

TEACHING AND LEARNING QUALITY IN A HIGHER EDUCATION CONTEXT IN CHINA

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ABSTRACT – Higher education institutions around the world have seen a surge in quality evaluations as a result of an increase in public sector accountability. Student learning is facilitated by high-quality teaching. The quality of teaching and learning at higher education institutions is being closely monitored. Academic quality in higher education has been the subject of new policy instruments introduced in many nations during the last decade. These include the UK, the US, and Australia. There was increasing pressure on UK's higher education system, for example, due to the growth of tertiary institutions and increased consumer expectations. The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAAHE) was established in 1997 to implement a dual system of quality assurance that included quality audits and quality assessments. As a result of the establishment of the Australian University Quality Agency in 2001 to monitor the quality of the country's higher education system, a quality assurance program was implemented, requiring universities to incorporate quality assurance and improvement planning into their annual published educational plans. And this is a review paper. For Chinese universities, quality assurance is a novel notion. The fast growth of Chinese tertiary institutions in the last 15 years has resulted in an increased focus on teaching quality. The number of students enrolled in China's higher education institutions has increased dramatically since 1999 as a result of increased enrolment.

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INTRODUCTION

Since the turn of the twentieth century, university learning and teaching have undergone substantial transformations throughout the world. Despite the fact that such change is a worldwide phenomenon, some countries have had rather dramatic transformations, and others have undergone relatively little transformation. Some people are still employing methods that were popular more than a century ago. Using a Narrative Inquiry technique, this essay investigates the differences and similarities between approaches to university learning and teaching at a Chinese and an Australian institution. For the most part, this article is based on the accounts of their events and our comments on those experiences in an attempt to gain a deeper understanding of the contexts for which we operate, along with our own practices and those of our colleagues. Shuling's 24 years (Li & Shaw, 2015) of experience as a university teacher have afforded her the opportunity to reflect on the changes that have taken place in university teaching in China, particularly in the field of English language instruction, where she currently works. In addition to her prior experience as a university professor in China, she recently completed a one-year vacationing scholar program in Australia, which allowed her to observe and experience learning and teaching in a different context and to reflect on her own teaching and learning practices as well as those of her institution.

By working in an Australian university for 26 years (MIR, FAN, DALY, & BOLAND, 2014), Greg also obtained valuable expertise in university teaching and learning while working as an adjunct professor in two Chinese universities during the last 15 years. As a result, students will get an opportunity to engage in critical reflection about modern university teaching and learning in China through the use of Narrative Inquiry techniques. In addition, the paper gives some remarks regarding the lessons that can be learned from activities in both the Chinese and Australian contexts. In addition, it offers us opportunities to reflect on our job as university instructors and the reasons why we might better our practices in the future. It also affords us the opportunity to encourage people who work in our

institutions to consider their own teaching and learning techniques from a broader perspective. As is often known, the Chinese population exceeds 1.37 billion (Worldometer, 2021), and the country is vast with a massive population (over 1.37 billion). Since 1999, university admission quotas have substantially increased, resulting in a rapid increase in student population. In 2012, there were more than 2,500 higher education institutions in China, with roughly six million new students enrolling annually, for a total of approximately 24 million new students. (2013). China Statistical Yearbook. The percentage of Chinese high school graduates who continue their education at the university level has increased significantly from 20% in the 1980s to over 60% now.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Compliance with external bodies' criteria of "quality As" in higher education (Houston, 2018) Assurance, accountability, auditing, and evaluation have dominated the discourse surrounding "quality" Following an externally imposed definition disregards the perspectives of academics, students, and others within the university who are affected but not involved in the definition (Ulrich, 2019). The existing system of required quality evaluation in Chinese higher education has caused a gap between macro-level quality analysis, meso-level quality assurance measures, and the micro-level improvement of teaching and learning. Compliance is the most significant factor in the development and construction of quality assurance in Chinese higher education. In comparison to other nations, Chinese universities devote substantial resources to complying with external standards, yet the results are modest and insufficiently targeted or reported.

