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Accepted

قبول البحث

2023/6/19

Revised

مراجعة البحث

2023 /5/30

Received

استلام البحث

2023 /4/23

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31559/GJEB2023.13.4.5>



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إمكانية تطبيق معايير ضمان الجودة والاعتماد الأكاديمي لاتحاد جامعات العالم الإسلامي في جامعة ظفار بسلطنة عمان من وجهة نظر أعضاء هيئة التدريس والإداريين

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Abstract:

Objectives: The aim of this research is to evaluate the performance of Dhofar University in Sultanate of Oman based on two criteria: quality assurance and academic accreditation of Islamic Universities Federation.

Methods: This research is categorized under quantitative approach by using descriptive statistics analysis. 236 participants of academics and Employee were selected randomly from population of university which included 423 lecturers and employees. Data was analyzed by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS-25).

Results: The results indicated that criteria used in Dhofar University was congruent with Islamic Universities Federation criteria with an average (3.81 of 5) and a standard deviation (0.63) which is relatively high. The first criteria were the "Education Resources and Facilities Standard" with an average of 4.06, then the "Teaching and Learning Standard" with an average of 4.01, and finally the "International Standard" with an average of 3.56 respectively. The results also revealed that there are no significant differences between the responses of participants in the extent of quality assurance application standards and academic accreditation at Dhofar University, based on gender and years of experience.

Conclusions: Finally, researcher presented a set of recommendations including adoption of the model (quality assurance standards and academic accreditation of Islamic Universities Federation) as long as there is an appropriate ground for the application at Dhofar University, with the initiation of forming a team to undertake this work, in addition to possibility of applying the module in other universities.

Keywords: Quality Assurance; Academic Accreditation; Performance; Higher education; Dhofar University.

الملخص:

الأهداف: يهدف هذا البحث إلى تقييم إمكانية أداء جامعة ظفار بسلطنة عمان في ضوء معايير الجودة والاعتماد الأكاديمي لاتحاد جامعات العالم الإسلامي. المنهجية: اتبع الباحث المنهج الوصفي التحليلي، فشمّل البحث أفراد المجتمع من الإداريين والأكاديميين، وعددهم (423) مشاركاً وُزعت عليهم استبانة إلكترونية، واستُرِدَّت (236) استبانة: منها إحدى عشرة استبانة غير صالحة، وكان تحليل البيانات باستخدام الحزمة الإحصائية للعلوم الاجتماعية (SPSS 25)، حيث استخدم الباحث أسلوب التحليل الوصفي كمتوسط الحسابي والانحراف المعياري والتحليل التائي (T-Test) وتحليل التباين أحادي الاتجاه (one way ANOVA) لمعرفة الفروق بين متوسطات عينة الدراسة تبعاً للمتغيرات الديموغرافية.

النتائج: أشارت النتائج إلى ارتفاع المتوسط الحسابي الكلي لاستجابات أفراد العينة، فقد كان بمتوسط حسابي (3.81)، وانحراف معياري (0.63)، وجاء في المرتبة الأولى "معياري مصادر التعليم والتسهيلات" بمتوسط حسابي (4.06)، ثم "معياري التعليم والتعلم" بمتوسط حسابي (4.01)، وأخيراً "معياري العالمية" بمتوسط حسابي (3.56). وأظهرت النتائج أيضاً أن لا فروق دالة إحصائية بين استجابات أفراد العينة في مدى تطبيق معايير ضمان الجودة والاعتماد الأكاديمي في جامعة ظفار. بناء على متغيري النوع والخبرة، بينما كانت هناك فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية لبعض المعايير بناءً على متغيرات العمر، الوظيفة والمؤهل العلمي.

الخلاصة: قدم الباحث نموذج لاستيفاء تطبيق المعايير لنيل جامعة ظفار عضوية اتحاد جامعات العالم الإسلامي وأوصى بتطبيقها في الجامعة لرفع مستوى الأداء وتنفيذاً للرؤية عمان 2040. ومن المتوقع أن يفيد هذا النموذج في تحسين وتعزيز جودة الخدمات التعليمية مما يؤدي إلى تحقيق النمو وتحسين جودة الأداء في الجامعة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: ضمان الجودة؛ الاعتماد الأكاديمي؛ الأداء؛ التعليم العالي؛ جامعة ظفار.

Introduction:

Evaluation of higher education institutions performance has been attracting more of interest for researchers and scholars around the world. Since the university is the base of knowledge, experience and human behavior, university also plays important role in raising the awareness and supplying the resource for students in the classroom. University also leads the processes of change and development in order to achieve comprehensive development goals in societies (Peters, 2020; Leal Filho et al., 2019; Ashworth & Harvey, 2016 & Asiimwe and Steyn, 2013). The quality of academic performance and evaluation at university level has received great attention regarding system of quality standards, academic accreditation and quality assurance in higher education. According to Waterbury (2018), the first quarter of 21st century is the era of university performance evaluation and accountability, especially since the evaluation includes all elements of university systems, inputs and outputs. Some of these evaluations are carried out by the university itself in order to correct its work or develop and improve by relying on international standards (Maarj and David, 2015; Volkwein, 2009).

