

## **A Study of Quality Enhancement Initiatives Regarding Classroom Teaching: A Focus on Higher Education Institutions in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**

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### **Abstract**

*This study was carried out to explore the implementation of quality enhancement initiatives at the university level in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The main focus was on the aspect of quality teaching. The study covered the following research objectives: to examine teachers' training and preparation for enhancing the quality of classroom teaching; to find out facilities and resources provided for the enhancement of quality of classroom teaching; to analyze classroom practices taken by teachers for the enhancement of quality of classroom teaching. Data were collected from 68 heads of department and 258 faculty members of the related departments. The sample of the study consisted of two hundred fifty-eight (258) University teachers and sixty-eight (68) Heads of Department. Two research instruments were used for data collection one for faculty members and the other for heads of department. The data were analyzed using the mean score, percentage, and chi-square test. The findings of the study revealed that need-based training facilities for university teachers and smart classroom facilities are slightly imparted in the universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The study also recommends that quality facilities, resources, and need-based training programs may equally be provided for quality teaching-learning processes in all the public sector universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.*

**Keywords:** Quality Enhancement: Quality Teaching: Quality Education: Initiatives

### **Introduction**

Quality of classroom teaching provides a solid foundation for quality education. Quality classroom teaching is a global approach and its importance has been realized in developed countries of the world. Quality teaching is linked with effective and efficient teaching practices and knowledge. It depends upon the quality of university teachers and their professional development. Quality of facilities and effective classroom practices play a significant role in promoting quality teaching. Higher education institutions should care about the quality of teaching and learning and they need to take extra care to maintain the quality of teaching and learning. The universities of the world paying much attention to this most important element of quality of education. A few research studies have been conducted on this area; Rehman et al. (2009) conducted a study and found that training for university teachers in teaching methodology must be provided to improve the quality of teaching. Greatbatch and Holland (2016) conducted a study on teaching quality; in this regard, they presented effective institutional audit and international models for quality teaching.

Roy (2016) conducted a study on quality teaching and its importance in higher education. He suggested some important factors for quality teaching i.e. quality teaching lead students learn better; improving the learning environment; adopt a learning-centered approach; the recruitment of good teachers; students' financial and academic support; guidance and counseling; staff development and quality management at the institutional level. In addition to this, he has mentioned that if a university wants its teaching to be of good quality it must give tangible signs that teaching matters. Another study was conducted by Henard and Roseveare (2012) on fostering quality teaching in higher education policies and practices. They proposed that professional development activities; teaching innovation funds; teaching recruitment criteria; support to innovative pedagogy; management of

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teaching and learning; guidance and counseling and effective student evaluation must be considered for quality teaching. They further viewed that quality teaching was influenced due to the internationalization of higher education; rapid changes in technology and pressure of global competition. They also viewed that there should be a strong link between research and teaching; establish a learning framework; improve the learning quality of experiences of students and long-term policies for quality teaching must be followed.

Bidabadi (2016) conducted a study and concluded that good teaching methods help the students to question their preconceptions and motivate them to learn and teaching competencies of faculty must be improved. The national and internationally recognized professors are good leaders in providing the best ideas, insight, and strategies for effective teaching in higher education. At the international level, numerous studies have been conducted and much attention has been given to this important aspect of quality education.

Effective teaching and learning are some of the most crucial issues in higher education in Pakistan. This issue has received increasing attention in the literature. In Pakistan, this crucial aspect has been ignored by researchers, especially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. There was a dire need to conduct this study to fill the knowledge gap. In the present study, three important aspects of quality teaching have been highlighted i.e. teachers' training and preparation for enhancing the quality of classroom teaching; facilities and resources provided for the enhancement of quality of classroom teaching; and classroom practices adopted by teachers for the enhancement of quality of classroom teaching.

### **Research Objectives**

1. To examine teachers' training and preparation for enhancing the quality of classroom teaching.
2. To find out facilities and resources provided for the enhancement of the quality of classroom teaching.
3. To analyze classroom practices taken by teachers for the enhancement of the quality of classroom teaching.