China's quality assurance (QA) literature (Zhang, Zhou, & Hai, 2022) places a heavy emphasis on evaluation, standards, and quality improvement, as described by the quality evaluation methodologies. There is minimal evidence to show (Cornali, 2015) that greater spending on quality assurance has resulted in improved learning outcomes. What variables can be manipulated to effect changes in education and learning? This study seeks to comprehend how to bridge the gap between current quality assurance and learning outcomes by examining the learning experiences of Chinese students and how these could be linked with Chinese quality assurance schemes to encourage continuous quality improvement (LI, 2011). This research aims to produce new approaches to comprehend students' participation and quality assurance procedures in Chinese universities, as well as to make suggestions for Chinese higher education institutions wanting to enhance the quality of education.

If we can't do this study, we can't see the quality of teaching and learning in the higher education system and don't know the areas we have to enhance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

AN OVERVIEW OF LITERATURE REVIEW

Using previously published research, we'll look into the theoretical underpinnings of effective classroom practices. Moderate quality, Theory in teaching quality evaluation, and Engagement theory can all be found in the literature. For the purposes of narrowing the study question, all of these directions have been taken into consideration.

This chapter's goals are, review of relevant theories and rational reasons to create new theoretical paradigms (Section 2.1.1). Examining additional sources of information to aid in this investigation into higher education. (Section 2. 2). Assemble high-quality studies that show how well higher education's teaching and learning services are performing. (Section 2. 3). Examine the relevant literature on quality assurance. (Section 2.4). Compile the findings to form a unified model of higher education's educational value. (Section 5).

Analytical Features of a Literature Review

2.2 Theoretical Framework

"Quality" is a term that has been debated throughout history, and it is still a hot-button issue today (Knud Illeris, 2014). It's commonly known that Joseph Juran and William Edward Deming coined the terms quality and QA. During the Second World War, both Juran and Deming helped Japan's postwar industrial and commercial sectors to recover quickly and effectively. Deming has been recognised for teaching hundreds of critical personnel in quality control in manufacturing operations. Juran, on the other hand, was quite active in teaching courses on quality management at the same time. In the latter half of the 20th century, their ideas were accepted in the United States and internationally. Throughout the 20th century, quality consciousness and the development of a quality management system evolved from the industrial sector. As a working definition of quality, quality management businesses and individuals have identified the importance of doing things right (Harvey, April 2004). There is consensus on the key definition of quality in the industrial/business setting. Customers define quality increasingly in terms of their expectations and perceived value in commercial transactions. In higher education, quality and consistency have long been emphasised. Since the mid-1980s, HEIs and the academics that make up these institutions have been increasingly impacted by arguments about quality (Watty, 2003). The quality metanarrative has spread throughout the world (Morley, 2003). Even in the United States, the public is becoming increasingly concerned with quality and QA issues in higher education (Dunkerley & Wong, 2001, p. 3). The concept of quality (Ozturgut, 2011) is presented as a universal truth; hence, its field of influence is continually growing. Higher education (HE) of high quality is increasingly desired by students, businesses, and the government (LI, 2011), as well as by university administration and external agencies created to evaluate and award HE of high quality. Numerous academics have expressed questions about the suitability of industry-derived quality models for higher education.

2.3 Quality of Service and HE

Many individuals within and outside of HE use the term "quality" without ever defining it. What defines "quality" in higher education is the subject of much dispute, and it may mean different things to different people. Barnett (1992) asserts that there is a logical connection between higher education ideals and various quality initiatives. According to him, the notion of "quality" in higher education is connected with our fundamental ideals and beliefs. It is impossible to judge the quality of human contact without taking a normative perspective related to our understanding of what we believe to be HE. Consequently, how we define higher education influences how we think about quality, how we accomplish it, how we measure our success in doing so, and how we improve it. Therefore, if we intend to offer an opinion on quality, we must be able to articulate our stance on the principal objective of higher education (Barnett, 2012). He divides HE concepts into two distinct categories:

Contemporary definitions and approaches to quality reflect HE's four fundamental concepts of quality: 1) Higher education as a method of generating qualified workers; 2) Higher education as a way of preparing students for a future in research; 3) Higher education as a means of efficiently managing educational resources; 4) Higher education as a means of enhancing individual chances of success. This collection of topics reflects the national policymakers, funders, and institutional managers, as well as other national interest groups. However, these principles have affected national debate and the expansion of quality evaluation, and they are founded on a methodical approach to education. (Barnett, 2012) If the objective of higher education is to produce "productive" workers, one way to evaluate the quality of a school may be to examine the graduates' subsequent employment. Employment in the positions envisioned by the course designers is more significant than employment in general. Students acquire value and are referred to as "the system's outputs" in the terminology of this concept (Barnett, 2012).

