

Engaging Stakeholders to Improve the Quality of Higher Education Program Outcomes

Accreditation is a review process to determine if educational programs meet defined standards of quality. Once achieved, it is renewed periodically to ensure that the quality of the educational program is maintained. Educational services have several service characteristics: They are predominately intangible, perishable, heterogeneous, and the professor's teaching efforts are simultaneously "produced" and "consumed" with both professor and student being part of the teaching experience. Due to these unique characteristics of services, service quality cannot be measured objectively.

There is a mandate for higher levels of skills, recurrent updating of skills and excellent 'soft skills' as well as technical skills. The Higher Education Institutions (Universities and Colleges) are placing importance on higher education programs that will encourage and foster skills and qualities in addition to ensuring a complete understanding of program outcomes.

The professional and personal attributes relevant to their field of study, expected by the students and employers along with specific knowledge, skills and attributes of higher education in undergraduate universities.

One of the best practices of using employers' feedback system about the performance of graduates will help to assure the quality of program deliver is matching with knowledge and skills needs at the work place.

This study normally conducted by using self-administered questionnaire to gather the feedback of employers from relevant institutions/ companies /Organizations to know on the performance of the graduates those who are working at these institutions.

Based on the result analysis of employers feedback which will be collected from various sectors of work places, the higher education institutions will understand what type of modification required in the program outcomes for the future graduates to perform effectively when they enter the workforce.

Most of the employers will assess the key factors of professionalism, in-depth knowledge of discipline, interpersonal and communication skill, problem solving ability, practice based learning, and system based practice and leadership and entrepreneurial skill of the employees.

These findings are useful as reflective tools on curriculum design.

This type of studies gave valuable insight about the gap analysis between the current programs outcomes and skills required in the work place.

The curriculum mapping that has been practiced in designing the curriculum could be used as a benchmark to map the learning outcomes and making sure that there is no gap in the graduates learning process.

In order to improve the quality of program outcomes, curriculum mapping will be the effective tool, which can be found out by the practice of having the feedback from the employers.

Encompassing employers on curriculum development and arranging internship programs would improve the relevance and quality of degree programs. It is also recommended that add-ons to training programs in relevant organizations should be arranged for graduates so that they can gain work experience.

The conclusion of this article is, having the practice of employers' feedback system at higher education institution will help to maintain the quality of program outcomes of higher educational institutions.

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