawll and Ms. Munira Al-Siyabi aim to investigate the internally driven factors that should contribute to quality in the teaching process in order to inform teaching in post COVID-19. Combining the results of 154 questionnaires and 7 interviews, they find that an average level of teachers' perceptions towards practices of quality assurance and their impact on quality teaching. Finally, it is suggested that teachers should be authorized to actively participate in the quality teaching

Technology the Answer?[Z] 2021 APQN Academic Conference,2021-11-25.

agreement, and a model of internally driven factors is recommended(Fig.4).[1]
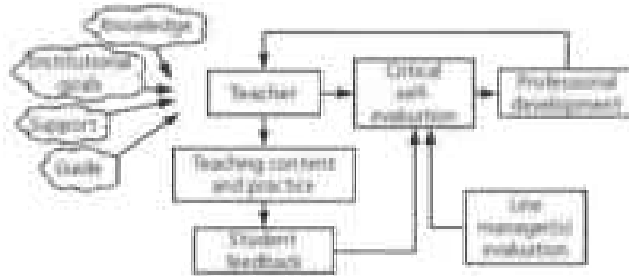
Fig. 4 Model of internally driven teaching quality

2. Learning Quality and Inequality of Students

Students are the necessary subjects for the internal guarantee of the quality of higher education. As COVID has spread across the globe, higher education is now experiencing an unprecedented crisis, students were forced to learn online and faculty members were compelled to adopt a new teaching mode without complete preparation. To ensure the quality of online learning, Arianna Fang Yu Lin and Angela Yung Chi Hou conducted a survey through questionnaires, and discussed students' learning experiences under the pandemic and explored online teaching learning challenges as well as the inequality issues existed in online learning. Based on the results of 517 questionnaires, it is known that inequality and quality will be the main problems for the rapid transition to online learning, and the state and quality assurance agencies should take active measures, not only trying to solve the gap between actual teaching and students' cognition through guidelines, principles or standards, but also strengthening international cooperation to properly evaluate online education.[2]

3. Feedback of QAM and ILPA in HKPC

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[1] Wafa AL-Maawali,Munira Al-Siyabi.Teacher Role in Internalising Quality Teaching Measures: A case Study of Oman Higher Education[Z].2021 APQN Academic Conference,2021-11-25.

[2] Arianna Fang Yu Lin,Angela Yung Chi Hou.Quality and inequality: Students' learning experiences and perceptions toward online learning amidst COVID-19[Z]. 2021 APQN Academic Conference,2021-11-25.

HEIs are strong support for the internal guarantee of higher education quality. A perfect QA system in HEIs can not only guarantee the smooth development of teaching, but also promote the improvement of teachers' teaching and students' cognitive experience. During the outbreak of COVID in 2020, Hong Kong Police College (HKPC) was committed to providing quality assurance training through an interactive Quality Assurance Mechanism(QAM) and Internal Learning Program Accreditation(ILPA). As the police officer of the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF) Carmen Chik emphasized, while the ILPA system is separated from the QAM, is works hand in hand with the QAM to assure and continuously enhance the Outcome-Based Teaching and Learning (OBTL) quality of learning programmes(Fig.5). Through it, officers can receive professional development of generic competencies in police context, and such specialized learning as detective and driving training in the very challenging times of pandemic, with an aim to equipping and strengthening the trainees at different levels with the necessary mindset, knowledge and skills to be professional, ethical and sensitive in "Serving Hong Kong with Honour, Duty and Loyalty".[1]
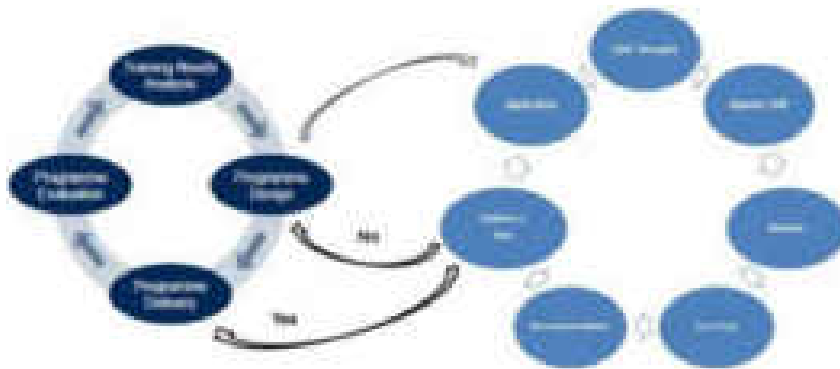
Fig. 5 Interaction diagram of QAM and ILPA

10.3.2   Normalize external standards

The external guarantee of higher education quality is mainly through coordinated development between regions and countries, so

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[1] Carmen Chik. COVID-19-Response Mechanism and Impact on Quality Assurance for Higher Education in the
Asia-Pacific Region[Z]. 2021 APQN Academic Conference,2021-11-25.

as to eliminate the absence of standards. On the one hand, with the help of regional platforms, APQN launched a global epidemic investigation; On the other hand, Ecctis proposed a transitional qualification benchmark(TNE QB), contributing to cross-border education.

1. A global survey of APQN

In 2020, COVID has brought great influence to study, work and life, and at the same time, HEIs are facing unprecedented challenges. Based on this, APQN has carried out a global survey covering a wide range of areas and disciplines. According to the basic information of questionnaire design, psychological state and behavior of respondents in COVID period, measures taken by HEIs, suggestions to HEIs and feedback from respondents, 1,570 respondents from 47 countries/regions around the world were analyzed (90.38% of them came from Asia). During the epidemic, the impact of individual psychological and behavioral responses is wide and enormous, and HEIs' responses and actions are active and supported(Fig.6). In order to promote the sustainable development of HEIs, Yahan Yang pointed out that higher education must adapt to the new changes of online teaching and blended teaching in the post-epidemic era as soon as possible, make future plans for improving the educational quality and ability in the future post-crisis era, and build a modern education governance system to cope with the public social crisis.[①]

Fig.6 Word cloud of the question about the opinions facing the COVID pandemic

2. Transitional Education Quality Benchmark of Ecctis

Over the past twenty years, the international education

[①] Jianxin Zhang,Yahan Yang.APQN Survey: the COVID impact on Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)[J]. Shanghai Journal of Educational Evaluation,2020, 9(05):74-79.

community has seen significant growth in transitional education quality benchmark of Ecctis (TNE QB), that is education delivered in a country other than the country in which the awarding institution is based. This growth has occurred across the board, involving the number of providers involved in TNE, the number of students studying on TNE programmes, the number of countries involved in TNE delivery either as sending or receiving country, as well as the different models and types of TNE operations. Moreover, TNE plays a key role in meeting the education and training needs of students unable or unwilling to travel internationally or long distance. However, there are still major challenges in recognizing TNE as an acceptable mode of qualification. Consequently, Dr. Fabrizo Trifiro' puts forward a TNE QB from four dimensions of international scope, international standards, international peer review and international peer cooperation to overcome the global quality assurance and recognition challenge for TNE (Table 1).[1]

Table 1 Transitional Education Quality Benchmark (TNE QB)

Dimension	Content
International Scope	Regardless of location of origin or delivery
International Standard	Aligned with accepted international reference points
International Peer--review	International review teams and Advisory Board
International cooperation	With sending and receiving countries' authorities

10.4   Hand in hand: progress in the Asia-Pacific region

In the post-epidemic era, higher education QA in the Asia-Pacific region emphasizes steady progress and actively responds to the new normal of education quality assurance. It is essential to base itself on the local area and seek stability internally, but also to look at the world and seek advancement externally.

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[1] Fabrizio Trifiro. Improving the recognition climate for TNE qualifications through cross-border cooperation [Z]. 2021 APQN Academic Conference,2021-11-25.

10.4.1　Based on local and seek internal stability

As far as the internal guarantee of higher education quality is concerned, we must start from the local area and seek stable development based on a clear understanding of our own development history and characteristics.

