

Research on Quality Assurance in African Higher Education: A Bibliometric Mapping from 1999 to 2019

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Abstract : The article reviews the literature on quality assurance (QA) in African higher education studies (HES) conducted through a bibliometric mapping of published papers between 1999 and 2019. Specifically, the article highlights the nuances of knowledge production in four scientific databases: Scopus, Web of Science (WoS), African Journal Online (AJOL), and Google Scholar. The analysis included 531 papers, of which 127 are from Scopus, 30 are from Web of Science, 85 are from African Journal Online, and 259 are from Google Scholar. In essence, 284 authors wrote these papers from 231 institutions and 69 different countries (i.e., Africa=54 and outside Africa=15). Results indicate the existing knowledge. This analysis allows the readers to understand the growth and development of the field during the two-decade period, identify key contributors, and observe potential trends or gaps in the research. The paper employs bibliometric mapping as its primary analytical lens. By utilizing this method, the study quantitatively assesses the publications related to QA in African HES, helping to identify patterns, collaboration networks, and disparities in research output. The bibliometric approach allows for a systematic and objective analysis of large datasets, offering a comprehensive view of the knowledge production in the field. Furthermore, the study highlights the lack of shared resources available to enhance quality in higher education institutions (HEIs) in Africa. This finding underscores the importance of promoting collaborative research efforts, knowledge exchange, and capacity building within the region to improve the overall quality of higher education. The paper argues that despite the growing quantity of QA research in African higher education, there are challenges related to citation impact and access to high-impact publication avenues for African researchers. It emphasises the need to promote collaborative research and resource-sharing to enhance the quality of HEIs in Africa. The analytical lenses of bibliometric mapping and the examination of publication players' scenarios contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the field and its implications for African higher education.

Keywords : Africa, bibliometric research, higher education studies, quality assurance, scientific database, systematic review

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