2.4 What is Quality?

Numerous authors have explored the concept of defining quality. Garvin identified transcendental thinking, product-focused thinking, customer-oriented thinking, methodically oriented production

thinking, and value-for-money thinking (1984). Regarding the transcendental approach to quality, subjective interpretations are inadmissible. However, what is the quality of education? This is a difficult question to which there may be no simple response. The paper "Defining Quality" by Harvey and Green (1993) is one of the most often quoted pieces on the topic of academic excellence in higher education. The framework they created to define the concept of quality has been utilised in numerous quality-related studies. To better comprehend how various stakeholder groups perceive quality, their organisational structure stressed the significance of comprehending these various conceptions in order to comprehend their preferences regarding quality issues. According to Harvey and Green, this is not a distinct perspective on the same things but rather a different perspective on things with the same label. The writers deconstruct quality and find five types: exceptional, perfection, purpose-fitness, and value.

As national economies try to be competitive on a global basis, the need for evidence to aid in the development of high-quality, long-term educational systems increases.

2.5 About Quality Assurance

Ball (1985), Birnbaum (1994), Frazer (1992), van Vugh and Westerheijden (1993), Woodhouse (1999), and Woodhouse (1999) are only a few of the authors who have provided definitions of quality assurance in the academic literature. Quality assurance refers to "systematic, structured, and continual attention to quality in terms of quality maintenance and improvement" (Vroeijsstijn, 1995). Girdwood defines it as "the rules, techniques, and processes designed to ensure the continued maintenance and improvement of a program's or institution's quality" (1997). To guarantee a high-quality end result, QA is all about establishing accountability. Public resource accountability, as defined by Lewis et al. (2001), involves demonstrating the worth and efficiency of allocated funds. Accountability, as defined by Campbell and Rozsnyai (2002), refers to a unit's promise to its constituents that it will maintain a standard of excellence in educational provision. "the systematic management and assessment procedures applied to ensure the achievement of a specified quality or improved quality" and "to enable key stakeholders to have trust in the management of quality" are Harman's (1998) definitions of quality assurance, as cited by (Gong, 2021). Quality Assurance (QA) can be understood in the context of regulations governing higher education. The idea of checking products for defects is not novel. There was, at first, an element of craftsmanship and expert execution (Morley, 2003).

2.6 Models in Educational Quality of HE

Models for educational quality assurance in higher education have been examined in a number of theoretical contexts. In the QA literature, there are a number of well-articulated models. HE QA is viewed from a different model by each model. When it comes to QA, there are a number of different models to select from, such as total quality management (TQM), transformative engagement, university of learning, responsive university, quality development model, and holistic model for quality (Harvey, April 2004).

2.7 Total Quality Management (TQM)

Efforts were undertaken in the late 1980s to introduce ideas from the world of industry, such as total quality management (TQM), into the world of higher learning (Sallis, 1993). The core message of the total quality strategy is "delight the client." There was a widespread movement in the early 1990s to apply TQM, the prevalent industry quality paradigm, to higher education. The TQM method applies the four tenets of management—control, quality, process, and customer—to the HE system as a whole. TQM is the first quality management system to be used in the academic setting, and it has sparked much discussion (HE). TQM has been linked to several positive outcomes, including increased enrollment, retention, and an internationalised institutional atmosphere, according to a number of studies (Freed & Klugman, 1997). To wit: (Freed & Klugman, 1997). On the other hand, some faculty members feel that TQM is not suited for usage in the academic setting.

2.8 Transformative Model

Transformation is the process of shifting from one qualitative state to another. According to Harvey & Knight (1996), the best way to improve quality is through "transformation." "Enhancing

participants," "providing value," and ultimately "empowering" them are the primary goals. In this section, we're concentrating on the perspectives of actual students. Transformative learning, according to their view, necessitates an open and integrated process that results in a rich and relevant "whole student experience." Harvey and Knight say that the transformative approach is truly about a responsive process of transparency, integration and communication. The term "transparency" refers to the openness with which educational processes, goals, and methods are communicated to students. To say that a lesson has been integrated is an understatement. Dialoguing on the nature, scope, and manner of students' learning and the dynamic exchange of teachers about the teaching and learning process are all part of the dialogue.

