Profiling of Accreditation in Libyan Higher Education Institutions

Ahmed Atia

University of Tripoli, Faculty of Medical Technology, LIBYA

Mohamed El-Attug

University of Tripoli, Faculty of Pharmacy, LIBYA

Abstract

Institutional accreditation is often implemented as a tool for service enhancement or as a vehicle for educational change in broadly different settings. There is little evidence of the effect of accreditation, although there are indications in developed countries that facilities complying with initial low standards substantially increase their compliance levels as a result of engaging in accreditation programs funded by quality improvement interventions. This review intends to highlight on the profiling of accreditation in Libyan higher education institutions.

Keywords: accreditation, institutions, higher education, Libya.

1. Introduction

The expansion and employment of active mechanisms for quality assurance and accreditation are crucial for effective higher education everywhere. Every nation and its university graduates are challenging by the local and global prospects and standards. The impacts of the latter are increasing. As a consequence, these prospects and standards will affect the achievement and productivity of graduates in tertiary institutions. Instructors, faculty members, and policymakers would be well counseled to evaluate their own tertiary systems in that context and struggle to set suitable standards and criteria of their own which also reflect the requirements and prospects of the nation.

Extending and employing active quality assurance and accreditation systems is essential for successful higher education everywhere. The local and global prospects and norms are daunting for every nation and its university graduates. The influence of the latter is rising. As a result, these expectations and opportunities will affect the achievement and productivity of graduates in tertiary institutions.

_____

2. Impact of accreditation

Education accreditation is often implemented, in broadly differing situations, as a mechanism for service enhancement or as a vehicle for education reform. Accreditation requires thorough planning including the compilation of information related to the necessary criteria that are used to analyze how well qualified the organization is to handle any investigations and concerns that may arise. There is limited evidence of the impact of accreditation in Libya, although in developing nations there are indications that facilities with preliminary low levels of standards compliance significantly enhance their levels of adherence as a result of contributing in accreditation programs supported by quality improvement interferences (Shaw, 2013). Profiling descriptions of accreditation organizations are scarce. Despite several studies have tracked accreditation organizations in Europe, yet there has been no comparable local picture (Shaw, 2010).

- Institutional accreditation is often applied as a vehicle for educational change.
- Every nation and its university graduates are challenging by the local and global prospects and standards.
- Extending and employing active quality assurance and accreditation systems is essential for successful higher education everywhere.
- Of the total 33 registered higher educational institutions, only 12 (36.3%) has granted the institutional accreditation, with only 7 (21.2%) offered the programmatic accreditation.
- It is now the mission of the National Center for Quality Assurance and Accreditation (NCQAA) to assist and guide universities and other institutions in Libya to adapt the national accreditation standards.

The raised worry about the quality of education offered in higher institutions is partly motivated by market demands, such as increased competition for the share of the global student market, which has also fueled demand for quality education and institute accountability. This means that the educational undertaking has been affected by universal structures that threaten the autonomy of national education systems, and that there are often major changes in the basic conditions of the institute system aimed at integrating into a society defined by proximity and familiarity.

Needless to mention, it is still mostly through accreditation that higher educational institutions develop their credibility among their various stakeholders, students, employers, other institutions, government and funding agencies. Accreditation processes are used for self-improvement and targeted preparation of future institutional growth. Accreditation allows institutions to assess whether a credential from another institution or a course taken elsewhere is of appropriate quality to be recognized.

3. Accreditation in the Libyan higher education

Accreditation in the Libyan higher education institutions are the method of assessing an educational institution and officially acknowledges that it has met or failed to meet the National Center for Quality Assurance and Accreditation (NCQAA) standards. There are two basic forms of accreditation for educational institutions; institutional (nine criteria) and academic; (eight criteria). It requires a visit to the site for at least three days with each form of accreditation by the accreditation committee applying the essential auditing, with the decision to grant accreditation to those institutions that meet their criteria.

Even with all the measures taken by NCQAA to highlight the accrediting of higher education institutions, it is clear that there is a lack of fundamental and necessary components to create an ideal learning atmosphere that improves knowledge, innovation and professionalism to

_____

meet international learning standards. Indeed, the Libyan higher education system has faced several difficulties over the last few years leading to a system that does not meet international expectations and more importantly social needs. It was therefore the concern to gather calculable insights on the profiling accreditation of Libyan higher educational institution from the available information assorted by the NCQAA database in December 2020 (https://qaa.ly/). Of the total 33 registered higher educational institutions, only 12 (36.3%) has granted the institutional accreditation, with only 7 (21.2%) offered the programmatic accreditation. Interestingly, only private institutions have obtained the programmatic accreditation, exhibiting a challenge facing the public higher education to meet these criteria.

Challenges to accreditation are not new, but they have seldom been noticeable to the general public. Across the past of the process of accreditation, by adapting their procedures, accreditors have responded to changing contexts and pressures from inside and outside the academy. For example, in response to the growing cost burden associated with regional and technical accreditation reviews, agencies have enabled organizations to integrate these reviews into existing administrative processes, such as strategic planning or evaluation of programs (Atia & Elfard, 2020). Recognizing the growing consensus that student learning results are the ultimate test of the quality of instructional programs, accreditors have also re-focused their requirements, reduced the emphasis on quantitative indicators of inputs and services, and necessary decisions on educational efficacy from observable outcomes.

4. Conclusion

After passing fourteen years of its initiation, it is now the mission of NCQAA to assist and guide universities and other institutions in Libya to adapt the national accreditation standards. Notwithstanding the difficulties that the Libyan higher education system faces, it has become a mandatory task for all sectors of Libyan higher education to pursue accreditation for all universities in the country. The ability to achieve an effective higher education system would therefore be a simple and attainable objective. The vulnerabilities found in higher learning institutions and their processes can be resolved effectively, and the next step for NCQAA is to inspect progress and ensure that all requirements have been compiled by all educational institutions. NCQAA is also recommended to recognize the latest international reform of the education system and to go through the process of revising the accreditation criteria and standardizing the process to meet the global task force on accreditation for higher education. We are hopeful that vigorous efforts to enhance the quality of higher education in Libya will be maintained.

_____

References

Shaw, C. D., Braithwaite, J., Moldovan, M., Nicklin, W., Grgic, I., Fortune, T., & Whittaker, S. (2013). Profiling health-care accreditation organizations: an international survey. *Int J Qual Health Care*, *25*(3), 222-231. https://doi.org/10.1093/intqhc/mzt011

Shaw C, Kutryba B, Braithwaite J, Bedlicki M, Warunek A. (2010). Sustainable healthcare accreditation: messages from Europe in 2009. *Int J Qual Saf Health Care*, *22*, 341-350.

Recognized universities (2020). National Center for Quality Assurance and Accreditation. Available from: https://qaa.ly/ (last accessed 11 December 2020).

Atia, A., & Elfard, S. (2020). Medical school accreditation in Libya: Current trends and future challenges. *Egyp J Med Edu*, *2*(2), 1-4. https://doi.org/10.33328/ejme.2020.004