

Defining quality assurance in academic library perspective: a systematic review

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Quality assurance (QA) in higher education has an immense impact on the quality and standardization of higher education in the world. In fact, the QA has become a major driving force behind the transformation of conventional teaching and learning practices towards modern educational systems. Libraries are integral counter part of education that support the core values of an academic institution. The term quality has been defined by different contexts, in different perspectives. However, to well adopt and smooth operationalization of QA in academic libraries, it needs to be defined accordingly. The study is based on definitions presented in previous literature related to academic library quality assurance. A systematic literature review was conducted to investigate existing definitions for QA in academic library perspective. Literature was searched in textbooks, publications in Ministry of Higher Education, official websites, academic journal databases, and newspapers with the phrases; “quality assurance”, “quality assurance in higher education”, “quality assurance in libraries”, “academic library quality assurance”, “library quality”, and “academic library transformation”. Results were then verified using the CRAAP evaluation criteria and 30 directly related literature were selected for further investigation. It was evident that, the definition of QA in academic libraries should include the concept that the quality of a library is “the difference between what users expect from the academic library and what library actually gives”. This concept can be used to formulate a proper definition for academic library industry or for a sperate library itself. However, the definition of academic library must be evident in their vision, mission, core values, objectives, services, and lead to formulate policies, procedures, standards, and accreditation related to library practices and education. It also opens the gateway towards academic library transformation, to meet the ever-changing needs of the society. Outcome of the research will be beneficial for any (academic) library that seeks to meet the needs of its users and utilize its resources to achieve a best return on investment to the community.

Keywords: Quality assurance, Academic library, Academic library transformation