The evaluation of the university's performance is considered as a result of the university's need to develop in all areas of higher education including scientific research and innovation, to achieve quality requirements. In addition, the evaluation process is responding to the aims of the external stakeholders. The goal of university administration here is to satisfy these parties and achieve benefits from them. In response to the urgent need to provide higher education opportunities for large numbers of general education diploma graduates, the government of the Sultanate of Oman has made great efforts to increase the absorptive capacity of higher education institutions (Education Council of the Sultanate of Oman, 2021). The Ministry of Higher Education in the Sultanate of Oman is committed to achieving tangible progress and knowledge development globally by ensuring that universities and academic institutions in the Sultanate provide higher education in accordance with international quality standards in accordance with the directives of Royal Decree No. (9/2021) for the framework of the Omani Authority for Academic Accreditation.

Furthermore, Islamic Universities Federation and Arab Universities Federation have given great importance to evaluation of universities performance by focusing on quality assurance and academic accreditation in their affiliated universities (Alferjany, 2018; Ali & Musah, 2012). The Arab and Islamic Federations have issued these evaluation criteria in 2003 and distributed it to member universities to be a unified tool used by all universities. The two Federations of Arab and Islamic Universities continued their interest in this vital topic and formed the nucleus of the Council for Quality Assurance and Accreditation in 2007 which formed a committee to review the previous external and self-evaluation guide, and to make many improvements and amendments to it, to facilitate its use by all Arab and Islamic universities (Addas, 2020; Hamalainen & Wahlen, 2011). The amendments were approved in Amman-Jordan where the revised manual was reprinted in 2008 with its new version including the Quality Assurance Guide for Arab and Islamic Universities. (Alferjany, 2018; Hamalainen & Wahlen, 2011 & Addas, 2020).

Accordingly, the Omani Authority for Academic Accreditation has imposed the application of academic accreditation standards to all higher education institutions operating in the Sultanate for the purpose of verifying academic programs. These regulations were designed to improve the classification of Omani universities in the international university rankings. The purpose of obtaining academic accreditation is to enhance governance and management, curriculum, research curriculum, research and consulting, company with society and industry, academic support services, students and support services, employee support services and facilities.

Based on these requirements by Omani government, the objectives of the study are determined as follows:

- Examining the application of quality assurance standards and academic accreditation of the Islamic Universities Federation at Dhofar University.
- Analyzing application of total quality assurance and academic accreditation based on demographic variables (gender, age, educational qualification, job level, experience) from the point of view of the faculties and employees at Dhofar University.

The importance of this study could be concluded in the necessity of applying the concept of quality assurance standards and academic accreditation based on Islamic universities confederation requirement to work in general at the university's educational plans, scientific research and community service. In addition, this study gives an important evidence of evaluation methods to improve performance at Dhofar University in light of the quality standards and academic accreditation that was prepared by the Federation of the Universities of the Islamic World, in order to obtain institutional academic accreditation from Omani universities and Dhofar University in particular.

Literature Review and Hypotheses Development:

Universities' Performance Evaluation:

The performance evaluation system in universities has become an important entry point for achieving quality and maintaining organizational development (Wu, 2014). Performance on a regular basis is one of the valuable tools in the field of guiding employees and encouraging the self-development process within the educational

institution (Samar, 2019). Universities evaluate their performance periodically in order to ensure that their procedures and process are effectively consistent with their mission and objectives and contribute to their achievement of education, scientific research, and university service to society (David & Marrja, 2015; Oakleaf, 2014). In addition, working effectively to identify strengths to reward outstanding employees and identifying weaknesses to points out needs to be developed. The assessment process is necessary as an integral part of the development of the higher education sector in society. According to (Kelum A. et.al, 2020; Vykydal et al., 2020 and Wals, 2014), for successful evaluation process at university, number of characteristics must be taken into account including: 1) Determine the purpose of the evaluation, 2) Choosing appropriate assessment tools for the purpose, 3) Awareness of possible sources of errors in the evaluation process, which differ from one tool to another.

The main elements of university performance evaluation depend on conducting continuous reviews of previously followed policies in light of the university's strategy and plans (Peters, 2020; Leal Filho et al., 2019 & Ali, 2012). Some of these elements that used in this study to evaluate quality assurance and academic accreditation are as follows:

- Academic Employees and faculty members: ensuring the adequacy of faculty members for the actual needs at the level of the scientific department and specialization in order to ensure the stability and continuity of the educational process.
- Educational Programs: the suitability of study programs for society needs, labor market, requirements for knowledge development, and the extent to which courses, curricula and study programs are linked to the university's mission and strategic objectives.
- Financial Support: availability of financial resources to perform all work, and various sources of financing. In addition to the ability to develop and allocate these resources.
- Buildings, facilities and facilities related to the educational process including adequacy of buildings and facilities, availability of laboratories, workshops and equipment and adhering to safety and security rules.
- Libraries and Information Centers: providing a library equipped with the necessary sources of information to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of academic achievement in each college and at the university level.
- Other indicators including student and staff services, research activities, student affairs, outcomes and Media Activities.