1. Evaluation of world-class universities from CASEE

World-class universities are the direct embodiment of the internationalization of higher education, and their evaluation is the top priority of higher education quality assurance. The Chinese Academy of Science and Education Evaluation(CASEE) has done the world-class evaluation since 2006 which based on the history of Research Centre for Chinese Science Evaluation(RCCSE). Dr. Qiu Junping emphasized that the evaluation index should be adjusted according to the background of the sustainable development of higher education based in China with global visions. The evaluation will help universities' stakeholders to fully understand the development status and trends of universities around the world. More importantly, the evaluation will help universities fully realize their position in a broad context, so as to understand the gap between individual universities and world-class universities in a rapidly changing world (Fig. 7).[①]

Fig.7　Evaluation principle

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① Junping Qiu, Rui Zhang, Jing Tian, JingChao Wu. World-Class Universities Evaluation: History and Characteristics-from the perspective of Chinese Academy of Science and Education Evaluation[Z].2021 APQN Academic Conference,2021-11-25.

2. Vietnam's Distance HE Standards

In the context of Industry 4.0 and COVID-19, the quality of distance education in higher education institutions has attracted much attention. Based on the introduction of distance higher education development and quality assessment standards for distance higher education programs in Vietnam, Ho Dac Hai Mien compared it with open and distance learning issued by Malaysian Qualifications Agency, to provide benchmark between Code of Practice for Program Accreditation(Fig.8).
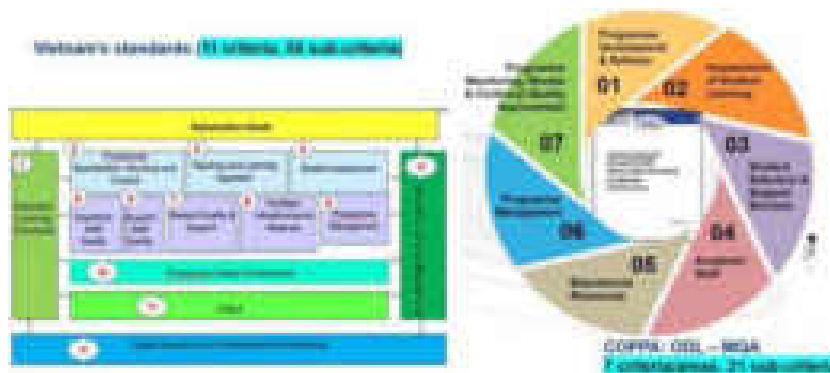
Fig. 8 Benchmark with COPPA: ODL - MQA

The distance education standard of Vietnam consists of 11 criteria and 55 sub-criteria, while that of Malaysia consists of 7 criteria and 21 sub-criteria. Ho Dac Hai Mien pointed out that Open and Distance Learning(ODL) emphasized the academic autonomy of projects and staff, the consistency of curriculum and qualification framework, and the relationship between primary and secondary standards, all of which needed to be improved and perfected.[1]Based on this, they put forward the following suggestions to the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam: Firstly, conduct more regional and international research in distance higher education assessment; Secondly, build sufficiently guidelines on process, methods and instruments for distance higher education assessment. Thirdly, encourage institutions providing distance programs to establish and implement the quality assurance process of distance courses. By

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[1] Ho Dac Hai Mien. Quality Assessment for Distance Higher Education Programmes in Vietnam: Introduction, Benchmark and Lessons Learned[Z].2021 APQN Academic Conference,2021-11-25.

these improvements, we can shorten the gap with international standards and promote the improvement of distance education quality in Vietnam.

10.4.2   Look globally and strive for progress

In terms of external guarantee for the quality of higher education, it is emphasized to look at the whole world. Use alliance analysis to build global university aggregate rankings; use digital technology to solve fake certificates and build quality assurance standards for online teaching.

1. Build a global aggregated university rankings

The ranking of global institutions is an important factor to measure the quality assurance of higher education, and it is also an objective manifestation of the globalization and internationalization of higher education. Based on the results of research into eleven most famous global institutional rankings and the analysis of their characteristics, Prof. Galina Motova and Prof. Vladimir Navodnov suggest a new results aggregation methods of education evaluation to build the Global aggregated university ranking, especially the global position of universities in the Asia-Pacific region(Table.2).[1]

Table 2   Ranking of countries by the number of universities located in different continents and listed in the Global Aggregated Ranking-2021 (as of 2020)

Continent	Total	Top 1%	Top 2%	Top 3%	Top 4%	Top 5%	Top 10%	Top 15%
Asia	1302	54	67	97	84	101	884	15
Europe	1061	118	119	98	115	105	502	4
North America	472	83	65	45	35	21	223	0
South America	256	1	8	6	12	13	115	1
Africa	118	2	4	1	8	10	93	0
Oceania	48	9	19	8	4	5	3	0

This method relies on various methods used to evaluate the

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[1] Galina Motova, Vladimir Navodnov. Aggregated ranking as a tool for positioning Asia-Pacific universities at the global level[Z].2021 APQN Academic Conference,2021-11-25.

achievements of universities, reduces the subjectivity of evaluation, and shows the status of universities at the global, regional and national levels. Moreover, the construction of global aggregated ranking (GAR) makes it possible to understand how universities are positioned at the international level. The use of generalized results of several different rankings can significantly enhance the credibility of assessment of every university and provide a more comprehensive picture of its achievements.

2. Use digital technology to solve fake certificates

The COVID epidemic is a catalyst for educational institutions all over the world to seek innovative solutions, which promotes the retraining and skill upgrading of the labor force. With e-learning gradually becoming a new normal, more and more employers have reduced their vigilance about issuing certificates online to trust the certificates issued by the e-learning teaching model, while the appearance of online fake certificates and transcripts have contributed to more educational fraud. With the recent innovation of digital technology, the Blockchain technology platform has been gaining interest. Accordingly, Alan Go explores how Blockchain applications should be considered as a noteworthy solution to significantly reduce circulations of fake certificates globally (Fig.9).[1]

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[1] Alan Go.Stopping Fake Certificates and Transcripts-Is Digital and Blockchain Technology the Answer?[Z]. 2021 APQN Academic Conference,2021-11-25.
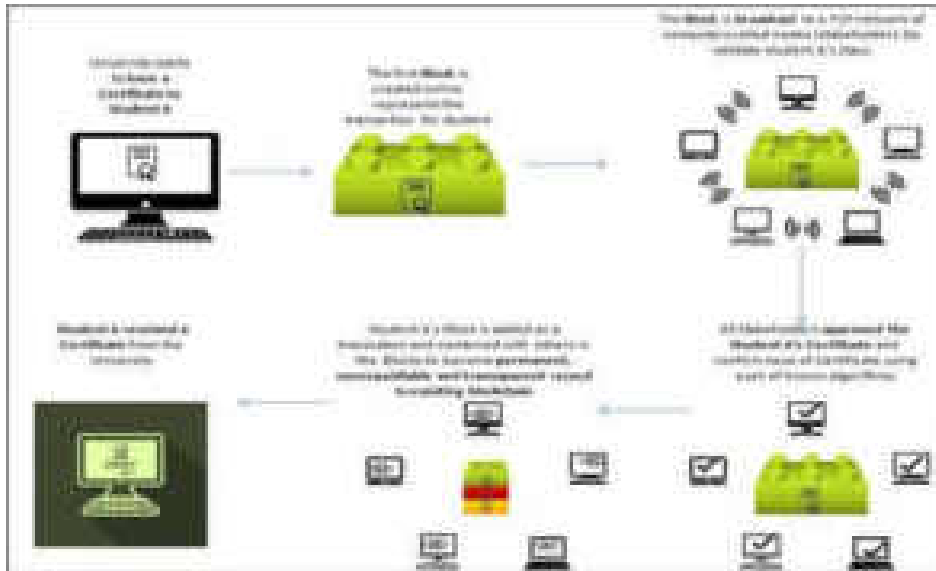
Fig. 9   Digital Certificate

3. Formulate QA Standards on online teaching

The epidemic situation in COVID has brought great challenges to traditional education and teaching, moreover online teaching has gradually become the "new normal" in the epidemic era. To guarantee and improve the quality of higher education, Prof. Jianxin Zhang, takes the educational evaluation experts, faculty and students in the Asia-Pacific region as the object, and further carry out the research on online teaching satisfaction and APQN online teaching quality assurance standard. By means of questionnaire, factor analysis and expert consultation, a comprehensive and systematic online teaching quality assurance standard in Asia-Pacific region is constructed from five aspects: online teaching environment, teachers' online teaching, learners' online learning, presentation of online teaching outcomes and online teaching quality assurance. This standard consists of 5 primary dimensions, 14 secondary dimensions and 46 specific standards (Fig.10).[1]

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[1] Jianxin Zhang. APQN Annual General Report[Z]. 2021 APQN Academic Conference, 2021-11-25.

