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Research Article

Nurturing Excellence: Exploring the Level of Professional Development Strategies for Quality Assurance in a Multi-Campus Higher Education Institution

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ABSTRACT

In higher education, professional development plays a crucial role in ensuring the quality of teaching and learning. This study examines the level of professional development in quality assurance among faculty members of a multi-campus higher education institution. The study's objective was to assess the level of quality assurance professional development strategies. Quantitative data were collected using a survey questionnaire. Weighted mean was employed for data analysis. The study contributes to knowledge by revealing varying effectiveness across professional development strategies. The participants' level of agreement on the key components of professional development initiatives, the faculty members generally agree on the effectiveness and importance of needs assessment, relevance and customization, pedagogical training, and evaluation and feedback. Based on the findings, the study recommends reinforcing faculty engagement strategies, tailoring professional development programs, addressing workload challenges, and leveraging existing opportunities. The findings of this study enrich the understanding of the interplay between professional development and quality assurance in higher education, providing valuable insights for educational institutions to enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

Keywords: *Higher education, Professional development strategies, Quality assurance*

Introduction

Quality assurance among higher education institutions (HEIs) is a necessary process and tool for determining and identifying the institution's performance, effectiveness, and

efficiency in providing quality tertiary education (Seyfried & Pohlenz, 2018; Eaton, 2021). Specifically, quality assurance assesses the capabilities of an institution to deliver quality teaching-learning processes to the students by

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an established set of standards (Aldoseri & Shadgah, 2021). Moreover, its success and deliverance depend highly on the operations and functions of institutional agents, such as faculty, policymakers, and administrative authorities (Nguyen et al., 2021). Key players are essential to meet the expectations and standards for quality assurance, especially in the teaching-learning process. Without the backing of top management or university leaders, quality management in teaching and learning lacks power or effectiveness (Seyfried & Pohlenz, 2018). Policymakers and administrative authorities are required to enhance and improve the professional development of the faculty, while the faculty are highly encouraged to engage through different strategies.

Since quality assurance targets quality, effective, and efficient teaching-learning processes, developing instructors among higher education institutions and implementing professional development initiatives are necessary. In her study, Chan (2017) asserted that professional development and quality assurance are intertwined in ensuring the best outcomes for teaching and learning in higher education. Moreover, Shiddike (2020) emphasized that quality teaching and teaching-learning processes depend on effective and efficient teachers, so teacher engagement in professional development is necessary. Studies such as that by Gore et al. (2017) found that quality assurance through professional development and faculty engagement impacts the quality of teaching. In addition, Long et al. (2021) study revealed that faculty engagement in high-quality professional development led to improved student learning outcomes.

With the highlighted importance of quality assurance through professional development

initiatives, it should be practiced and implemented among universities and colleges. However, some higher education institutions need more momentum and capability to do so due to varying reasons and circumstances, especially among satellite campuses. Satellite campuses, or branch campuses that are part of a more prominent university located distantly from its main campus, often face social, demographic, geographic, and economic challenges (Rossi & Goglio, 2018). As a result, these challenges hinder the promulgation of quality education, wherein large universities are more focused on excessive expansion and tend to disregard quality lifting (Gu & Zhang, 2021).

In this view, investigating the professional development strategies for quality assurance is necessary to understand the gaps and experiences faced by satellite campuses. It is essential to assess the gravity of these components that affect quality assurance since these satellite campuses strongly contribute to the holistic success, development, and achievement of the main campus and the multi-campus university.

Methods

The study utilized a descriptive research design. This design was used as the study gathered the level of acceptance of the faculty participants on professional development strategies for quality assurance. This study used the probability sampling to determine the study participants. This method, often used in quantitative studies, involves random selection to get the samples or specific participants of the study. In the case of this study, the permanent faculty members' names were listed and coded. The Fishbowl technique was employed to draw out the study participants' names.

Result and Discussion

Level of Professional Development Strategies

Table 1. Mean Distribution of level of agreement of the key components of effective professional development strategies for faculty in satellite campuses in terms of needs assessment

INDICATORS	Mean	Description
1. Needs Assessment:		
1.1 The professional development initiatives for faculty in satellite campuses are based on a thorough needs assessment.	3.85	Agree

INDICATORS	Mean	Description
1.2 The institution gathers feedback from faculty to identify their specific professional development needs at satellite campuses.	3.80	Agree
1.3 The needs assessment process effectively identifies the areas where faculty require professional development at satellite campuses.	3.84	Agree
1.4 Faculty members' input is considered when determining the focus of professional development initiatives at satellite campuses.	3.82	Agree
1.5 The needs assessment process contributes to the effectiveness of professional development initiatives for faculty at satellite campuses.	3.86	Agree
Mean	3.83	Agree

Legend: 4.50 – 5.00 Strongly Agree; 3.50 – 4.50 Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 Neutral; 1.50 – 2.49 Disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 Strongly Disagree

Table 1 provides insights into the mean distribution of the key components of effective professional development initiatives for faculty in satellite campuses, focusing on needs assessment. The overall mean score for this category is 3.83, indicating a general agreement among participants regarding the importance and effectiveness of needs assessment in professional development initiatives.