Implementation of Total Quality Assurance:

Total Quality is described as a management philosophy aimed at continuous improvement in the quality of performance and all operations and services in the educational institution. The evaluation of higher education outcomes is a detailed basis for controlling the quality of education in general and university education in particular. Phan et al. (2019) stated that total quality is a method for improving the effectiveness and flexibility of work in general, and it is a method of organization that includes the entire facility, including all departments, activities, and employees at all levels. Furthermore, Alolayyan et al. (2011) defined total quality assurance as specifications and conditions that should be met in the components of the Deanship of Scientific Research and Graduate Studies, which are the quality of the university administration, the quality of faculty members, and the quality of the graduate studies curricula. Regarding these definitions of total quality assurance, process of verifying academic standards should be consistent with the mission of the educational institution in a manner consistent with the corresponding standards, whether at the national or international level.

Most researchers indicated that there are justifications for applying quality in educational institutions to improve performance in these institutions (Indrawati et.al, 2020; De Matos et al., 2020; Kahloun & Ayachi-Ghannouchi, 2019; Yirdaw, 2016 & Mohammed, 2013). Through reviewing these literatures, it could be concluding the most important indicators as quality and its link to productivity, application of this requirements in most institutions of higher education globally and relationship of total quality management to institutional and societal development and improvement. The application of total quality management in the higher education system requires great efforts to improve performance and enhance educational inputs, processes and outputs (Kahloun & Ayachi-Ghannouchi, 2019; Yirdaw, 2016; Mohammed, 2013). Furthermore, many previous studies confirmed that the requirements of quality management can be focused through continuous improvement, focus on customers and administrative leaders, participation of all employees and decision-making, in addition to education and training (Abdel-Gadir, 2020; Saroja and Sojatha, 2016 & Thomas and Lawrence, 2014). On the other hand, there are obstacles facing higher education institutions when implementing quality systems, but there is a difference in the degree of their importance. Some studies have explored the most important obstacles to the application of total quality in higher education including lack of awareness of the concept of continuous education, weak financial support for scientific research, limited capacities of libraries and weak communication channels between university administrations and departments (Ashworth, 2016; Asiimwe and Steyn, 2013). In addition, Gasman and Marybeth (2010) pointed out that there are a number of challenges facing total quality management in universities including expansion of scientific programs instead of quality application, lack of financial support, lack of interest in activating student training and strategic planning application.

Academic Accreditation Criteria:

Academic accreditation has emerged as one of the most pressing issues in the field of higher education due to necessary basis for achieving desired renaissance in the educational process (Sywelem & Witte, 2009). Kelum et al. (2020), Tawafak et al. (2018), Shearman & Seddon (2010) and Patil & Conder (2007)– indicated that the beginning of academic accreditation started in 1871 as voluntary cooperation from a number of universities and high schools in US in order to improve the educational situation. As for the Arab countries, academic accreditation and quality assurance are new starting in 1998, despite the reference and recommendations confirmed by Arab countries in their regional conferences on the need to adhere to the application of accreditation and quality standards in Arab universities (Alsharari, 2019 & Tezcan-Unal et al., 2018). Lenn (2014) stated that academic accreditation is defined as a non-profit voluntary activity aimed at encouraging institutions and assisting them in the processes of evaluating and developing the efficiency of their educational programs and granting recognition to institutions or academic programs that have met or exceeded the minimum standards. Furthermore, Hamalainen and Whalen, (2014) defined academic accreditation as an evaluation process of the educational institution or academic programs carried out by the accreditation body according to sequential scientific stages, and verification of the extent to which this institution or program meets the local or international organization's standards.

Academic accreditation is represented in the application process that is carried out through a codified mechanism to legitimize higher education institutions advancement by requesting their accreditation from a party concerned with granting academic accreditation according to a predetermined system and guidelines (Eaton, 2016). Sanyal & Martin (2007) clarifies the importance of academic accreditation as it is an important way to prove the reputation and position of the educational institution, which represents an incentive for students to join specific university based on this accreditation. There are several types of academic accreditation, including: institutional accreditation, program accreditation and professional accreditation. On the other side, several problems and obstacles emerged during the application of academic accreditation standards in Arab universities in general, and Omani universities in particular. The most significant factors facing academic accreditations include increasing teaching period in exchange for conducting and preparing scientific research, lack of financial support for scientific research, lack of communication with employment institutions to know their needs and complexities of scientific promotions (Frank et al. 2020 & Joo et al. 2018).

