

Quality Assurance in Higher Education and the Involvement of Stakeholders: A Study on Student Involvement in Internal Quality Assurance at Universities in Taiwan

In recent years, international quality assurance organizations and national higher education quality assurance agencies have shifted their focus towards evaluating higher education quality based on student learning outcomes. This approach emphasizes the involvement of students—who are the primary recipients of higher education—in various aspects related to their learning, guidance, and outcomes. This model has become a significant trend in global quality assurance practices. Therefore, obtaining student feedback and ensuring their active participation is crucial for achieving quality assurance objectives. In many Asian countries, influenced by Chinese cultural values and traditional societal norms, students are often perceived as "passive" learners, making it challenging for them to take an "active" role in quality assurance mechanisms. Particularly in external quality assurance participation, students typically engage as interviewees or survey respondents, while internal participation often involves compliance with regulations during meetings.

This study employs document analysis, student and institutional surveys, and focus group discussions to understand the current practices and status of student involvement in internal quality assurance. Additionally, an international research symposium was conducted to invite scholars and student representatives to discuss the implementation of student participation in internal quality assurance.

This study has found that although the government has established a regulatory framework for student participation in university affairs through the 《University Act》 and its enforcement rules, there

remains considerable room for improvement in practice. Universities in Taiwan should work to shorten the gap in understanding between the institution and students regarding participation in university development, and provide substantial assistance. Both students and universities need to recognize the importance of student involvement in university development to align with international higher education trends and enhance students' understanding of quality assurance agencies and their outcomes, thereby improving the quality and effectiveness of student participation.

Based on the aforementioned research conclusions, this study recommends the following:

1. Clarifying the roles and responsibilities of student representatives in various meetings.
2. Enhancing the promotion and transparency of participation information.
3. Establishing diverse communication channels and effective feedback mechanisms.
4. Strengthening students' professional competencies related to participation and support systems.
5. Demonstrating the supportive role and actions of quality assurance agencies.

This study aims to provide concrete and feasible directions for promoting student participation in Taiwan's higher education system.

Keywords: Student Involvement, Quality Assurance, Stakeholders, Internal Quality Assurance