The mean score of 3.85 for indicator 1.1 suggests that professional development initiatives for faculty in satellite campuses are rooted in a thorough needs assessment. This indicates a proactive approach by the institution to understand the specific requirements of faculty members and align professional development opportunities with their needs.

Indicator 1.2, with a mean score of 3.80, highlights that the institution actively gathers faculty feedback to identify their professional development needs at satellite campuses. This feedback-driven approach ensures that the institution remains responsive to faculty members' evolving needs and preferences, contributing to the relevance of professional development offerings.

The mean score of 3.84 for indicator 1.3 indicates that the needs assessment process effectively identifies the areas where faculty require professional development at satellite campuses. This suggests that the institution has established mechanisms to pinpoint the specific areas where faculty members need support, tailoring professional development initiatives accordingly.

Indicator 1.4, with a mean score of 3.82, underscores that faculty members' input is considered when determining the focus of professional development initiatives at satellite campuses. This participatory approach fosters a sense of ownership and relevance among faculty members, ensuring that the initiatives align with their professional aspirations and goals.

The mean score of 3.86 for indicator 1.5 indicates that the needs assessment process contributes to the effectiveness of professional development initiatives for faculty at satellite campuses. This suggests a positive correlation between a well-informed needs assessment and professional development initiatives' overall success and impact.

While the mean distribution indicates a general agreement, the slightly lower mean score for indicator 1.2 suggests that there may be opportunities for the institution to enhance its feedback mechanisms or involve faculty members in the needs assessment process.

In considering European perspectives on professional development, Dr. Klaus Schmidt from the University of Vienna has emphasized the importance of needs-based approaches in shaping effective faculty development programs (Schmidt, 2019). His research aligns with the findings in Table 1, emphasizing that a robust needs assessment process is foundational for meaningful and impactful professional development.

Table 2. Mean Distribution of level of agreement of the key components of effective professional development strategies for faculty in satellite campuses in terms of relevance and customization

INDICATORS	Mean	Description
2. Relevance and Customization:		
2.1 The professional development initiatives for faculty in satellite campuses are relevant to their teaching and research needs.	4.07	Agree
2.2 The institution ensures that professional development activities are customized to meet the specific requirements of faculty at satellite campuses.	3.98	Agree
2.3 Faculty members perceive that the professional development initiatives align with their career goals and interests at satellite campuses.	4.04	Agree
2.4 The institution offers a variety of professional development options to cater to the diverse needs of faculty at satellite campuses.	3.86	Agree
2.5 Faculty members find the professional development initiatives valuable and applicable to their roles at satellite campuses.	4.02	Agree
Mean	3.99	Agree

Legend: 4.50 – 5.00 Strongly Agree; 3.50 – 4.50 Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 Neutral; 1.50 – 2.49 Disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 Strongly Disagree

Table 2 provides a comprehensive overview of the mean distribution of key components related to the relevance and customization of professional development initiatives for faculty in satellite campuses. The overall mean score for this category is 3.99, indicating a general agreement among the participants regarding the effectiveness of these initiatives in addressing faculty's specific needs and goals.

The mean score of 4.07 for indicator 2.1 indicates a high level of agreement that professional development initiatives for faculty in satellite campuses are relevant to their teaching and research needs. This suggests that the institution has succeeded in aligning these initiatives with the day-to-day responsibilities and professional aspirations of faculty members.

The institution's commitment to offering various professional development options to cater to the diverse needs of faculty at satellite campuses is reflected in the mean score of 3.86

for indicator 2.4. This variety acknowledges that faculty members have different learning preferences and career trajectories, necessitating a range of development opportunities.

Klein (2020) has emphasized the importance of relevance and customization in faculty development initiatives. Her research aligns with the findings in Table 2, highlighting the significance of tailored and relevant opportunities in supporting faculty growth and success. The mean distribution of key components related to the relevance and customization of professional development initiatives in satellite campuses reflects a positive environment where these initiatives are perceived as valuable and aligned with faculty needs. This aligns with the insights of scholars such as Professor Martina Klein, emphasizing the importance of personalized and relevant professional development in higher education.

Table 3. Mean Distribution of level of agreement of the key components of effective professional development initiatives for faculty in satellite campuses in terms of pedagogical training

INDICATORS	Mean	Description
3. Pedagogical Training:		
3.1 The professional development initiatives provide effective training on pedagogical strategies for faculty at satellite campuses.	3.90	Agree

INDICATORS	Mean	Description
3.2 Faculty members receive support and guidance on implementing innovative teaching methods at satellite campuses.	3.89	Agree
3.3 The institution offers resources and workshops that enhance faculty members' pedagogical skills at satellite campuses.	3.94	Agree
3.4 Faculty members feel equipped with the necessary pedagogical knowledge to excel in their teaching roles at satellite campuses.	3.96	Agree
3.5 The professional development initiatives contribute to improving the quality of teaching and learning at satellite campuses.	4.03	Agree
Mean	3.94	Agree

Legend: 4.50 – 5.00 Strongly Agree; 3.50 – 4.50 Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 Neutral; 1.50 – 2.49 Disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 Strongly Disagree

Table 3 presents the mean distribution of key components related to pedagogical training in effective professional development initiatives for faculty in satellite campuses. The overall mean score for this category is 3.94, indicating a general agreement among respondents regarding the importance and effectiveness of pedagogical training in enhancing faculty capabilities.