### **Review of Related Literature**

Quality education can play a significant role in social adjustment as well as in competing global standards. It is a fact that the economic success of the countries is directly related to their higher education system. Improving the quality of education for students who have weak backgrounds; is very necessary to provide them equal opportunities for quality education. In this way, they can compete at the international level. It can improve the socioeconomic position of society, as well as poverty, which can be eradicated after achieving the desired objective of excellent education (Bassi *et al.*, 2020). The effective classroom teaching-learning process is very important for promoting quality teaching. Nithyanadam (2020) argued that teaching and learning is a process where students learn new knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and skills. Three elements play a very crucial role in the teaching-learning process; teachers; students; and a conducive learning environment. The process of teaching-learning should be continuous and the teacher makes it more meaningful as well as lifelong remembrance. He further recommended sixteen different teaching pedagogies for quality teaching i.e. rubric; mind mapping; open-ended questions; reflection; summarization; journal reflection; divider; google search; team formation; role-play; flip-flap classroom; case study; mini projects; quiz; unique question paper; and bloom taxonomy. Tylor (2003) proposed thirteen of the most important elements for quality teaching i.e. engagement with students; engagement globally and locally; equity and pathways; effective planning for learning; the best academic management; entrepreneurship; personal management; reflective practices; engagement with peers and colleagues teaching for learning; managing for teaching and learning; evaluation and assessment of teaching and learning, and assessing for learning and professional development of teachers. Quality teaching plays a crucial role in higher education in this regard, Brusoni *et al.* (2014) viewed that effective teaching fulfills the needs of students and provides satisfaction as well as helps in the assessment process. It increases the knowledge of students and information is presented in the best way. Students remain busy all the time and learn new skills and the teaching-learning process becomes more effective. Similar views were presented by Roseveare and Henard (2012) effective techniques are utilized in quality teaching and conducive teaching-learning environment created for students. Content is presented most fittingly and various teaching strategies are adopted. The social learning environment is provided for students and

different projects are assigned to them. the social learning environment is provided individually and different projects are assigned to them (OECD, 2012).

Roy (2016) mentioned that quality teaching must be student-centered; its aim must be for all students learning; conducive learning should be created for the personal needs of students; necessary support for staff and students i-e financial, social, and academic; improve learning outcomes; guidance and counseling be provided; teachers and students learn jointly and build knowledge by their mutual understanding and both feel inner satisfaction in quality teaching.

University teachers are the most significant symbol of the whole teaching-learning process they can impart in improving the quality of teaching and they may provide better feedback to students during their teaching. Well-trained and the most committed faculty with the latest knowledge of the subject are the most important for higher education likewise seminars; workshops; refresher courses; and opportunities for higher study at national as well as international level. These opportunities promote the expertise of teachers which leads to quality teaching. Professional growth of the teachers refers to the knowledge and necessary skills which may be attained for personal and career development. There are various approaches i.e. coaching; consultations; mentoring; technical assistance; and reflective supervision. (Archana, 2011).

Higher Education Commission has brought many changes to promote the quality of teaching at higher institutions. Some of the most essential factors were developed i.e. curriculum oriented training programs for faculty; professional growth of teaching staff, training for the English language; during the service training facilities, three months of a special program for faculty members, criteria of students attendance; students evaluation and assessment, and developing computer expertise of university teachers (HEC, 2005). In this regard, Raouf (2006) viewed that to meet the requirements of globally in research and teaching some very basic facilities are very much important i-e quality labs; facilities of computer; and quality libraries are very necessary for universities for promoting quality teaching and research work. The very fundamental facilities at higher educational institutions are s, libraries, laboratories, classroom conference rooms, offices, and playground.

Facilities and resources are very essential for the social and academic growth of students and make the learning process more effective and everlasting for the students. The public sector universities are not providing proper facilities to their students. He further suggested the necessary services for students i.e. library facilities consisting of sufficient books; effective admission criteria; cafeteria facilities; playground facilities; effective mechanism of providing financial aids; curriculum as per need of the day; teachers encouragement participation students in all activities; qualified staff; and co-curricular activities (Kaur, 2016).