Based on the literature review, previous studies and objectives related to performance evaluation in light of quality standards and academic accreditation in Islamic universities federation, researcher has formulated the following hypotheses:

H₁: there is a significant difference in applying of quality assurance and academic accreditation criteria at Dhofar University based on gender.

H₂: there is a significant difference in applying of quality assurance and academic accreditation criteria at Dhofar University based on age.

H₃: there is a significant difference in applying of quality assurance and academic accreditation criteria at Dhofar University based on position- academic or employee.

H₄: there is a significant difference in applying of quality assurance and academic accreditation criteria at Dhofar University based on year of experience.

H₅: there is a significant difference in applying of quality assurance and academic accreditation criteria at Dhofar University based on qualifications.

Methodology:

Research Design:

Dhofar University was established in January 2004 as a private higher education institution in Salalah, Governorate of Dhofar in the Sultanate of Oman. The university aims to achieve scientific excellence in the various fields offering student to take advantage of the educational opportunities available at the university, in order to develop their skills and abilities to seize the chances of success. The Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) is affiliated with university rectorate, where it is responsible for following up on the implementation of the strategic plan and its executive plan to achieve the vision and mission of the university. The QAU develops quantitative and qualitative standards related to teaching and service performance. Departments of QAU at Dhofar University consist of three sections as follows:

- Academic Internal Audit Department: it supervises the continuous follow-up and monitoring of the application of quality in all matters related to academic programs and colleges at the university.
- Non-Academic Internal Audit Department: it supervises the follow-up of all departments and administrative centers to ensure their compliance with the application of all quality standards.
- Quality Standards External Department: it supervises the follow-up and coordination with all external bodies and institutions to ensure the application of standards and academic commitment.

Research Type and Sampling:

Descriptive analytical method was used in this study. This method is based on describing the related case to reach the causes and the factors that control and draw conclusions in order to generalize the idea which is application of criteria of Islamic universities federation on Dhofar University. The study used a questionnaire tool in order to collect data and information for the study and apply IPM SPSS 25 program for the statistical analysis.

The study population consists of (423) individuals including professors, assistant professors, associate professors and lecturers. Questionnaires were distributed to the study sample, and a total of (236) participants were retrieved. After organizing and processing data. It was found that there were (225) valid questionnaires for statistical analysis, and it 5 forms were not valid for analysis because there were no answers to some questions or to repeat answers to the same questions. In addition to 6 other forms have extreme values. The questionnaires had a 53% retrieval rate, all of which were subjected to statistical analysis. The questionnaires also were distributed randomly among academics and Employees of the university. Table (1) shows the characteristics of the sample according to gender, age, educational qualification, occupation and years of experience.

Table (1): Demographics of Sample

No.	Indicator	Category	Frequencies	Percentages
1.	Gender	Female	86	38.2 %
		Male	139	61.8%
2.	Age	Less than 30	20	8.9%
		30 > 40	64	28.4%
		40 > 50	88	39.1%
		50 > 60	42	18.7 %
		More than 60	11	4.9%
3.	Qualification	Diploma	40	17.8%
		Bachelor	40	17.8%
		Master	52	23.1%
		Doctorate	93	41.3%
4.	Occupation	Academics	105	46.7%
		Staff	120	53.3%
5.	Years of experience	Less than 5	58	25.8%
		5 > 10	101	44.8%
		10 > 15	42	18.7%
		More than 15	24	10.7%

Table (1) shows that the number of male participants was the highest with 139 participants, or 61.8%, while female participants was 86, or 38.2%, which indicates that Omani women have taken their place in working in accordance with state policy and the development. Furthermore, almost 60% of academics and employees age between 30 and 50 with working experience among 5 to 15 years.

Data Collection and Measures:

To achieve and implement the study's objectives, the researcher relied on the following sources:

- **Primary sources:** the researcher prepared a questionnaire in order to provide data and information related to the study to complete the applied aspect and address the analytical aspects. The questionnaire included a set of items for every variable related to the subject of the study.
- **Secondary Sources:** in order to address the theoretical framework of the study, the researcher relied on some of the secondary sources of Arabic and foreign books related to the subject of the study, and reviewed many published researches in various periodicals, scientific conferences and web sites.

The questionnaire included 48 items distributed over two main parts; the first part is concerned with the personal characteristics (demographic variables) of the study sample members. This part includes 6 paragraphs including gender, age, educational qualification, job level, experience, and years of service. The second part is concerned with the dimensions of the study, which are the standards of quality assurance and academic accreditation of the Federation of the Universities of the Islamic World, and it consists of ten main criteria and other sub-criteria that the researcher studied in order to identify the extent to which they can be applied at Dhofar University in the Sultanate of Oman.

Furthermore, researcher used 10 criteria to measure quality assurance and academic accreditation based on Islamic universities federation. These items are shown in Table (2). The researcher applied Cronbach's alpha coefficient in order to assess the coherence of the scale. The accepted value of the coefficient is 0.70 according to (Al Kurdi, 2020) in answering items of the ten criteria included in the questionnaire. Researcher also used the five-point Likert scale with 5 "strongly agree" and 1 "strongly disagree".

