

2023 INQAAHE conference

Revisit of quality assurance and qualification recognition
of cross-border higher education during the pandemic-
*Does physical mobility matter in joint / dual degree
programmes from an Asian perspective?*

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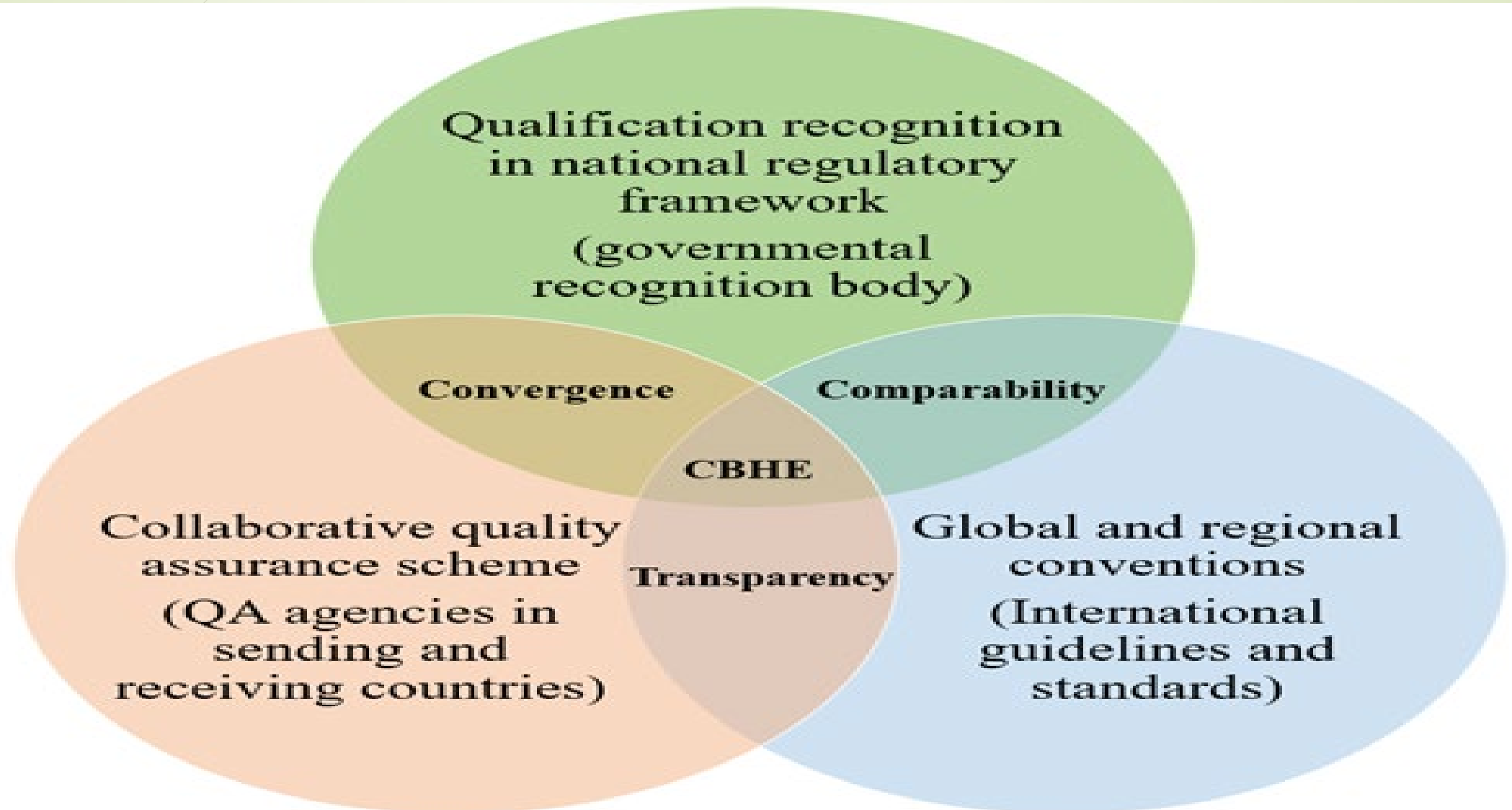
Outline of Presentation

- Introduction
 - Research questions
 - Research method
 - Major findings
 - Discussions and Conclusion
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Growth of Cross-border Higher Education