Fig. 10   Framework diagram of online teaching quality assurance standard in Asia Pacific region

Concluding Words

Under the COVID epidemic, the quality assurance of higher education in the Asia-Pacific region is the dawn from dilemma to opportunity by taking dual measures to overcome difficulties. In the post-epidemic era, the quality assurance of higher education in the Asia-Pacific region should emphasize steady progress and actively respond to the new normal of education quality assurance. We should not only base ourselves on the mainland, seek stability internally, but also look to the world and seek progress externally. On the one hand, as far as the internal guarantee of higher education quality is concerned, we must start from the local area and seek stable development based on a clear understanding of our own development history and characteristics. On the other hand, from the external guarantee of the quality of higher education, it emphasizes the global perspective. With online teaching becoming the new normal of teaching, integration based on the APQN platform, promoting the open sharing of educational resources, improving the quality of online teaching, ensuring the quality of higher education, and standardizing the formulation of educational policies and rules will be the themes that we should consider and discuss.

Annex

Annex 1: APQN survey of the COVID impact on higher education institutions (HEIs)

APQN Survey on the Influence of COVID-19 at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

Dear teachers, administrators and students:

The pandemic outbreak of Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) relentlessly spread all over the world! As of March 30, 2020, COVID-19 has infected more than 700,000 persons in nearly 200 countries. The winter vacation of some universities has been extended for over 2 months, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have stopped face-to-face teaching... Our teaching, our learning, our work, our thinking and behavior have been greatly affected. COVID-19 is a great challenge for you, for me, for each HEI, and for each country in the whole globe. "We are all citizens in this globe village." Please spend about 8 minutes to fill in the survey distributed by the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN). Let's call for responsibility and solidarity, let's fight against COVID-19 for a better tomorrow!

the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN)
March 31, 2020

Part I: Basic Information

1. Your sex: [single choice] *
○A. male　　　○B. female　　　　○C. Other

2. Your age(years old): [single choice] *
○A. Under 30　　　　○B. 31-45　　○C. 46-60　　○D. over 60

3. Your field /subject: [single choice] *
○Philosophy

○Economics　　　○Law　　　　　○Education　　　○Literature
○History　　○Science　　○Engineering　　○Agronomy
○Medicine　　　○Management○Art　　○Military Science
○Other

4.　You are: [single choice] *
○A. Teacher　　　　○B. Administrator　　○C. PhD/Master candidate
○D. Undergraduate ○E. College student

5.　You are from: [single choice] *
○Asia　　　　○Europe　　　○Oceania　　○North America
○South America　○Africa　　　○Antarctica

6.　Your current location:(in alphabetical order)　[single choice] *

○Afghanistan
○Albania
○Algeria
○Andorra
○Angola
○Anguilla
○Antigua and Barbuda
○Argentina
○Armenia
○Aruba
○Australia
○Austria
○Azerbaijan
○Azores
○Bahamas
○Bahrain
○Bangladesh
○Barbados
○Belarus
○Belgium
○Belize
○Benin
○Bermuda
○Bhutan

○Bolivia
○Bosnia Herzegovina
○Botswana
○Brazil
○British Virgin Islands
○Brunei Darussalam
○Bulgaria
○Burkina Faso
○Burundi
○Cambodia
○Cameroon
○Canada
○Canary Islands
○Cape Verde
○Cayman Islands
○Central African Republic
○Chad
○Chile
○China mainland
○Chinese Hongkong
○Chinese Macao
○Chinese Taipei
○Christmas Island
○Cocos Islands

○Colombia
○Comoros
○Congo Brazzaville
○Cook Islands
○Costa Rica
○Croatia
○Cuba
○Cyprus
○Czech Republic
○Democratic Republic of
the Congo
○Denmark
○Djibouti
○Dominican Republic
○East Timor
○Eastern Samoa
○Ecuador
○Egypt
○El Salvador
○Equatorial Guinea
○Eritrea
○Estonia
○Ethiopia
○Falkland Islands

○Faroe Islands

○Fiji

○Finland

○France

○French Guiana

○French Polynesia

○Gambia

○Georgia

○Germany

○Ghana

○Gibraltar

○Gabon

○Greece

○Greenland

○Grenada

○Guadeloupe

○Guam

○Guatemala

○Guinea-Bissau

○Guyana

○Guinea

○Haiti

○Honduras

○Hungary

○Iceland

○India

○Indonesia

○Iran

○Iraq

○Ireland

○Islas Malvinas

○Israel

○Italy

○Jamaica

○Japan

○Jordan

○Kazakhstan

○Kenya

○Kiribati

○Korea-North

○Korea-South

○Kuwait

○Kyrgyzstan

○Lao People's Republic

○Latvia

○Lebanon

○Lesotho

○Liberia

○Libya

○Liechtenstein

○Lithuania

○Luxembourg

○Macedonia

○Madagascar

○Madeira Islands

○Malawi

○Malaysia

○Maldives

○Mali

○Malta

○Marshall Islands

○Martinique

○Mauritania

○Mauritius

○Mexico

○Micronesia

○Moldova

○Monaco

○Mongolia

○Montserrat

○Morocco

○Mozambique

○Myanmar

○Namibia

○Nauru

○Nepal

○Netherlands

○Netherlands Antilles

○New Caledonia

○New Zealand

○Nicaragua

○Niger

○Nigeria

○Niuē

○Norfolk Island

○Norway

○Oman

○Pakistan

○Palau

○Palestine

○Panama

○Papua New Guinea

○Paraguay

○Peru

○Philippines

○Pitcairn Island

○Poland

○Portugal

○Qatar

○Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

○Republic of Uzbekistan

○Reunion Island

○Romania

○Russian Federation

○Rwanda

○Saint Lucia

○Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

○Samoa

○San Marino

○Sao Tome and Principe

○Saudi Arabia

○Senegal

○Serbia

○Seychelles

○Sierra Leone

○Singapore	○The Commonwealth of	○Turkey
○Slovakia	Dominica	○Turkmenistan
○Slovenia	○The Commonwealth of	○Tuvalu
○Solomon Islands	Puerto Rico	○Uganda
○Somalia	○The Federation of Saint	○Ukrainian SSR
○South Africa	Kitts and Nevis	○United Arab Emirates
○Spain	○The Northern Mariana	○United Kingdom
○Sri Lanka	Islands	○United States
○St Helena	○The Republic of Cote	○Uruguay
○Sudan	d'Ivoire	○Vanuatu
○Suriname	○The Turks and Caicos	○Vatican City State
○Swaziland	Islands	○Venezuela
○Sweden	○The United States Virgin	○Vietnam
○Switzerland	Islands	○Wallis and Futuna Islands
○Syrian Arab Republic	○Togo	○Western Sahara
○Tajikistan	○Tokelau	○Yemen
○Tanzania	○Tonga	○Zambia
○Thailand	○Tunisia	○Zimbabwe

7. The location of your Higher Education Institution (HEI): [single choice] *
○The same as your current location
○Not the same, then name it _____ *