Table (2): Indicators and Cronbach Alpha

No.	Indicator	Items	Cronbach Alpha
1.	Teaching and learning,	4	0,730
2.	Research and publication	3	0.792
3.	Students	4	0.809
4.	Employees	4	0.760
5.	International Cooperation	4	0.799
6.	Learning resources and facilities	7	0.820
7.	Institutional calendar	6	0.854
8.	Financing	5	0.823
9.	Values, morals and culture	3	0.771
10.	Community development	3	0.858

Data Analysis Approach:

In order to investigate and achieve the objectives of the study and by testing the study's hypotheses, SPSS 25 was used including these statistical methods:

- Reliability and validity test: to measure the stability of the study tool.
- Frequencies, percentages, averages and standard deviations: in order to describe the characteristics of the sample, and to determine questionnaires of participants towards two parts of the study tool.
- Confirmatory factor analysis: to give quantitative evidence that items of questionnaires belong to the dimensions associated with indicators, and to reveal the validity of the hypothesis that researcher used in the study.
- Conformity indicators: to determine the extent to which the proposed study model matches the sample data. There are a number of indicators by which it is possible to judge the extent to which the study model matches the sample data.
- T-test: In order to determine the differences between the participant's answers to each indicator, which is used if the differences between two independent samples are determined.
- ONE WAY ANOVA TEST: in order to determine the differences between the participant's answers to each indicator of the study, and in the case of determining the differences between more than two independent samples.

Results:**Confirmatory Factor Analysis:**

The homogeneity test was used as CFA analysis. Table (3) shows the results of the Levine's test for homogeneity where the results show that the p-value in all variables is greater than the level of significance (0.05), and then homogeneity occurred in the data.

Table (3): Homogeneity test results

Indicator	Levine's statistics	Df1	Df2	Sig.
Gender	2.007	1	224	0.118
Age	0.561	4	221	0.859
Qualification	1.274	4	221	0.241
Occupation	1.368	1	224	0.190
Years of Experience	0.582	3	222	0.842

Correlation Test:

In addition to correlation test, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Maximum Square Variance (MSV), and Average Square Variance (ASV) were measured for the ten indicators. Based on Table (4), the square root of average variance extracted for a particular variable is greater than the value of the correlation of one indicator to another.

Table (4): Correlation, Convergent and discriminatory Tests

Factor	AVE	MSV	ASV	LRN 1	PUB 2	STD 3	EMP 4	WRL 5	FCT 6	EVL 7	FIN 8	ETH 9	SOC 10
LRN	0.711	0.120	0.111	0.84									
PUB	0.692	0.209	0.125	0.59	0.83								
STD	0.604	0.231	0.117	0.76	0.74	0.77							
EMP	0.599	0.211	0.104	0.33	0.65	0.66	0.77						
WRL	0.731	0.186	0.122	0.66	0.55	0.59	0.70	0.85					
FCT	0.658	0.196	0.131	0.54	0.59	0.63	0.64	0.45	0.81				
EVL	0.701	0.210	0.132	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.55	0.66	0.44	0.83			
FIN	0.687	0.219	0.122	0.60	0.61	0.61	0.67	0.53	0.60	0.62	0.82		
ETH	0.696	0.241	0.143	0.49	0.63	0.58	0.69	0.63	0.48	0.66	0.53	0.83	
SOC	0.663	0.199	0.115	0.58	0.63	0.56	0.68	0.70	0.66	0.59	0.43	0.61	0.81

Through the comparisons in Table (4), the results highlight the excellence of the variables with convergent validity because the values of average variance extracted (AVE) for each variable exceeded the value 0.50, which is less than the composite reliability, and values of each of the maximum square variance (MSV) were smaller than the values of AVE). Furthermore, mean squared variance (ASV) values are smaller than the maximum square variance (MSV) values for all indicators, which indicates the model's excellence in discriminatory validity.

Descriptive Analysis:

The results of Table (5) indicate that total arithmetic mean of participants' answers on the performance evaluation of Dhofar University in Sultanate of Oman.

Table (5): Descriptive Statistics: Mean and Standard deviation

No.	Indicator	Mean	SD	Order
1.	Teaching and learning,	4.01	0.71	2
2.	Research and publication	3.86	0.69	4
3.	Students	3.70	0.71	8
4.	Employees	3.78	0.85	7
5.	International Cooperation	3.56	0.78	10
6.	Learning resources and facilities	4.06	0.70	1
7.	Institutional calendar	3.90	0.73	3
8.	Financing	3.83	0.77	5
9.	Values, morals and culture	3.80	0.86	6
10.	Community development	3.65	0.79	9
Total at University Level		3.81	0.75	

The results show that the total mean of the responses of participants on evaluating the performance of Dhofar University was (3.81) and with a standard deviation of (0.75), and accordingly the mean, results indicate a high level of evaluation of the performance of Dhofar University based on criteria of Islamic Universities Federation. The standard of educational resources and facilities came in first place with an average (4.06), followed by the standard of teaching and learning with an average (4.01), and finally the global cooperation standard with an average (3.56).