- ▶ Cross-border higher education exerted external influences on higher education system reform throughout student mobility since 1990s.
 - ▶ positive impacts on **economic, cultural and social developments** in a nation,
 - ▶ facilitate the **research and teaching/learning cooperation** among higher education institutions (Stearns, 2009; Smith, 2010; Knight & McNamara, 2017, Hill, 2022)
- ▶ Global discourse and regional initiatives.
 - ▶ Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education in 2001
 - ▶ the Guidelines or Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education 2005/ 2015
 - ▶ UNESCO/APQN Toolkit: Regulating the Quality of Cross Border Education in 2006
 - ▶ Tokyo Convention in 2011
 - ▶ Global Convention 2019
 - ▶ INQAAHE ISG 2022

Figure: Relevance of qualification recognition, quality assurance and global/ regional conventions in CBHE



Three modes of delivery during the pandemic

- physical student mobility (PSM)
 - a learner should “travel and stay in another country for academic, professional, or cultural reasons”
- virtual student mobility
 - as “a form of mobility that uses information and communication technologies to facilitate cross-border and/or inter-institutional academic, cultural, and experiential exchanges and collaboration which may be credit-bearing or not for credit”
- hybrid mobility (HSM)
 - an alternative form of mobility with “more flexibility to adapt and to cope with both students’ demands and expectations of mobility activities, as well as those conditions that can realistically be provided”

Joint/ Dual degree program in Asia

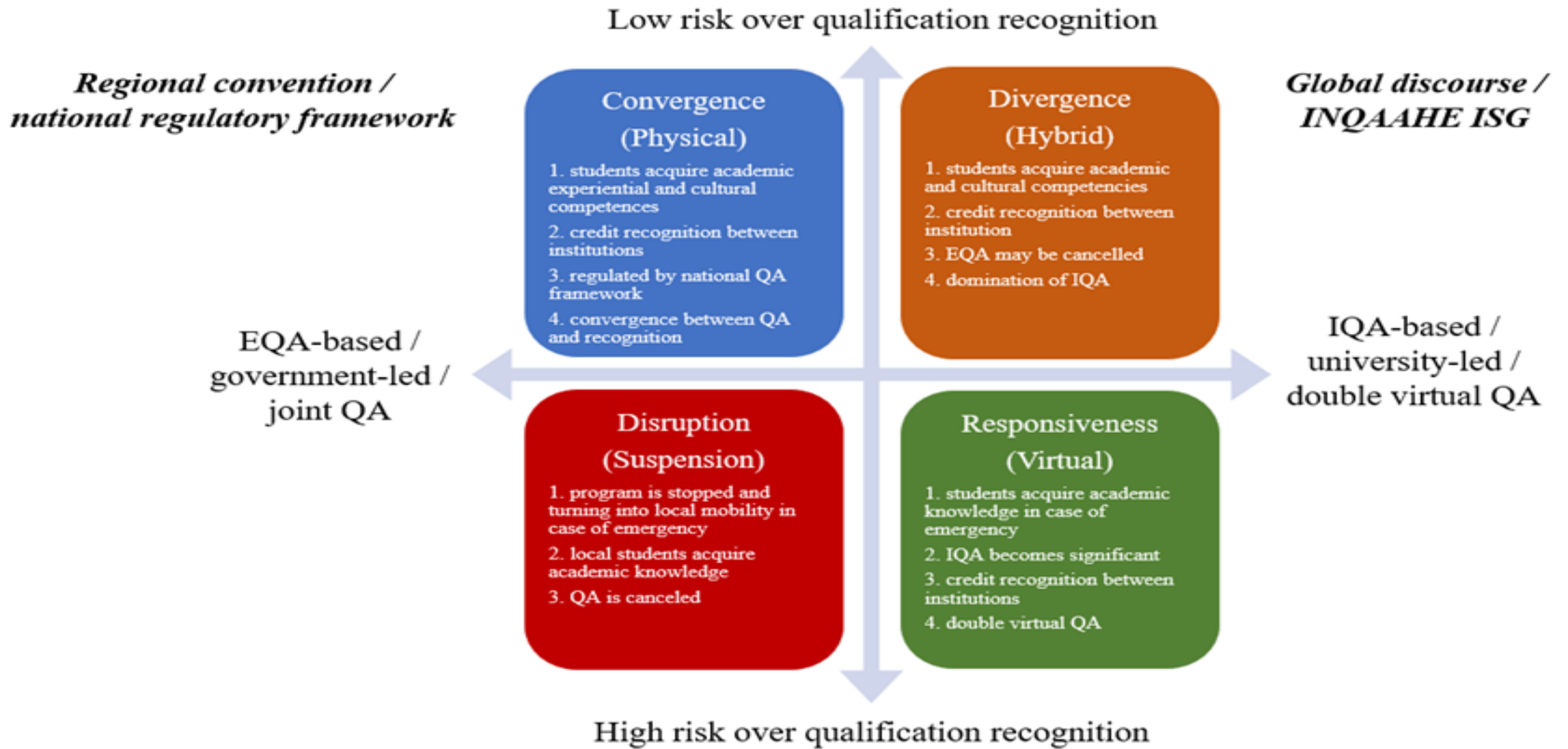
- “A jointly developed and **integrated curriculum and agreed-on credit recognition**” (Obst, Kuder, and Banks 2011, p. 9) feature characteristics of a joint/ dual degree program.
- The rapid growth of international joint / dual degree programmes have been prominent in Asia since 2000
- There are several reasons for universities to develop joint and dual degree programs, particularly for the top research universities in Asia
 - to enhance academic reputation, invigorate degree program system to become more interdisciplinary, to strengthen student employability
- During the pandemic , joint / dual degree programs suddenly shifted from a physical mode into a virtual delivery,
 - quality and qualifications issues