2.9 Engagement model

A decade ago, "engagement" was a relatively new word in the HE lexicon. According to the research and findings presented by Cross (1999), we know that students who are more engaged in their studies and who strive for a more thorough understanding of the material are more likely to succeed academically in the present. One of the best predictors of student learning and development is their level of participation in extracurricular activities. Carini, Kuh, and Klein claim that the more time a pupil spends learning about a topic, the more they will retain (2006a). A student's motivation, happiness, and success in school are all boosted by their involvement in extracurricular activities. Haworth & Conrad (1997) investigate the factors that consistently foster excellence and lead to fruitful educational experiences for students. In their view, high-quality programs are those that foster positive changes in students as a result of the information they provide.

2.10 University of Learning Model

According to the University of Learning model, the most important aspect of a university is the quality of its education, which depends heavily on the presence of a variety of perspectives (Bowden & Marton, 1998). Reference: (Bowden & Marton, 1998). Bowden and Marton (1998) argue that the educational outcomes of a university are directly proportional to the proficiency of its undergraduates. There is an examination of the instructional structure of universities. Learning is emphasised as the most crucial part of a university's triple mission of teaching, research, and service. In other words, they argue that the unique viewpoints that students bring to the classroom have a significant impact on how well pupils learn in an academic setting. Learning is conceptualised here as an increase in perceiving the important features of variety. According to them, the mark of a competent observer is the ability to distinguish between competing factors and zero in on the one that is most important to the situation at hand. The notion posits that providing children with multiple perspectives on the same object will help them develop a more nuanced understanding of the world and provide them with more opportunities for success. They stress the importance of having a wide range of experiences and perspectives before making any kind of judgment.

2.11 The National Student Survey of Engagement (NSSE) in China

Tsinghua University brought the NSSE to China in 2007; however, it was originally created at Indiana University. After being translated and localised into the language of the intended audience, the NSSE instrument was modified to fit the context in China. The program was piloted in 2007 at six Beijing establishments. Cognitive interviews were conducted in 2008 across five types of Chinese institutions in five cities across the country. In 2009, 27 Chinese institutions opted to take part in the statewide NSSE-China survey. Students in China fill out the National Student Satisfaction Survey (NSSE-China) and answer questions about their experiences in the classroom, their participation in extracurricular, their relationships with faculty and peers, the efficiency with which they complete assignments, and their overall academic growth and development. The National Student Study of Education (NSSE-China) is a survey administered to university students in China with the goal of enhancing the quality of education offered by Chinese universities by measuring and benchmarking student performance.

2.12 Theorizing Quality in Chinese HE

Quality assurance (QA) literature frequently discusses how to define quality in Chinese higher education. There were a total of 98 journal papers reviewed, with 87 of them engaging in conceptual/theoretical disputes. These publications expressed views on or described concepts related to various attempts to conceptualise the quality of Chinese higher education. According to Qi, it is hard to adopt a uniform criterion when evaluating the quality of higher education due to the numerous classifications, levels, and roles that exist within various educational systems (2002). When there are different aims and benchmarks for education, Pan argues, HE expansion helps to make HE more diverse (2000). For him, there can be no compromise on quality. Quality standards at the micro level can be either general, requiring universities to turn out graduates who are well-rounded in terms of moral character, cognitive ability, and physical health, or specific, referring to the variety of programs available at the undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral levels.

2.13 Quality Assurance in Overseas Countries

Our study of 87 works found that 18 of them serve as introductions to quality assurance in the United States, while 24 offer a synthesis of quality assurance approaches across the Western hemisphere. There are eight quality assurance articles pertaining to the United Kingdom, twenty pertaining to the rest of Europe, and five pertaining to the rest of Asia; two pertaining to the United States and Canada; two pertaining to New Zealand; two pertaining to India; one pertaining to Russia; and one pertaining to South Africa. These articles cover a wide range of QA overseas topics, from the general development of QA in Western countries (e.g., Lei 2003; Li, W., 2003) to the new direction of quality evaluation policies in specific countries like the US (Wen, 2008); from the general practice of QA in Western countries to the new direction of quality evaluation policies in specific countries like the US (Wen, 2008); and from Accreditation practices in the US to the general trends in HE evaluation. Quality evaluation agencies (Fu 2008; Meng 2008) are introduced, as are IQA methods (Lu, 2005; Bi, 2004b), and the part that students play in QA. Enhancing the standard of outputs (Wang & Fortune, 2007); the release of quality data from tertiary institutions in US higher education (Zheng, 2006; Zhou, 2007), the quality assurance of foreign private universities, and the quality assurance practices of US research universities (Ozturgut, 2011).