The latest technology of teaching and learning in the field of education now has been moved to smart classrooms and it is a new approach in higher education. It provides smart thinking tools and a techno-based environment to learn for students in different groups. The use of ICTs and different educational technology in the teaching-learning process gives an effective understanding for students. Teaching through computers, the internet, and multimedia is more effective for promoting quality teaching. The smart class idea is a new creates interest in students. This new concept of education is effectively utilized in all educational institutions from primary to higher-level education (Tiwari, 2017). Hence, information technology infrastructure e-learning facilities are very important for quality teaching.

Areekkuzhiyil and Santhosh. (2019). summarized that Assessment is a very important part of the teaching-learning process. Assessment practices have a large function in terms of the teaching-learning process. In the field of higher education evaluation and assessment can play a very important role in enhancing quality education. Assessment must be valid reliable and comprehensive. Assessment must be motivating and joyful for students as well as for teachers. It is the core responsibility of teachers and others responsible to redefine the assessment practices and fair culture must be promoted for students. HEC has also announced the criteria for evaluation and assessment, quizzes, tests, group discussion, and different projects are very necessary for students.

Formative assessment is the assessment that must be conducted on t regular basis to assess the performance of students. In this regard, However and Boud (2000) viewed that the prevailing assessment in higher education is not sufficient to prepare the students for lifelong learning. Therefore, Boud and Falchikov (2005) suggested that we need to refine the summative assessment that focuses on specifics, standards, and immediate results to sustainable assessment that may enhance

the students and to become more active learners not only in managing their learning but also assessing themselves at the various stages of their lives.

In most of the universities, seventy-five percent (75 %) attendance criteria have been made compulsory and universities monitor their attendance record. It is the most important element of students' academic success and they must be aware of the importance of attendance in their departments. Many discipline problems may be solved from the regularity of students; and this may reduce the academic weaknesses of students (Bowen et al., 2005). HEC has also declared the clear-cut criteria of attendance and most of the universities are implementing the same criteria proposed by HEC.

**Research Methodology**

A quantitative survey research design was adopted to conduct this study. It is the only method through which the researcher can obtain the opinion, attitudes, and suggestions for improvement. Quantitative facts are collected about the social aspects of community composition in a social survey process. The [population of the current study consisted of nineteen (19) public sector universities, Three hundred seventy-one (371) Heads of Department, Nineteen hundred fifty – five (1955) faculty members of the universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Stratified random sampling techniques were adopted to select the sample of nine universities and each university was considered strata. Eight departments four from social and four from natural sciences were selected. Sixty-eight heads of department out of 371 were randomly selected from the sample universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. At the final stage, 326 respondents sixty-eight (68) Heads of Department, and 258 faculty members were selected as a sample for the current study. The quantitative data were analyzed using the mean score, percentage, and Chi-square.

**Results**

The results of the study are discussed as under.

**Table No. 1**

**Teachers training for classroom teaching (Faculty members= 258, HODs=68)**

S. No	Statements	Respondents	Responses			Mean	$\chi^2$	P-value
			DA	UD	AG			
1	Professional growth training programs are imparted for university teachers at your department.	Teachers	105 41%	44 17%	109 43%	1.99	1.710	.425
		Heads	22 32%	12 18%	34 50%	2.17		
2	Curriculum-oriented training programs are carried out at your department.	Teachers	108 42%	43 17%	107 41%	1.99	3.113	.211
		Heads	31 46%	16 23%	21 31%	1.85		
3	In-service training programs for university teachers are rendered at your department.	Teachers	110 43%	56 22%	92 36%	1.93	.790	.679
		Heads	26 38%	18 27%	24 35%	1.97		
4	Three months of training programs regarding university teaching are availed at your department.	Teachers	1525 9%	46 18%	60 23%	1.64	1.803	.406
		Heads	34 50%	14 27%	20 29%	1.79		
5	Facilities of smart classrooms for quality teaching are available at your department	Teachers	106 41%	59 23%	94 36%	1.64	1.059	0.589
		Heads	32 47%	12 18%	24 35%	1.79		
N=326			df=2					

Table No. 1 depict the opinion of heads of department and faculty members regarding the quality initiatives about the teachers' training about classroom teaching.