Part II: Your thinking and behavior during COVID-19

8. When you know that COVID is a severely infectious disease, your first psychological reaction (FPR): [single choice] *
○A. Fear   ○B. Anger   ○C. Nervousness
○D. Depression   ○E. Indifference   ○F. Others

9. If your colleagues, classmates or friends come from or have been to a high risk country/region recently, your attitude is: [single choice] *
○A. Fear   ○B. Anger   ○C. Nervousness
○D. Care   ○E. Indifference   ○F. Others

10. If your relatives, colleagues, classmates or friends are unfortunately infected with COVID-19, your psychological reaction: [single choice] *
○A. Fear   ○B. Anger   ○C. Nervousness
○D. Indifference   ○E. Worry   ○F. Care   ○G. Others

11. If you are in a serious epidemic country/region and you have chance to go to a safer country/region, you may: [single choice] *
○A. Leave   ○B. Not sure   ○C. Stay   ○D. Others

12. Since the COVID breakout, your attitude to life: [single choice] *
○A. Cherish life more   ○B. Cherish life   ○C. The same
○D. Never thought about it   ○E. Despise life   ○F. Others

13. What is your attitude towards the labelings / stigmatization during the pandemic? [single choice] *
○A. Agree   ○B. Not sure   ○C. Disagree   ○F. Others

14. What are your methods to effectively prevent the infection of COVID-19: [multiple choices] *
□A. Try not to go out, indoors/ quarantine
□B. Be sure to wear a face mask when going out to prevent droplet infection
□C. Pay attention to personal hygiene, wash your hands frequently
□D. Do not go to crowded places, cancel unnecessary gatherings
□E. Oppose wildlife trade，avoid contact with wild animals
□F. Pay attention to my own health, for early detection, early quarantine and early treatment
□G. Quarantine those who came back from the pandemic area in time.
□H. Others

15. What kinds of activities have you spent more time on during your quarantine/stay indoors: [multiple choices] *
□A. Reading
□B. Researching
□C. Learning
□D. Communicating with the lover and close friends
□E. Playing games
□F. Watching TV plays/films
□G. Internet chats
□H. Exercise and workout
□I. Beauty treatment
□J. Cooking
□K. House keeping
□l. sleeping

□M. Reading online news

□N. Others

16. During COVID-19, many of your activities have been cancelled and you cannot go to campus. What do you think of your teaching/learning/research/work? [single choice] *

○A. More concentrated than ever   ○B. The Same

○C. Cannot get concentrated   ○D. Others

17. How bad does the long vacation or campus lockdown caused by COVID affect your teaching/learning/research/work: [single choice] *

○A. Severely   ○B. Lightly   ○C. None   ○D. Others

18. What are the crucial issues for HEIs if the students from all over the world study as usual on campus during COVID-19?: [multiple choices] *

□A. Large crowds gathering

□B. Potential COVID carriers

□C. Inadequate supply of medical resources

□D. Inadequate sanitation and disinfection measures

□E. Others

Part III: HEIs' Action fight against COVID-19

19. Have your HEI ever collected your health information concerning COVID-19? [single choice] *

○A. Yes   ○B. No

20. What is your attitude towards your HEI response to COVID-19? [single choice] *

○A. Support   ○B. Indifference   ○C. Not support   ○D. Others

21. What kind of HEIs' actions do you support ? [multiple choices] *

□A. Stopping face-to-face teaching

□B. Transparency on COVID information news

□C. Campus lockdown

□D. Teaching as usual

□E. Opening online courses

□F. Asymptomatic quarantine

□G. Donation

□H. Others

22. What kinds of actions have your HEIs adopted for "Campus lockdown without stopping learning" during COVID ?: [multiple choices] *
□A. Online teaching
□B. Online scientific research
□C. Online services
□D. Free and open online courses
□E. Free open virtual/simulation experiments

23. How effective has online teaching during COVID-19?: [single choice] *
○A. Effective   ○B. OK   ○C. Ineffective   ○D. Others

24. From the overall perspective, do you think your HEI has done a good job in crisis management and response measures at the critical stage of public health emergency such as COVID-19: [single choice] *
○A. Good   ○B. Average   ○C. Poor   ○D. Others

Part IV: Your suggestions to universities facing public health emergencies such as COVID-19

25. What is your reaction to the fact that your HEI requires students from the regions/countries with high risk of pandemic to continue learning or return to campus? [single choice] *
○A. Acceptable   ○B. Indifferent
○C. Unacceptable   ○D. Others

26. Due to COVID-19, many overseas students have returned home. Do you think COVID will impact the internationalization of higher education ? [single choice] *
○A. Yes
○B. In the short term, but not in the long term
○C. No

27. What kinds of actions must be taken by your HEI after the pandemic is under country control and the re-open of the campus?: [multiple choices] *
□A. Overall deployment: continuous measures to fight against pandemic;
□B. Teaching and research: strongly encourage blended teaching (offline + online)

□C. Student administration: online management, ability-building of public health emergencies

□D. Medical health and logistics services: ensure adequate supply of medical materials

□E. Psychotherapy: pay attention to students' psychological state, provide psychological consultation and online consultation services

□F. Others

28. What kinds of teaching method should be taken during COVID ? [multiple choices] *

□A. Continue as usual

□B. blended teaching (online +offline)

□C. Teachers and students wear masks and other protective measures

□D. Carry out "off-peak teaching" in different time, venues and classification

□E. Limit the flow of people in libraries, lecture halls, laboratories, and other teaching places

□F. Student self-study while teachers answer his/her individual questions

□G. Others

29. The Students from the country/region with high-risk of COVID-19, might be in Acute Stress Disorder (ASD). After the pandemic is over, do you think it is necessary for HEIs to take measures to the students with Post Traumatic Stress disorder (PTSD): [single choice] *

○A. Necessary   ○B. Not really

○C. Completely unnecessary   ○D. Others

30. What do you think HEIs can do during the prevention and control of public emergencies like COVID-19: [multiple choices] *

□A. Requiring students to stay indoors, ensure they are not getting infected

□B. Conducting scientific research to combat COVID-19

□C. Establishing prevention guidelines to educate students

□D. Actively organizing teachers and students to participate in voluntary activities

□E. Medical teachers and students actively participate in front-line prevention and control work

□F. Others

Part V: Open question

31. What do you want to say facing public health emergency such as COVID-19?

_____

Let's fight against the pandemic for a better tomorrow!

Annex 2: APQN survey of the COVID impact on quality assurance agencies(QAAs)

1. **Name of your agency:**

2. **What was the COVID Impact on the work of your agency?**

    o We continue working in the office;
    o We temporarily suspended our activities;
    o We are working remotely;
    o Other option.

3. **If you are working remotely, what are the biggest challenges your agency is currently facing? (multiple)**

    o The agency does not have essential tools to conduct external reviews remotely;
    o It is difficult to ensure quality of education while conducting external reviews remotely;
    o The tools or policies for conducting external reviews are not developed;
    o No access to the tools or information that employees need to do their job at home;
    o Employees are sick;
    o Communication with coworkers is harder;
    o Internet connectivity;
    o Keeping a regular schedule;
    o No challenges;
    o Other Option.

4. **What are the sources of financing of your agency? (multiple)**

    o State (budgetary) financing;
    o Self-financing (by higher education institutions);
    o State grants;

- o Sponsors;
- o Other option.

5. **What was the COVID Impact on the financial sustainability of your agency?**

- o It remains unchanged;
- o Incomes decreased;
- o Incomes increased;
- o Other option.

6. **How does your agency conduct external reviews in the current situation?**

- o We conduct site-visits observing all safety precautions;
- o We will conduct follow-up site visits to the institution within a reasonable period of time after remote reviews;
- o We conduct external reviews remotely;
- o We temporarily suspended external reviews;
- o Other option.

7. **What tools does your agency employ while conducting external reviews remotely? (multiple)**

- o Phone calls;
- o Video conference calls;
- o Document reviews;
- o Exchange of e-mails;
- o Currently developing new tools/policies;
- o No tools;
- o Other option.