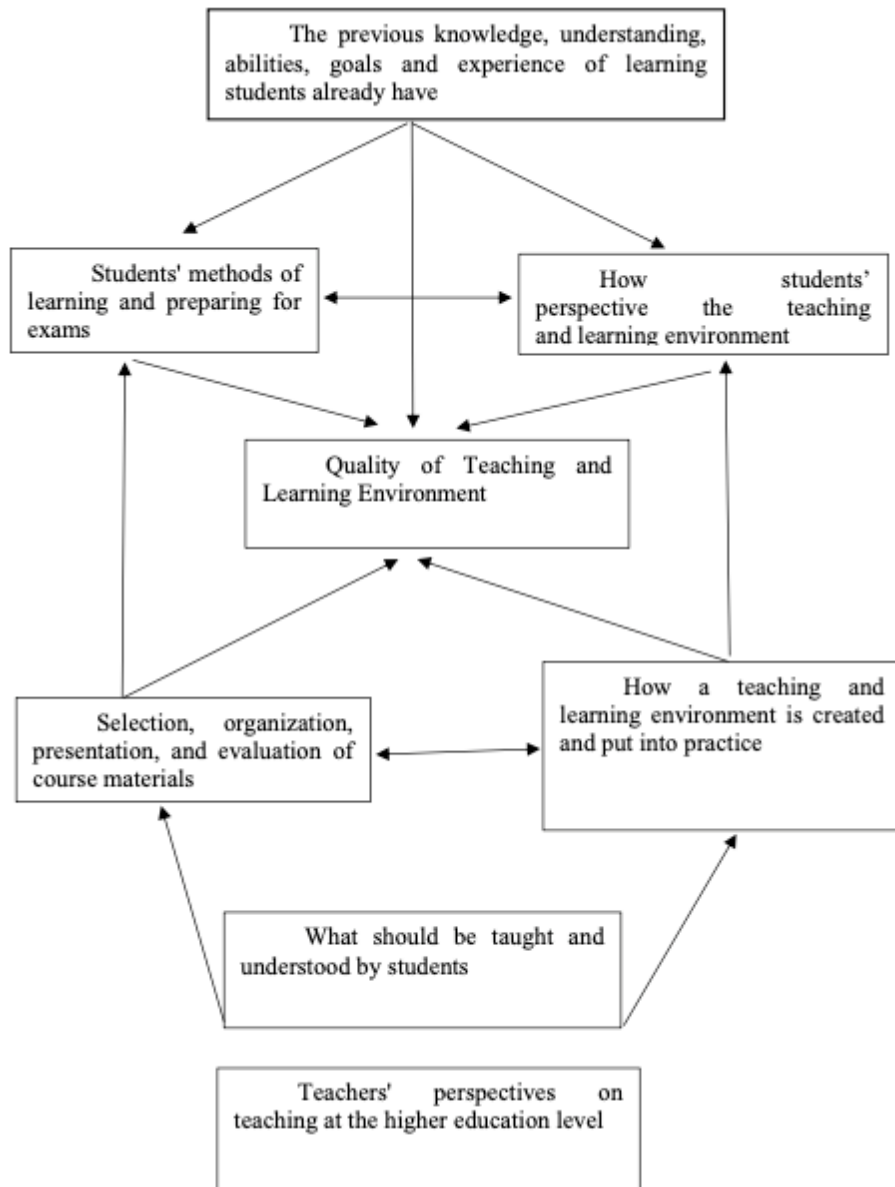
2.14 HE Teaching and Learning Quality with Employability

Employability is an important metric for measuring the quality of higher education. Studies have looked at the link between educational quality and employment outcomes for recent graduates as well as factors that influence students' job prospects, as well as methods for students to gauge their own employability. They believe that the sooner pupils learn about the workplace, the more prepared they will be. As a result, they believe that universities should do more to help students find jobs on campus, including strengthening students' work-related abilities, offering suitable career development counselling, and providing more possibilities for social practice.