The data in statement No. 1 indicate that there is no significant difference ( $\chi^2=1.710$ ,  $P>0.05$ ) in the opinion of faculty members and heads of the department regarding the provision of professional development programs for faculty members.

Statement No 2 shows that ( $\chi^2=3.11, P>0.05$ ) there is no significant difference in the opinion of faculty members and heads of department about the implementation of curriculum-based training programs at different departments of the universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The data in statement No 3 indicate that ( $\chi^2=.790, P>0.05$ ) there is no significant difference between the opinion of faculty members and heads of the department regarding the in-service training programs facilities are partially available at different departments of the universities of KP.

The data in statement No. 4 shows that ( $\chi^2 =1.80, P>0.05$ ) there is no significant difference between the opinion of faculty members and heads of department about the training programs on university teaching at the departments.

The data in statement No.5 depict that ( $\chi^2 =1.059, P>0.05$ ) there is no significant difference in the opinion of faculty members and heads of the department regarding the smart classrooms' facilities.

**Table No. 2**

**Facilities provided for classroom teaching (Faculty members =258, HODs = 68)**

S. No.	Statements	Respondent	Responses			Mean	$\chi^2$	P-value
			DA	UD	AG			
1	Facilities for English language teaching projects are available at your department.	Teacher	127 49%	52 20%	79 31%	1.81	1.37	.504
		Heads	36 53%	16 23%	16 24%	1.70		
2	The curriculum of various programs is implemented at your department according to the guidelines of HEC.	Teachers	22 8%	31 12%	205 80%	2.70	18.48	.000
		Heads	19 28%	7 10%	42 62%	2.33		
3	The best teacher award is provided at your department.	Teachers	140 54%	44 17%	74 29%	1.74	2.92	0.231
		Heads	29 43%	15 22%	24 35%	1.92		
			N=326			df=2		

The data in table No. 2 shows the opinion of different heads of department and faculty members regarding the quality initiatives for classroom teaching.

The data in statement No.1 indicate that ( $\chi^2 =1.37, P>0.05$ ) there is no significant difference in the opinion of faculty members and heads of the department regarding the English language teaching project facilities.

The data in statement No. 2 shows that ( $\chi^2 =18.48, P<0.05$ ) there is a significant difference in the opinion of faculty members and heads of department that the curriculum for various programs is implemented equally at different departments of the university of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The data in statement No. 3 shows that ( $\chi^2 =2.92, P>0.05$ ) there is no significant difference between the opinion of faculty members and heads of the department regarding the provision of the best teacher award scheme at different departments.

**Table No.3**

**Process at the classrooms level (Faculty members= 258, HODs= 68)**

S. No	Statements	Respondent	Responses			Mean	$\chi^2$	P-value
			DA	UD	AG			
1	The university teachers availed training for developing computer skills at departments.	Teacher	140 54%	48 19%	70 27%	1.72	.187	.911
		Heads	35 52%	13 19%	20 29%	1.77		
2	Departments are I students attendance criteria is followed at departments.	Teachers	37 14%	24 9%	197 77%	2.62	9.98	.007
		Heads	19 28%	10 15%	30 57%	2.29		
3	Teachers give a schedule of	Teachers	26	30	202	2.68	5.64	.059

	the assignments to students.		10%		78%			
				12%				
		Heads	14	8	46	2.47		
			21%	12%	68%			
4	Faculty members assign presentations that are presented in classes.	Teachers	24	20	214	2.73	23.70	.000
			9%	8%	83%			
		Heads	21	8	39	2.26		
			31%	12%	57%			
5	Faculty members evaluate their students in term of quiz, and tests	Teachers	218	18	219	2.76	23.20	.000
			%	7%	85%			
		Heads	20	6	42	2.32		
			29%	9%	62%			
6	Semester rules are implemented while conducting the midterm and final term exams.	Teachers	22	12	244	2.78	19.02	.000
			8%	5%	87%			
		Heads	18	6	44	2.38		
			26%	9%	65%			
7	Research projects are assigned to students by the university teachers.	Teachers	27	26	205	2.68	30.20	.000
			10%	10%	79%			
		Heads	25	9	34	2.13		
			37%	13%	50%			

The data in table No. 3 shows the opinion of heads of department and faculty members regarding the initiatives for the effective teaching-learning process at the classroom level.