8. **What measures does your agency take to cope with the challenges? (multiple)**

- o Informing employees on the ways of avoiding infection;
- o Adopting new health and safety procedures (i.e. hand sanitizer, masks, gloves);
- o Cancelling major events;
- o Halting business travel;
- o No measures taken;
- o Other option.

9. **What do you think of accreditation decisions made remotely during COVID outbreak?**

   o Decisions are valid;
   o Decisions are valid with some restrictions;
   o Decisions are not valid;
   o We have not thought about it;
   o Other option.

10. **In the situation when the COVID Impact goes beyond 3 months from the time changes were implemented in your agency, what are your plans?**

   o We are developing short term (3months) interventions to continue work;
   o We are developing medium term (6 months) interventions to continue work;
   o We are developing long term (more than 6 months) interventions to continue work;
   o We will continue as we are doing now;
   o We do nothing;
   o Other option.

Annex 3: Survey of the effectiveness of online teaching in the COVID era

<div align="center">

新冠疫情下高校在线教学有效性问卷调查表

</div>

亲爱的老师、同学:您好！

自新冠肺炎疫情发生以来,教育部提出要努力实现"停课不停教,停课不停学"的目标,全国高校纷纷开展在线教学。教学,是一种学生为主体、教师为主导的人才培养活动,是由教师的"教"与学生的"学"共同组成,其中教师是教学成败与否的关键要素之一。随着教学形式的转变,教学质量的保障成为亟待解决的问题。希望您用 10 分钟左右的时间,填写本调查问卷,以便我们了解新冠疫情下高校在线教学的有效性。

后疫情时代,让我们一起为保障在线教学的质量做出努力！

<div align="right">

课题调研组

2020 年 7 月 13 日

</div>

一、基本信息

1. 您的年龄是:（单选题）

A. 30 岁以下

B. 31-45 岁

C. 46-60 岁

D. 60 岁以上

2. 您的身份是:

A. 教师

B. 管理人员

C. 硕博研究生

D. 本科生

E. 专科生

3. 您的职称是:（单选题）

A. 助教

B. 讲师

C. 副教授

D. 教授

4. 您所在的专业是:（单选题）

A. 哲学

B. 经济学

C. 法学

D. 教育学

E. 文学

F. 历史学

G. 理学

H .工学

农学

医学

管理学

艺术学

5. 您所在的学校是:（单选题）

A. 本科院校

B. 高职院校

二、在线教学事实调查

6. 在线教学平台使用中遇到的的问题有（多选题）：

A. 网络不稳定

B. 流量费用较高

C. 缺乏在线学习的设备

D. 网络操作不熟悉

E. 教学平台功能不足或稳定性不够

F. 使用的教学平台数量太多

G. 无问题

H. 其他:_____

7. 在线教学中,高校为教师和学生提供的支持服务有（多选题）：

A. 在线平台和工具操作的培训与指导　　□提供课程相关的电子教学资源

B. 配备一定数量的课程助教　　□在线教学、学习技能的培训

C. 明确在线教学考核与评价的方式　□没有提供

D. 其他:_____

8. 在线课程开始前,针对网络课程进行的师生互通主要有（多选题）：

A. 教师告知学生课程安排与课程要求

B. 教师与学生就授课方式、使用平台、授课时间等进行协商

C. 建立 QQ 群、微信群等联系通道

D. 教师向学生提供课程学习资料（PPT、论文或视频素材等）

E. 其他: _____

9. 请您对教师在线教学中使用各环节的频繁程度进行评价（矩阵单选题）：

（频繁　经常　　偶尔　　几乎没有　　完全没有）

布置作业

课堂讲授

课堂提问

提供材料给学生自主学习

随堂测验

课后答疑辅导

课堂研讨

实验演示

10. 教师在线教学模式的使用情况（多选题）：

A. 纯直播教学　　B.纯录播教学

C. 直播+录播教学　D.提供资料供学生自学

E. 其他 _____

11. 与线下教学相比,在线教学课堂中您的精力投入度:（单选题）

A. 提高　B. 降低

C. 差不多　　D. 其他: _____

12. 在线课程结束后,学生的学习成果的呈现方式主要有（多选题）：　*

A. 课后习题

B. 课程论文

C. 小组活动成果

D. 汇报

E. 考试

F. 其他: _____

13. 在线教学中,教师对于学生的评价考核主要包括（多选题）：

A. 课堂问答表现　　　　B. 课后作业完成度　　　C. 随堂测验

D. 期中/期末考试　　　 E. 课堂出勤率　　　　　F. 学生在线时长统计

G. 在线互动次数　　　　H.没有进行评价　　　　I.其他:_____

14. 在线教学中,对教师的评价考核方式主要包括（多选题）：

A. 考核人员随机进入课堂听课

B. 教师教学工作量、教学时长统计

C. 教师互评

D. 教师自评

E. 学生测验(课中、课后)成绩统计

F. 学生对教师进行评价考核

G. 没有进行教师评价考核

H. 不清楚/不确定

I. 其他: _____

15. 与传统教学相比,在线教学的课堂中对教师、学生的评价考核频率:（单选题）

A．更多　　　B. 更少　　　C. 差不多

16. 在线教学课后,师生为改善在线课堂进行的工作主要有（多选题）： ＊

A. 师生共同商议课堂构建

B. 教师针对课堂效果及存在问题与学生进行沟通

C. 教师询问学生关于课程的建议

D. 通过课后作业进行教学效果反思

E. 学生主动向教师反映学习情况

F. 其他: _____

三、在线教学态度调查

17. 您认为在线教学中的课程设计（多选题）： ＊

A. 课程导入部分能引起学生兴趣与共鸣

B. 课程设计前后一致连贯且易于操作

C. 课程内容容易学习

D. 课程材料和活动易于获取,满足不同学生的需要

E. 在线课程平台方便易用

F. 课程要求使用的技术易于获得和操作

G. 各方面还需要进一步加强

18. 请您对教师线上教学中的教学行为的效果做出评价（矩阵单选题）：

（很不满意　不满意　一般　　满意　　很满意）

课前发放课程相关资料与电子教学资源

能培养学生的多种能力,注重创新性与独立性培养

能根据在线课堂特点及学生个体差异设计合适的教育内容

能有效组织线上教学、维持教学秩序

通过各种平台与学生积极互动,引导学生有效学习

能控制教学节奏并熟练运用各教学方法

有效处理在线教学中的突发情况

课后积极主动与学生交流,对学生情况进行有效反馈

能综合运用各种评价方式,并跟踪学生学习行为

总体效果评价

19. 请您对学生的在线学习行为的效果进行评价（矩阵单选题）：

（很不满意不满意 一般 满意 很满意）

能认真学习课程相关资料

能遵守在线教学纪律（不迟到/早退,音频、视频不随意打开等）

能认真听课,注意力集中

能积极参与课堂互动（师生互动、生生互动）

能完成线上线下个人与小组作业

总体表现评价

20. 请您评价以下要素对在线教学的有效性的影响程度（矩阵单选题）：

（非常大 比较大 一般 影响较小 没有影响）

配备一定数量的课程助教进行管理

掌控和维护好课堂教学秩序

选择适当的评价方法

对教学平台和工具的熟悉程度

开发适用实验操作及实地考察的在线技术（例如模拟操作平台等）

提供课程配套电子教学资源

高校对在线教学政策支持

教师的教学策略及讲授方法

在线教学平台的功能及稳定性

师生对教学的态度和精力投入度

良好的在线学习行为习惯

学生自主学习能力

学生积极参与

21. 请选出您在在线教学中遇到的最大的挑战（多选题）： *

A. 在线教学的教学习惯及观念的转变

B. 增加教学工作量负担

C. 在线教学过程中注意力的保持

D. 在线交流互动

E. 在线开展测评与考试

F. 在线作业布置与批改

G. 重新学习各种在线教育技术

H. 在线教学的空间环境和设备

I. 师生在线教学的评价与考核

J. 实验操作及实地考察内容的完成

K. 其他: _____

22. 您认为在线教学相对于传统教学主要的优势有（多选题）：

A. 可以反复回放,便于复习巩固

B. 可以让名师名课充分共享

C. 有助于学生自主学习能力的培养

D. 突破时空限制,可以随时随地学习

E. 可以让学生充分表达关注的问题

F. 方便学生之间交流合作

G. 其他: _____

23. 您认为在线教学存在的问题主要有（多选题）：

A. 教师无法及时了解学生的学习状态

B. 教师无法及时了解学生知识掌握情况

C. 缺乏老师现场指导和督促,课堂纪律松弛

D. 教师无法第一时间反馈学生关注的问题

E. 学生过分依赖回放功能,学习效率低

F. 网络交流不如线下交流直接,浪费时间

G. 在线互动缺乏眼神交流,人情味不够

H. 其他: _____

24. 与线下教学相比,您认为在线教学的效果:（单选题）

A. 更好

B. 较好

C. 相差不大

D. 较差

E. 非常差

25. 您对疫情过后采用在线教学的看法:（单选题）

A. 采用线上教学

B. 不采用线上教学

C. 线上+线下混合式教学

D. 不确定

26. 在线教学中,你认为教师应采用哪些方式保障学生的在线学习效果？

[multiple choices]

A. 课前上传课件资源以供学生预习使用

B. 在线教学过程中,以随机点名检测学生听课专心情况

C. 结合教学平台数据浏览与统计情况,确定学生学习需求

D. 增加课堂沉浸式互动频次,引导学生主动参与

E. 通过教学平台接受学生学习效果自评表并提供教师意见

F. 结合学生课堂表现与课后作业完成情况进行单独反馈

G. 使用在线教学平台自动评分,创建学生行为与学习绩效的互评体系

H. 其他: _____

27. 为提高在线教学质量,您认为线教学最应改进的方面是（多选题）： *

A. 配备课程助教

B. 加强在线教学的相关培训

C. 教师加大教学精力投入

D. 改革教育评价方式方法

E. 加强课堂教学秩序管理

F. 改变教学策略及教学方法

G. 加强学生对教学平台和工具使用指导

H. 提高学生在线学习的自主能力

I. 改善学生学习空间环境及设备支持

J. 引导学生养成良好学习习惯

K. 提高学生的课堂参与度

L. 进一步改善教师教学空间环境及设备

M．加大对线上教学的政策支持

N．加大课程配套电子教学资源建设

采用混合式教学模式（线上教学+线下作业、实习、训练一体）

其他: _____

28. 有专家认为,在线教学效果的好坏取决于教师。您认为应该如何考评教师的在线教学？

_____

Annex 4: Interview in quality of higher education with APQN Board Directors in the COVID crisis

Dear APQN Board Directors

Greeting from APQN Survey Team of the Influence of COVID in Quality of Higher Education!

In no time, the COVID crisis has brought the whole world to a painful halt. 1.5 billion students around the world are forced to stay away from schools because of COVID-19. This is simply unprecedented in history.

The world is one family. With the endorsement of the APQN Board, APQN has conducted a project entitled "APQN Survey of the Influence of COVID in Quality of Higher Education" since last month…

Here, the APQN Survey Team would like to interview each of the Board Director. We will summarize the opinions of each director into an interview article and publish it on APQNnews (No. 21).

You are expected to send us your answers to the following 4 questions within 7 days (before April 28, 2020), attaching one of your recent photos.

Thank you very much for your support!

Dear APQN Board Directors, let's call for responsibility and solidarity, let's fight against the COVID Crisis for a better tomorrow!

APQN Survey Team of the Influence of COVID in Quality of Higher Education

April 20, 2020

Interview on in Quality of Higher Education with APQN Board Directors in the COVID Crisis	
Your Name	Your organization
APQN Position	Country

1. As an external quality assurance agency (QAA) in the COVID Crisis, what role do you think your QAA plays in ensuring the internal

quality of higher education institutions (HEIs)?

Reference sub-topics: (1) How has your QAA worked with HEIs to focus on quality in curriculum, grading practices, an award of credits and others? (2) What is your QAA doing to address concerns about the potential for growth in academic corruption as online teaching and learning expand? (3) What are the differences between the role of quality assurance if the current crisis is short-term vs. long-term? (4) What kind of quality assurance support has your QAA provided to HEIs?

Your Reply:

2. In the COVID Crisis, the HEIs around the world have begun online teaching. How do you think the internal quality of the HEIs should be guaranteed?

Reference sub-topics: (1) Please recommend what types of interactive delivery of online teaching and learning; (2) Can you describe developed curriculum as well as grading practices, both short-term and longer-term? (3) How shall the HEIs do to get adequate financial support? (4) How shall the HEIs provide training and technology for faculty and staff? (5) How shall the HEIs provide effective student support and academic support services?

Your Reply:

3. In your opinion, what influence has the COVID Crisis caused to the internationalization of higher education quality assurance?

Reference sub-topics: (1) How has COVID disrupted current and prospective overseas educational journeys, such as campus study, recruitment and admission practices? (2) How has OVID-19 eroded confidence in the future of international education? (3) The necessity of increased online learning options can no longer be denied. Will a wider role for virtual learning strengthen or weaken the architecture of the international education industry? (4) What measures should we take to promote the international quality assurance of higher education in the future?

Your Reply:

4. In the COVID Crisis, what do you think APQN should do to realize its goal of "Dissolving Boundaries for a Quality Region" and "to be committed to the Quality of Higher Education and is supportive of both internal and external quality assurance in the Asia-Pacific Region"?

Your Reply:

Go Go APQN! Go Go the Whole World!

Annex 5: Survey of QA standards for online teaching of HE in the Asia-Pacific Region

Dear administrators, teachers, students and QA experts:

As online teaching has become an increasingly important part of higher education during and after the COVID pandemic, it is crucial to develop quality assurance(QA) standards for online teaching. This survey is to find out your satisfaction of online teaching and the importance of the key elements of online teaching.

Please spend 10 minutes filling in the survey truthfully! Your opinion is very important for the research. Let's work together to improve the quality of online teaching!

APQN Research Group

Part 1: Basic Information

1. You are from:(Single-choice)

    A. Asia-Pacific region (countries and regions of Asia and Oceania)

    B. non-Asia-Pacific region (countries and regions in Europe, North America, South America, Antarctica and Africa)

2. You are: (Multiple-choice)

A . Faculty (teacher and administrator)   B.Student   C. QA expert

3. How many online-teaching courses have you participated in since the outbreak of COVID-19? (Single-choice)

  A. Over 11   B.6-10   C.1-5   D.None

4. How many online-teaching modes have you participated in since the outbreak of COVID-19? (Multiple-choice)

A. Online synchronous teaching

B. Online asynchronous teaching

C. Blended teaching

D.None

Part 2: Your Satisfaction of Online Teaching

Please choose your satisfaction degree on all aspects of online teaching based on your own experiences. (On a scale of 1 to 5: 1)very dissatisfied; 2)dissatisfied; 3)neutral;4)satisfied; 5) very satisfied)

(*Ps:If you haven't been directly involved in online teaching since the outbreak of COVID-19, you can make a choice based on what you know about that,or you can choose to be neutral.*)

4. Please evaluate the support services for online teaching in one of the following 5 scales:

Note: 1=very dissatisfied; 2=Dissatisfied; 3=Neutral; 4=Satisfied;5=Very satisfied

	1	2	3	4	5
The policy support and services for online teaching from your HEI, e.g. online teaching methods and technical training, feedback channels, etc.					
The support of online teaching platform and technology, e.g. terminal equipment, network speed, stability, function.					
The support of teaching resources(online and offline), e.g. availability, accessibility, enrichment and update of resources.					
Overall evaluation of online-teaching support services					

6. Please evaluate the teachers' online teaching behaviors in one of the following 5 scales:

Note: 1=very dissatisfied; 2=Dissatisfied; 3=Neutral; 4=Satisfied;5=Very satisfied

	1	2	3	4	5
Teachers' information literacy, e.g. the use of online teaching platform and the analysis of students' behaviors using large data.					
Teachers' attitudes and input to conduct online teaching.					

