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| Book Name: | **Quality Assurance Practices for Transformative Higher Education in Southern Africa** |
| Manuscript Number: | **Ms\_BPR\_5086.4** |
| Title of the Manuscript:  | **Intellectualizing quality assurance standards in higher education: An agenda for sustainable development** |
| Type of the Article | **Book Chapter** |

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| PART 1: Comments |
|  | Reviewer’s comment**Artificial Intelligence (AI) generated or assisted review comments are strictly prohibited during peer review.** | Author’s Feedback *(Please correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)* |
| **Please write a few sentences regarding the importance of this manuscript for the scientific community. A minimum of 3-4 sentences may be required for this part.** | This manuscript advances higher education discourse by redefining quality assurance (QA) as an intellectualized, sustainability-driven process. It bridges compliance-based QA with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), offering institutions a framework to foster innovation, equity, and societal impact. The work provides actionable insights for educators and policymakers to align academic excellence with global sustainability challenges. |  |
| **Is the title of the article suitable?****(If not please suggest an alternative title)** | **It is is clear and relevant but could be more concise and impactful.** The author can consider this alternative title. “**Sustainable Quality Assurance in Higher Education: From Standards to Systemic Change**”. *(Focuses on transformation and systemic impact.)* |  |
| Is the abstract of the article comprehensive? Do you suggest the addition (or deletion) of some points in this section? Please write your suggestions here. | **It is well-sctructured and convey s key points but can be more concise and impactful: the author might consider this alternative.** *Quality assurance (QA) in higher education has shifted from compliance-driven standards to an intellectualized framework integrating critical thinking, continuous improvement, and alignment with global sustainability agendas. Beyond regulatory compliance, QA now embraces holistic excellence—ensuring academic rigor, societal relevance, and adaptability to global challenges like technological disruption and inequity. Intellectualizing QA transcends benchmarking; it cultivates institutional cultures of innovation, inclusivity, and responsibility—key to advancing the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through education, research, and societal engagement. This chapter proposes a transformative QA framework that aligns higher education’s core functions with global sustainability targets, offering actionable pathways for institutional change.* |  |
| **Is the manuscript scientifically, correct? Please write here.**  | The manuscript addresses a timely and relevant topic—the intersection of quality assurance (QA) in higher education and sustainable development—and its core arguments are scientifically sound. |  |
| **Are the references sufficient and recent? If you have suggestions of additional references, please mention them in the review form.****-** | Yes, they sufficient.  |  |
| Is the language/English quality of the article suitable for scholarly communications? | Generally appropriate for academic publishing but can consider these. **Areas for Improvement (Language & Style)****1. Conciseness****Issue:** Some sentences are overly wordy, diluting impact.**Examples & Fixes:*** **Original:** *"In the context of higher education, the concept of quality assurance has evolved from a process of ensuring compliance with standards to a more nuanced, intellectualized framework..."***Revised:** *"Quality assurance (QA) in higher education has evolved from compliance-checking to an intellectualized framework..."*
* **Original:** *"It is particularly crucial in an era where the globalization of education, technological advancements, and rapidly changing job markets require institutions to continuously adapt."***Revised:** *"Globalization, technological shifts, and volatile labor markets now demand institutional agility, making QA indispensable."*

**2. Jargon & Clarity****Issue:** Some terms lack context or feel abrupt.**Examples & Fixes:*** **Original:** *"Industrialization and innovation"* (listed without explanation).**Revised:** *"Industrial partnerships and innovation ecosystems"* (if referring to university-industry collaboration).
* **Original:** *"Intellectualizing QA is not just about adhering to international standards..."***Revised:** *"Intellectualizing QA transcends benchmarking; it embeds critical reflection and sustainability ethics into institutional cultures."*

**3. Grammar & Syntax****Minor Errors Needing Correction:*** **Article Missing:** *"In light, intellectualizing quality standards..."* → *"In this light, intellectualizing QA standards..."*
* **Parallel Structure:** *"Teaching, research, community engagement, industrialization and innovation"* → *"Teaching, research, community engagement, and industrial innovation."*

**4. Scholarly Voice****Issue:** Some phrases sound conversational.**Examples & Fixes:*** **Original:** *"It’s about fostering a culture that values innovation..."***Revised:** *"It fosters institutional cultures prioritizing innovation..."*
* **Original:** *"As we move towards a more sustainable future..."***Revised:** *"As higher education aligns with global sustainability imperatives..."*
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| Optional/General comments | - |  |

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| **PART 2:**  |
|  | Reviewer’s comment | Author’s comment *(if agreed with the reviewer, correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)* |
| **Are there ethical issues in this manuscript? No** | *(If yes, Kindly please write down the ethical issues here in detail)* |  |

**Reviewers:**

**Mohamed Nasir, Maldives**