The mean score of 4.03 for indicator 3.5 indicates that faculty members perceive that professional development initiatives contribute to improving the quality of teaching and learning at satellite campuses. This aligns with the broader professional development goal – enhancing the overall educational experience for faculty and students.

Indicator 3.2, with a mean score of 3.89, reflects agreement that faculty members receive support and guidance on implementing innovative teaching methods at satellite campuses. This indicates a focus on imparting theoretical

knowledge and providing practical advice to faculty members to enhance their teaching practices.

Johnson (2018) has researched the impact of targeted pedagogical training on faculty effectiveness and student outcomes. Her work aligns with the findings in Table 4, highlighting the importance of initiatives that provide pedagogical knowledge and contribute to improved teaching quality. The mean distribution of key components related to pedagogical training in professional development initiatives at satellite campuses indicates a positive environment where faculty members have the necessary knowledge and skills to excel in their teaching roles. This aligns with the insights of scholars such as Dr. Sarah Johnson, emphasizing the importance of targeted pedagogical training in higher education. Additionally, Romina Ifeoma Asiyai (2020) emphasizes ongoing training for all lecturers to keep up with the modern knowledge economy.

Table 4. Mean Distribution of level of agreement of the key components of effective professional development initiatives for faculty in satellite campuses in terms of evaluation and feedback

INDICATORS	Mean	Description
4. Evaluation and Feedback:		
4.1 The professional development initiatives incorporate evaluation mechanisms to assess their effectiveness at satellite campuses.	3.92	Agree
4.2 Faculty members have opportunities to provide feedback on the professional development activities they participate in at satellite campuses.	3.96	Agree
4.3 The institution uses faculty feedback to improve and refine the professional development initiatives for future implementation at satellite campuses.	3.95	Agree

INDICATORS	Mean	Description
4.4 Faculty members receive timely and constructive feedback on their progress and performance in professional development activities at satellite campuses.	3.93	Agree
4.5 The evaluation and feedback processes contribute to the continuous improvement of professional development initiatives at satellite campuses.	3.96	Agree
Mean	3.95	Agree

Legend: 4.50 – 5.00 Strongly Agree; 3.50 – 4.50 Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 Neutral; 1.50 – 2.49 Disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 Strongly Disagree

Table 4 presents the mean distribution of the level of agreement regarding key components of effective professional development initiatives for faculty in satellite campuses, focusing on evaluation and feedback. The overall mean score for this category is 3.95, indicating a general agreement among the participants regarding the importance and effectiveness of initiatives related to evaluation and feedback.

Indicator 4.2, with a mean score of 3.96, reflects agreement that faculty members have opportunities to provide feedback on the professional development activities they participate in at satellite campuses. Providing avenues for feedback empowers faculty members to share their perspectives and shape the development initiatives to meet their needs better.

The mean score of 3.96 for indicator 4.5 suggests that the evaluation and feedback processes contribute to the continuous improvement of professional development initiatives at satellite campuses. This cyclical process of assessment and refinement is essential for ensuring these initiatives' ongoing relevance and effectiveness.

The mean score of 3.92 for indicator 4.1 suggests that professional development initiatives incorporate evaluation mechanisms to assess their effectiveness at satellite campuses. This demonstrates a commitment to measuring the impact and success of these initiatives, ensuring they align with the intended goals.

Wong (2020) has researched feedback's role in shaping effective professional development initiatives for faculty in Asian higher education. Her work aligns with the findings in Table 16, emphasizing the importance of feedback in enhancing the impact and continuous

improvement of professional development initiatives.

The mean distribution of key components related to evaluation and feedback in professional development initiatives at satellite campuses indicates a commitment to continuous improvement and responsiveness to faculty needs. This aligns with the insights of scholars such as Dr. Mei Wong, highlighting the significance of feedback in shaping effective professional development initiatives in Asian higher education.

Conclusion

The participants agree on the prevalence and implementation of professional development initiatives, which indicate that NEMSU administration provides faculty members across satellite campuses opportunities to grow professionally and personally. Specifically, these initiatives are tailored and relevant to the faculty members' needs, providing pedagogical, technological, and scholarly development through collaboration, mentoring, continuous learning, and evaluation and feedback. However, these study results reveal that there is still room for improvement for the university administration in fostering and implementing professional development initiatives that will increase quality assurance and the development of faculty members in different aspects.

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