2.15 Teaching and Learning Quality Evaluation

The quality problem in China's fast-developing higher education sector is well acknowledged, and quality evaluation is seen as a key solution. There is a movement afoot in China's higher education institutions (HEIs) to improve their performance as measured by quality evaluation. Quality evaluation is generally acknowledged in the researched literature as a means to ensure and enhance quality. The literature discusses the development of evaluation in higher education, problems with initial assessments of teaching quality, and ways in which evaluation processes could be enhanced. Evaluating quality technologically is also addressed. According to Zhao's (2008) analysis of the evolution of assessment in Chinese higher education, the years 1949–1978 were marked by both development and disruption, 1978–1991 were marked by formal development and exploration, and the years 1990–present by the flourishing development and institutionalisation of education assessment. Li (2006) looked at the significance of the changes in content, technique, and theoretical understanding of quality evaluation since the 1950s for quality assessment in Chinese higher education. Y. Zhang (2006) traces the development of educational evaluation and its epistemology and technique from positivism through

social constructivism and into postmodernism. Although quality assessment is generally accepted as important, several problems with current methods have been identified. The eight challenges of evaluating higher education in China.



Source; Developed by the Researcher

Figure 1; Conceptual Framework

2.16 Conceptual Framework

Many things can affect how much students learn, but the quality of the instruction provided is the most crucial. In the first part, we see how students' beliefs and actions (Ozturgut, 2011) are reflected in classroom dynamics, while in the second part, we examine the role of educators and the learning environment they design and foster. We'll cover each of these foundational concepts in turn, with a special focus on the ones that are getting the most media coverage right now.

2.17 Hypothesis (H)

- H1: Experience of learning with students on Quality of teaching and learning in HE.
- H2: Students' methods of learning and preparing for exams on Quality of teaching and learning in HE.
- H3: Students' perspective on the teaching and learning environment on Quality of teaching and learning in HE
- H5: Teaching and learning environment is created and put into practice on Quality of teaching and learning in HE

2.18 Summary

As a result, most journal publications about teaching and learning quality in Chinese higher education fall into one of two categories: conceptual or theoretical. Empirical research is rare, as is research that connects student learning outcomes to QA and quality assurance (QA). There are a great number of articles devoted to a theoretical or conceptual discussion, but few of them are based on proper theoretical literature and lack depth. Despite the prevalence of quality and QA theories from the West, there is a dearth of papers providing critical feedback and interpretation of how these theories may be used in the Chinese context.

METHODOLOGY

The proposed and competing models are compared with the entire measurement model in Chapter 5 to find the best-fitting model there.

The following are the aims of this chapter:

In order to examine the direct impact of six variables on the quality of teaching and learning, we propose a conceptual model (Figure 3.1). (Section 3.1).

Provide a qualitative framework for better understanding the process of improving the quality of teaching and learning (Section 3.2, Figure 3.2).

Research Design

A person or group's interpretation of a social or human problem is the focus of qualitative research (Creswell, 2009). Given its "perfect suitability to addressing questions concerning the meanings, interpretations, and explanations people connect with a given phenomenon," the qualitative research design was used for the present investigation (Seale, 1999). As so, they help one see a phenomenon from all angles (Creswell, 2009). Many studies examining the difficulties faced by dairy farmers used a qualitative research approach. Used a qualitative approach to learn as much as possible about the phenomenon studied.

Population and Sampling

In addition, a non-probability sampling strategy would be used for this investigation. To gather information about China, we used a convenience sample method to conduct interviews with ten Chinese teachers and students. This method was repeated until theoretical saturation was reached, meaning that no further information could be gleaned from further interviews.

Data Collection

Data will be collected through primary and secondary data sources. The researcher gathered and collected all of the completed 100 questionnaires, which were used to do further data analysis in order to produce the final output and conclusions for the study.

Measurement/Trustworthiness

Results from qualitative studies that may be trusted are those that are high in both quality and authenticity. It has to do with how much faith (or assurance) readers put in the findings. So standard of quality confirms the standard questionnaire.

Measures are the items in a research study to which the participant responds. Research measures include survey questions, interview questions, or constructed situations. When constructing interviews and surveys, it is important that the questions directly relate to the research questions.

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