There is no statistically significant difference ( $\chi^2=.187, P>0.05$ ) in the opinion of faculty members and heads of the department regarding the training facility for developing computer skills at different departments.

There is no statistically significant difference ( $\chi^2=9.98, P>0.05$ ) between the opinion of faculty members and heads of the department regarding following the criteria of students' attendance at different departments.

There is a statistically significant difference ( $\chi^2 =9.98, P>0.05$ ) between the opinion of faculty members and heads of the department about faculty members equally give the schedule of the assignments to the students in different departments of the universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

There is a significant difference ( $\chi^2=23.707, P>0.05$ ) between the opinion of faculty members and heads of the department about the presentation of the assignments to the students by the faculty members at different departments.

There is a significant difference ( $\chi^2 =23.205, P<0.05$ ) between the opinion of faculty members and heads of the department about the quiz, and tests are equally given to the students by the university teachers in different departments.

There is a statistically significant difference ( $\chi^2=19.020, P<0.05$ ) between the opinion of faculty members and heads of the department regarding mid-terms and final term exams are conducted equally as per semester rules at different departments.

There is a significant difference ( $\chi^2=30.205, P<0.05$ ) in the opinion of faculty members and heads of the department about assigning the research projects to students in different departments.

### **Discussions**

The findings of this study revealed that professional growth programs for university teachers and best teacher scheme services are slightly imparted at different departments. The results of this study have supported the study conducted by Hassan (2016) and found that provides training and professional growth opportunities arranged at a very small level for faculty members and these are very important for quality teaching. University teachers play a very vital and dynamic role in the educational system for this purpose a special focus must be given to their professional training. The most important factor which influences the quality of higher education is the quality of university teachers. The current study found that curriculum-oriented training; training regarding the English language; three training programs on university teaching; and training for enhancing computer skills were imparted at a very small level. These findings are aligned with studies conducted by Tahira (2014) and Hassan (2016) and found that effective training programs for

university teachers be arranged. Both the studies highly recommended professional development programs for faculty members. In most universities teaching is being ignored and much attention has been given to research. The current study found that the criteria of student attendance were slightly followed in the universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and it is a very crucial element. The university teachers evaluate the students according to the guidelines of HEC. These findings supported the study carried out by Shabeer (2014) and found that students are equally evaluated as per guidelines of HEC. The current study found that ICTs and smart classroom services are rendered at a very small amount not provided at the required level in the universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. These findings are similar to the study carried out by Abbasi et al. (2011) and found that students were not satisfied with the services provided by the universities. The curriculum of different programs is equally followed by the departments according to the guidelines of HEC. The quality curriculum is the key element for enhancing the quality of higher education and it must be according to the need of society. Higher educational institutions must revise the curriculum to meet the global requirements of the countries.

### **Conclusion**

Professional growth programs for university teachers and best teacher award services are slightly imparted at the departments of the universities of KP. Training regarding Curriculum-based; training of the English language; three months training program on university teaching facilities, and training for developing computer skills are provided partially in the universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The curriculum for different programs is equally implemented in the universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as per the guidelines of HEC. ICTs and smart classroom teaching services are imparted to some extent at the universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Students' attendance criteria are slightly followed in the departments and they are evaluated according to the guidelines of HEC. All types of exams are carried out according to the policies of HEC. Research projects are assigned to the students by their teachers in the universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

### **Recommendations**

The results of this study indicate that there is an intense need for consecutive teachers' professional development programs; regular workshops; and in-service training for university teachers. Therefore, it is recommended that the higher education department (HED) may establish professional growth need-oriented training centers that may be formed at the provincial level to redress this main issue by carrying out training programs on regular basis for university teachers. It is also recommended that smart classrooms and ICTs teaching services may be imparted in all public sector universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with the support of HEC and HED for the improvement of quality teaching.

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