Teachers' ability of online teaching design, e.g. the arrangement of teaching contents, teaching methods and the design of teaching links.					
Specific behaviors in online teaching process, e.g. teaching progress, concern about students' needs, teachers-and-students interaction, the assignment and homework assessment.					
Teachers' assessments to students, e.g. subject, criteria, the feedback and utilization of the assessment findings.					
Overall evaluation of teachers' online teaching					

1. Please evaluate students' online learning performance in one of the following 5 scales:

Note: 1= Very dissatisfied; 2= Dissatisfied; 3=Neutral ； 4=Satisfied ； 5=Very satisfied

	1	2	3	4	5
Students' attitudes and input to participate in online learning.					
Specific behaviors in the process of online learning, e.g. the initiatives to answer questions, cooperation among students and the completion of learning tasks.					
Students' improvement of knowledge and ability after online teaching, e.g. grades, achievements, information literacy.					
Overall evaluation of students' online learning performance					

Part 3: Importance of Key Elements of Online Teaching

According to the degree of importance, please carefully compare and rate the

following quality assurance standards for online teaching made by APQN in December 2020.

8. Please choose the most appropriate score.

Note: 1=completely unimportant; 2= unimportant; 3= neutral; 4=important; 5=very important

	1	2	3	4	5
HEIs have at least one online-teaching department with necessary regulations, such as "Guideline for Online Teaching".					
HEIs have online teaching platform technology, administration and other support services, including online counseling, teaching, technology, technical training, etc.					
E-teaching administration platforms have availability and reliability, including good web response, linkage, navigation and positioning, etc.					
Adequacy of online teaching resources, such as access to online teaching resources (both online and offline).					
Openness and sharing of online teaching resources, such as access to teaching resources outside campus.					
Publicity of information, such as the release of reliable, complete and up-to-date online-teaching information, including qualification recognition, teaching objectives, credits, requirements, assessment methods, timetable and so on.					
Sustainability of online-teaching platforms and teaching software.					
Sustainability of online-teaching materials development and academic approaches.					

Sustainability of teachers and trainers skills, and HEIs' active responses to online teaching.					
Online-teaching goals are clear, and teaching contents meet students' needs.					
There are various modes of online teaching, such as "online teaching", "blended teaching" (online + offline).					
Appropriateness of online-teaching media (the most appropriate teaching forms for different types of courses), such as "recorded teaching", "live teaching".					
Teaching design emphasizes the use of online platform to attract learners' attention, strengthen the interactions between teachers and learners, and highlight "learner-centered" education concept.					
Comprehensiveness of the online-teaching content, covering all teaching objectives, orientation, navigation, schedule and outcomes, such as online activities and assignments are clearly explained.					
Regularity of online teaching, such as the accessibility of courses.					
Effectiveness of interactive communication and feedback between teachers and learners, among learners, including the use of platforms, forums, emails, interactive groups and other communication channels, etc.					
Trace ability of teaching platform, including records of learning track, progress, task, etc.					
Ensure that the teachers are qualified and appropriately trained to deliver high-quality learner					

support in the online environment and assessment.					
Ability of web-based teaching design and innovation of online teaching, e.g. each online course has an open and clear syllabus, which can innovate previous teaching.					
Control ability of online classroom under the web-based environment, e.g. being skillfully use network platform and technology to successfully complete teaching tasks.					
Ability of online-teaching evaluation and reflection in the information age, e.g. ability to analyze teaching effect, making rules for students to study and to be in exams honestly, and taking the measures to prevent plagiarism.					
Ability to continuously improve information ethics and information literacy, including academic integrity, moral behaviors, electronic security measures, etc.					
Assignments assigned by teachers are related to the online-teaching contents and learners' learning outcomes.					
Learners' initiative and enthusiasm, being able to regularly know their own online learning rate, browsing frequency, interaction, assignment completion and other information.					
Assignments can promote learners' critical thinking, self-reflection and problem-solving ability, and the explicit scoring rules can help learners know how to score themselves.					
Learners receive an orientation					

session to the online environment and technical requirements for studying on the course, prior to the commencement of learning and teaching activities and assessment as well.				
Ability to acquire, manage and integrate online teaching information by using data technology and communication tools.				
Evaluation ability of online learning, usage of network technology or IT tools to improve their own learning and evaluation efficiency.				
Ability to continuously improve network ethics and information literacy, including academic integrity, moral behaviors, electronic security measures, etc.				
Submission of learners' learning outcomes (SLOs), such as course papers and curriculum design.				
Teaching and learning outcomes and qualification recognition, e.g. SLOs' display, teaching achievement awards and online excellent course.				
HEI's report on success stories of online teaching to a central office which could share these with other entities in the HEI.				
Realization of online teaching to achieve the expected teaching and learning outcomes.				
Achievement of online teaching outcomes, including passing rate, dropout rate and others.				
Improvement of learners' problem-solving ability and learners'own development.				
Learners' satisfaction with online				

teaching.					
Teachers' and learners' overall satisfaction with online teaching.					
Formative assessment, e.g. pre-online teaching, mid-term assessment and online tracking records.					
Summative assessment, e.g. final assessment at the end of online teaching.					
Developmental assessment, e.g. assessment results promoting quality of online teaching and the improvement of teachers and students.					
Teachers' mutual assessment online, i.e. a peer assessment mechanism.					
Supervisors' online teaching assessment, such as supervisors' entering online classrooms to assess.					
Learners' online teaching assessment, learners can assess each online course.					
HEIs, schools and departments have the mechanism of regularly monitoring and evaluating the online-teaching quality.					
HEIs, schools and departments publish the assessment results publicly.					
Both teachers and learners can use the assessment results for future quality improvements of online teaching and learning.					

9. If you are interested in this study, please write down your email address and we will send you a summary of the survey later on.

_____

Thank you sincerely for your support and participation!

Annex 6: Survey on the Asia-Pacific Quality Register (APQR)

Dear Sir/Madam,

The first review of the Asia-Pacific Quality Register (APQR) was conducted in 2015. In the past five years, APQR has made remarkable achievements: eight educational quality assurance agencies (QAAs) from six countries have been accepted onto the register. In order to promote the sustainable development of APQR in the future, this survey wants to know your opinions from the eight QAAs and experts who have conducted the AOQR aiming to "re-examine" the APQR review in the past six years, and seek sustainable development in the future. Thank you very much for your support. Let' make our contribution to the improvement of education quality in the Asia-Pacific Region!

APQR Research Group

January 6, 2021

1. You are:

A: Staff member from QAAs on APQR　　B: Review expert　　　C. Member of APQR Council

2. **APQR purposes:** please choose and tick one "√" to the following statements, "3": agree; "2": neutral; "1":disagree.