Hypotheses test:

H₁: there is a significant difference in extent of quality assurance and academic accreditation criteria at Dhofar University based on gender.

The t-test was conducted to identify the statistical differences in the extent of the application of quality assurance and academic accreditation standards for Islamic Universities Federation at Dhofar University based on gender. Table (6) shows these results.

Table (6): t-test based on Gender of applying Indicators at Dhofar University

No.	Indicator	t-test	df	Mean		Sig.
				F	M	
1.	Teaching and learning,	0.939	223	4.06	3.97	0.349
2.	Research and publication	0.603	223	3.89	3.84	0.547
3.	Students	0.615	223	3.66	3.72	0.539
4.	Employees	0.246	223	3.75	3.78	0.806
5.	International Cooperation	1.358	223	3.64	3.50	0.176
6.	Learning resources and facilities	1.118	223	4.12	4.01	0.265
7.	Institutional calendar	0.928	223	3.95	3.86	0.354
8.	Financing	0.208	223	3.83	3.81	0.835
9.	Values, morals and culture	0.421	223	3.82	3.77	0.674
10.	Community development	0.890	223	3.71	3.61	0.374

The p-value of all indicators was greater than 0.05 that is, there are no statistically significant differences in the extent of application of quality and academic accreditation standards at Dhofar University according to the gender. This result rejects the first hypothesis of this research.

H₂: there is a significant difference in extent of quality assurance and academic accreditation criteria at Dhofar University based on age.

The one-way ANOVA test was conducted to identify the statistical differences in the extent of the application of quality standards and academic accreditation at Dhofar University due to the age indicator. Table (7) shows the results of the ANOVA test analysis.

Table (7): Results of the ANOVA test based on Age

Indicator	Source of Var.	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Teaching and learning,	Between Gro.	3.011	4	0.753	1.466	0.214
	Within Groups	112.979	220	0.514		
Research and publication	Between Gro.	5.472	4	1.368	2.934	0.022
	Within Groups	102.571	220	0.466		
Students	Between Gro.	7.117	4	1.779	3.662	0.007
	Within Groups	106.883	220	0.486		
Employees	Between Gro.	8.435	4	2.109	2.959	0.021
	Within Groups	156.780	220	0.713		
International Cooperation	Between Gro.	3.774	4	0.943	1.560	0.186
	Within Groups	133.032	220	0.605		
Learning resources facilities	Between Gro.	3.365	4	0.841	1.705	0.150
	Within Groups	108.574	220	0.949		
Institutional calendar	Between Gro.	5.123	4	1.281	2.432	0.048
	Within Groups	115.832	220	0.527		
Financing	Between Gro.	5.279	4	1.320	2.227	0.067
	Within Groups	130.371	220	0.593		
Values, morals and culture	Between Gro.	8.584	4	2.146	2.966	0.021
	Within Groups	159.171	220	0.724		
Community development	Between Gro.	2.531	4	0.633	1.009	0.403
	Within Groups	137.906	220	0.627		

In Table (7), the p-value was greater than 0.05 for half of the indicators which means there are no statistically significant differences in the extent of application of quality and academic accreditation standards at Dhofar University according to the age while the half of indicators show there are significant differences. In this case, we have to look at the mean of every indicator based on age where the greater is the mean, the acceptable value is calculated. In total, this hypothesis is accepted partially.

H₃: there is a significant difference in extent of quality assurance and academic accreditation criteria at Dhofar University based on position (whether academic or Employee).

The t-test was conducted to identify the statistical differences in the extent of the application of quality assurance and academic accreditation standards for Islamic Universities Federation at Dhofar University based on type of occupation. Table (8) shows these results.

Table (8): t-test based on position of applying Indicators at Dhofar University

No.	Indicator	t-test	df	Mean		Sig.
				Employee	Academic	
1.	Teaching and learning,	3.183	223	4.14	3.86	0.002
2.	Research and publication	2.203	223	4.01	3.72	0.002
3.	Students	1.741	223	3.78	3.62	0.083
4.	Employees	2.673	223	3.93	3.63	0.008
5.	International Cooperation	0.969	223	3.60	3.50	0.334
6.	Learning resources and facilities	0.156	223	4.05	4.06	0.876
7.	Institutional calendar	2.234	223	4.01	3.80	0.026
8.	Financing	0.153	223	3.83	3.81	0.878
9.	Values, morals and culture	2.471	223	3.94	3.66	0.014
10.	Community development	2.889	223	3.81	3.51	0.004

The p-value of all indicators was less than 0.05 for six indicators, that is, there are statistically significant differences in the extent of application of quality and academic accreditation standards at Dhofar University according to the position. while four indicators were not significant namely: international cooperation, learning resource and facilities and financial support. By calculating the mean for each indicator, the highest mean has the preference, in this case this hypothesis is partially accepted.