Kind reminding of the APQR purposes:

#	Purpose
1	Provide an inspirational target
2	Serve as a quality hallmark and qualification to accredit HEIs/programs
3	Provide a basis for mutual recognition of cross-border operations of QAAs and HEIs
4	Offer a reference to global stakeholders on trustworthy external QAAs in in the Asia-Pacific Region

Question	3	2	1
1.Do you agree with the APQR purposes?	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
2. Do you think the APQR review has achieved	Agree	Neutral	Disagree

its purposes?			
3. Do you think the purposes of APQR are aligned with those of your QAA?	Agree	Neutral	Disagree

3. APQR criteria: please choose and tick one "v" to the following statements, "3": agree; "2": neutral; "1":disagree.

Note: Kind reminding of the APQR purposes:

Criterion	Description
1. Organization	The QAA is a full member of APQN or is a QA body which is valid entity recognized by the appropriate authority in the relevant country/territory/region, and is accountable to stakeholders.
2.Operations	The quality assurance agency undertakes quality assurance activities (at institutional and/or program level) on a cyclical basis.
3. Mission and Objectives	The mission statement and objectives of the agency are understood consistently by its stakeholders.
4. Staff and reviewers	The profile of the agency staff and the profile of the reviewers the agency uses are consistent with the Mission Statement.
5. Independence	The quality assurance agency is independent and has autonomous responsibility for its QA operations. The judgments and recommendations of the agency's reports cannot be changed by third parties.
6. Resources	The agency has sufficient resources to run its operations in accordance with its mission statement and objectives.
7. Process and Criteria	The description of the processes and criteria applied by the agency are transparent and publicly available and normally include: self-review, site visit, public report and follow-up measure. The published standards and criteria are applied consistently and rigorously.
8. Appeals	An appeals mechanism is available for the institutions.
9. Quality Assurance	The agency has effective quality assurance measures in place to monitor itself and is subject to occasional review.
10. Monitoring and Review	The agency undertakes research on internal and external quality assurance and provides information and advice to the higher education institutions.
11. Agency Linkages	The agency cooperates and collaborates with other agencies and key players across national borders.

Question	3	2	1
1. Do you agree with the review criteria of APQR?	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
2. Do you think the criteria design is oriented to clear objectives?	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
3. Do you think the design of the criteria can comprehensively and systematically review your	Agree	Neutral	Disagree

QAA?			
4. Do you think the APQR criteria can demonstrate the advantage and disadvantage of your QAA?	Agree	Neutral	Disagree

4. The APQR procedure: please choose and tick one "√" to the following statements, "3": agree; "2": neutral; "1":disagree.

Note: Kind reminding of the APQR procedures

#	Target
1	Expression of interest(EoI) by the QAA
2	Acceptance of eligibility by the APQR Council
3	Self-Review Report (SER) by the QAA
4	Desk Review of SER by the APQR review panel
5	On-Site Visit by the APQR review panel: Validation of SER; Qualitative and quantitative review
6	Finalizing the external review report by the APQR review panel and approved by the QAA
7	Outcome by the APQR Council

Question	3	2	1
1. Do you agree with the review procedure of APQR?	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
2. Do you think the review process is objective and systematic?	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
3. Do you think the review process of APQR is completely based on evidence and all kinds of documents?	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
4. Do you think the data required for the review process is accessible, transparent, and understandable?	Agree	Neutral	Disagree

5. APQR sustainable development:please choose and tick one "√" to the following statements, "3": agree; "2": neutral; "1":disagree.

Question	3	2	1
1. Do you think the review combines the short-term development with the long-term development of your QAA?	Agree	Neutral	Disagree

2. Do you think this survey can promote the reflection, improvement and sustainable development of your QAA?	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
3. Do you think that the review will contribute to the internationalization of higher education in the Asia Pacific region?	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
4.Do you think that the combination of qualitative and quantitative review of APQR is helpful for real and effective result?	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
5. Do you think APQR emphasizes personalized and characteristic review?	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
6.What do you think of APQR	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied

6. Open questions

What are your suggestions for improvement of APQR review?

Thank you for your support！ Let's look forward to the bright future of education quality in the Asia-Pacific Region!

Authors Introduction

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Prof. Dr. Jianxin Zhang is the 5th and 6th President of Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN), professor of Yunnan University and Chief Expert of Yunnan Higher Education Evaluation Centre (YHEEC). She obtained PhD degree at Peking University in China, Master degree at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (EPFL) in Switzerland. She has been teaching for over 30 years and been actively involved in QA practices and researches, completing over 30 on-site reviews, visiting over 60 countries /territories on various academic assignments and QA matters. She has published 6 monographs such as "ASEAN Higher Education", 4 translated books, 18 edited books and over 200 papers. Among them, 10 got the government's awards.

Galina Motova
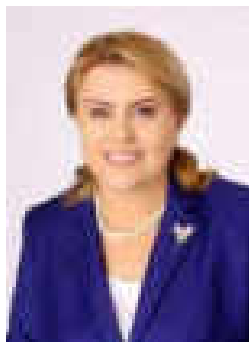
Dr. Galina Motova   is Deputy Director of the National Centre for Public Accreditation, Editor-in Chief of the journal "Accreditation in Education", Executive Director of the Guild of Experts in Higher Education. Dr. Motova has 25-year work experience in the field of quality assurance. A Steering Committee member of CEENQA (2006-2010).   2016-2019 - Member of the 5th APQN Board Directors. Since 2019, she is Vice President of APQN. Author and co-author of over 200 publications.

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Dr. I-Jung Grace Lu is now an Assistant Research Fellow of Higher Education Evaluation and Accreditation Council of Taiwan (HEEACT), Chinese Taibei. She graduated from the University of Manchester with a PhD degree in Education. She has conducted research focusing on higher education, inclusive education, and social networking. She was elected as a board director of Asia Pacific Quality Network (APQN) in 2019.

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Ms. Yahang Yang is an research fellow at Center for China and Globalization (CCG), volunteer project member for APQN. She got her Master of Science from Columbia University in 2019. She used to work as the administrative/research assistant for Center Director Qin Gao at the Columbia Population Research Center, the project manager at Hamilton-Madison House, Consoler at China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation. She led a team funded the Beijing Bureau of Education to study policy support for the elders who lost their only child in Hebei, China. Her current research interests include education quality, migrant policies, and population policies.

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Ms. Xiaoyin Cao is a licensed attorney in Illinois, U.S.A. As a senior attorney in Carmen D. Caruso Law Firm, she focuses on complex commercial litigation, alternative dispute resolution, and franchise transactions. She serves as a committee member on the American Bar Association Forum on Franchising Litigation and Dispute Resolution Division. Apart from her J.D. and L.L.M. from Chicago-Kent College of Law, she also holds a Bachelor of Law Degree from China University of Political Science and Law, Beijing, China. She has published over 20 papers such as "Different Tendecy of Ethnic Minority Undergraduates' Acculturation", "Research on Belief Crisis of Law in Modern China", "Advance Your Case by Analyzing Metadata: E-Discovery Practice Techniques for Solo & Small Firms". She participated the Found Project of National Social Science entitled "Research on the difference of higher education needs of ethnic minorities" (Code No.: 08bmz036), "APQN Survey Research on the COVID impact on Higher Education Institutions" and other 5 research projects. She also recently spoke at the 2021 IFA Legal Symposium on Managing Risks in Contract and Relationships due to COVID-19.

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Ms. Daria Efremova is specialist of the Accreditation Office, National Centre for Public Accreditation (NCPA). She got diploma in Linguistics and Translating. She has 10 years of work experience in the sphere of education and over 5 years of work experience in NCPA. Daria is responsible for the cooperation with foreign experts in the framework of accreditation procedures and joint international projects with China.

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Dr. David W. Sansom is the Deputy-Director of the MPI-Bell Centre at the Macao Polytechnic Institute(MPI). He enjoys working with students to improve their English and as well as working with teachers of English to develop their knowledge and classroom skills. His research interests include investigating how teachers can change what they think and do so that students can learn as effectively as possible, and how quality in teaching can be evaluated and enhanced. He also works extensively with teachers and students to improve the teaching and learning of English writing.

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Jagannath Patil

Dr. Jagannath Patil is the former APQN President (2012-2016) and APQN Board Co-opted Director, also INQAAHE President (2015-2016). He is also the founder Chairperson of Asia Pacific Quality Register (APQR). With experience of his long tenure as Adviser at National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) of India. He has played key role in placing NAAC and India prominently on global quality scenario. He has coordinated Accreditation exercise of about 1500 higher educational institutions. Having visited over 50 countries, he is one of the sought after speaker in QA fraternity around the world and has delivered keynote speeches in Asia, Europe, Africa and Americas.

Research on the COVID Impact on the Quality of Higher Education in the Asia-Pacific Region

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