H₄: there is a significant difference in extent of quality assurance and academic accreditation criteria at Dhofar University based on years of experience.

The one-way ANOVA test was conducted to identify the statistical differences in the extent of the application of quality standards and academic accreditation at Dhofar University due to the year of experience indicator. Table (9) shows the results of the ANOVA test analysis.

Table (9): Results of the ANOVA test based on Years of Experience

Indicator	Source of Var.	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Teaching and learning,	Between Gro.	1.177	3	0.392	0.755	0.520
	Within Groups	114.813	221	0.520		
Research and publication	Between Gro.	0,457	3	0.152	0.313	0.816
	Within Groups	107.586	221	0.487		
Students	Between Gro.	0.590	3	0.197	0.383	0.765
	Within Groups	113.410	221	0.513		
Employees	Between Gro.	0.834	3	0.278	0.374	0.772
	Within Groups	164.381	221	0.744		
International Cooperation	Between Gro.	0.758	3	0,253	0.410	0.746
	Within Groups	136.048	221	0.616		
Learning resources facilities	Between Gro.	2.312	3	0.771	1.554	0.202
	Within Groups	109.627	221	0.496		
Institutional calendar	Between Gro.	0.537	3	0.179	0.328	0.805
	Within Groups	120.418	221	0.545		
Financing	Between Gro.	0.473	3	0.158	0.258	0.856
	Within Groups	135.177	221	0.612		
Values, morals and culture	Between Gro.	1.515	3	0.505	0.671	0.571
	Within Groups	166.240	221	0.752		
Community development	Between Gro.	1.863	3	0.621	0.990	0.398
	Within Groups	138.574	221	0.627		

In Table (9), the p-value of all indicators was greater than 0.05 that is, there are no statistically significant differences in the extent of application of quality and academic accreditation standards at Dhofar University according to the years of experience at university. This result rejects the fourth hypothesis of this research.

H₅: there is a significant difference in extent of quality assurance and academic accreditation criteria at Dhofar University based on qualifications.

The one-way ANOVA test was conducted to identify the statistical differences in the extent of the application of quality standards and academic accreditation at Dhofar University due to the qualification indicator. Table (10) shows the results of the ANOVA test analysis.

Table (10): Results of the ANOVA test based on Qualification

Indicator	Source of Var.	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Teaching and learning,	Between Gro.	7,035	4	1.759	3.551	0.008
	Within Groups	108.955	220	0.495		
Research and publication	Between Gro.	5.525	4	1.381	2.964	0.021
	Within Groups	102.518	220	0.466		
Students	Between Gro.	2.019	4	0.505	0.992	0.413
	Within Groups	111.981	220	0.509		
Employees	Between Gro.	7.858	4	1.964	2.747	0.029
	Within Groups	157.357	220	0.715		
International Cooperation	Between Gro.	2.414	4	0.603	0.988	0.415
	Within Groups	134.392	220	0.611		
Learning resources facilities	Between Gro.	1.116	4	0,279	0.554	0.696
	Within Groups	110.824	220	0.504		
Institutional calendar	Between Gro.	4.163	4	1.041	1.961	0.102
	Within Groups	116.792	220	0.531		
Financing	Between Gro.	1.635	4	0.409	,671	0.613
	Within Groups	134.015	220	0.609		
Values, morals and culture	Between Gro.	9.997	4	2.499	3.485	0.009
	Within Groups	157.758	220	0.717		
Community development	Between Gro.	6.524	4	1.631	2.680	0.033
	Within Groups	133.913	220	0.609		

In Table (10), the p-value was greater than 0.05 for half of the indicators which means there are no statistically significant differences in the extent of application of quality and academic accreditation standards at Dhofar University according to the qualifications while the half of indicators show there are significant differences. Based on the mean differences, the mean for accepted indicators is greater than the mean of rejected indicators. In this case, the fifth hypothesis is accepted partially.

Discussion:

The results of the study indicated high level of ten indicators investigated in this research based on the Islamic Universities federation criteria at the University of Dhofar, based on general average of descriptive statistical analysis. The researcher attributes this to the fact that the university uses a technical system that covers its needs to provide various programs. The university is keen to increase the use of technology to serve the educational process, in addition to offering appropriate educational programs and modern scientific curricula that keep pace with developments in the field of specialization.

The results also revealed that there are no significant differences in the extent of application of quality standards and academic accreditation for ten indicators at Dhofar University according to the gender differences. This is due to the effective distinguished policy adopted by the university, which strengthens and encourages the administrative and academic bodies to pay attention to learning process, publishing scientific research, international cooperation and other ten indicators of quality assurance and academic accreditation. These results were not concordant with the findings of the previous studies (Leal Filho et al., 2021; Guo et al., 2021; Lim et al., 2020; Al-Swidi & Al Yahya, 2017 & Cardoso et al., 2013) which stated there are slight variance based on gender. The different result of this research is due to variance in assessment which is based on Islamic Universities Federation.

Regarding the second hypothesis, results revealed that there are no significant differences in the extent of quality standards and academic accreditation based on age related to teaching and learning, international cooperation, learning resources, financial support and community development. These results are similar with previous studies (Cardoso et al., 2018 & Scharager Goldenberg, 2018). This is due to the fact that the older employees are the most experienced and knowledgeable about the application of quality standards and academic accreditation due to their long experience in this field. Conversely, research and publication, students, Employees, institutional calendar, values, morals and culture were significant different due to the same reason which is knowledge and experiences of academic compared to students. These results were proven by previous researches including (Elken & Stensaker, 2018; Ingvarson & Rowley, 2017 & Houston & Paewai, 2013).

According to the third hypothesis, results revealed that there are significant differences in the extent of quality standards and academic accreditation based on type of job related to teaching and learning, research and publication, staff, institutional calendar, values, morals and culture and community development while there are no significant differences related to other indicators (Stura et al., 2019; Skolink, 2016 & Bernhard, 2012). These results explain the different role of academics and administrators at Dhofar University where academics have role in teaching and publication while Employee share the same role in cooperation, resources facilitating and community development. These results were proven by previous researches including (Glendinning et al., 2019; Bieker, 2014 & Hou, 2011).

The fourth hypothesis indicated that there are no significant differences in the extent of quality standards and academic accreditation based on years of experience for all ten indicators. This is due to the fact that the university encourages both academics and employees to participate in all activities of the university including learning, publication, international cooperation and community service without discrimination based on year of experience. These results were supported partly by previous researches including (Almuhaideb & Saeed, 2020; de Paor, 2016; Hou, 2014; Shearman & Seddon, 2010 & Materu, 2007).

Finally, results of the fifth hypothesis indicated that there are significant differences in the extent of application of quality standards and academic accreditation based on qualifications for five indicators including teaching/learning, publication, Employee, values and culture and community development while other five indicators have no significant differences (Knight, 2005; Vlăsceanu et al., 2004 & KOHLER, 2003). The results revealed differences based on qualification where academic and employees with higher qualification are more active in teaching/learning, publication and community service while all share same interest related to cooperation, financial support and academic calendar. These results were proven by previous researches including (Tien et al., 2021; Makhoul, 2019 & Paggatt, 2013).

Conclusion:

Based on the two main questions of this research, application of quality assurance and academic accreditation of Islamic universities federation criteria have been investigated at Dhofar University. The higher management of Dhofar University is interested in quality and academic accreditation, and it is moving at a good pace in raising the quality of services to the community. This trend comes through the university's quality in accordance with the requirements of the national framework and then moving to global accreditation through obtaining the international accreditation of ASIC. Furthermore, the College of Commerce and Administrative Sciences applying to obtain accreditation in the field of business offered by the highest academic accreditation body in the world, which is AACSB institution.

All the standards of quality assurance and academic accreditation of the Federation of the Universities of the Islamic World obtained a high degree of application in the Dhofar University system, as indicated by the results of the statistical analysis based on the academic and employees of Dhofar University.

Recommendations:

Recommendations for Dhofar University administration:

- Adopting this model (Quality Assurance Standards and Academic Accreditation of Islamic Universities Federation) in Dhofar University since there is an appropriate ground for the university to implement it and to initiate the formation of a team to undertake this task.
- Evaluating the Quality Assurance Department at the university level and the efforts to develop and update the education process and to improve learning continuously.
- Adoption of the elements of this model (Standards of quality assurance and academic accreditation of the Islamic Universities Federation) that need to be improved because the educational process is a continuous improvement process where university management and quality department should be satisfied at these levels.
- Establishing Career Guidance Center to integrate the Department of Graduate Affairs at the university to study the reality of the real need for the requirements of the labor market, and to harmonize the university's specializations with local market.
- The university administration should motivate and encourage administrative and academic to conduct joint scientific studies and research on everything related to quality and academic accreditation, in addition to seminars and a workshop in this field.
- Activating International Cooperation office in order to enhance and activate the university's external relations with Arab and foreign universities, as well as with regional and international organizations related to institutions of higher education and scientific research.
- Taking into consideration the importance of selecting global standards (model) for academic accreditation that can be applied at Dhofar University.

Further research:

- The questionnaires and applications of this research could be further used in other universities than Dhofar University.
- Conducting further studies in Omani universities towards the type and obstacles of the approved academic accreditation standards.
- Conducting comparative research between Omani universities that adopt the same academic standards.
- Conducting an exploratory study for the best academic standards from the point of view of both teachers and students.

- Conducting a study between the areas of similarities and differences in academic standards in terms of requirements and desired advantages.
- Conducting a proposed study to implement a single academic standard for all Omani universities and measuring and evaluating the results after several years.

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