Research questions

- How was quality assurance system relevant to qualification recognition of cross border higher education from a global discourse and a regional perspective?
- What **common QA approaches** were adopted by the top ranked universities in Asia to ensure quality of joint/ dual degree program via physical, virtual or hybrid delivery modes before and under COVID-19 pandemic?
- How did the **top-ranked universities** in Asia perceive quality and value of qualification of joint/ dual degree programs via different delivery modes?

Conceptual framework for linking mobility modes with quality of joint and dual degree programs in Asian context





Research method

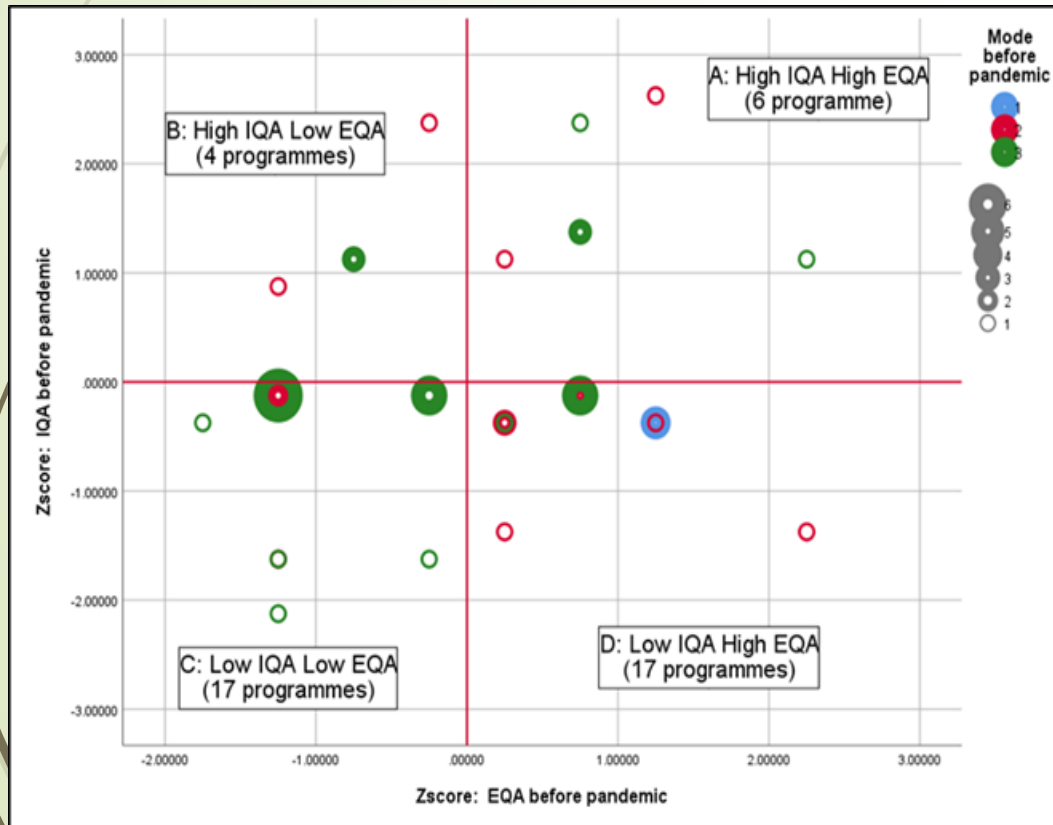
- 7 In-depth interviews
- an online
 - the top ranked 200 universities
 - there were 50 responses from 13 countries, including 36 from top 200 universities in QS ranking and 34 from top 500 ranked institutions

Top three approaches of IQA, EQA and qualification recognition

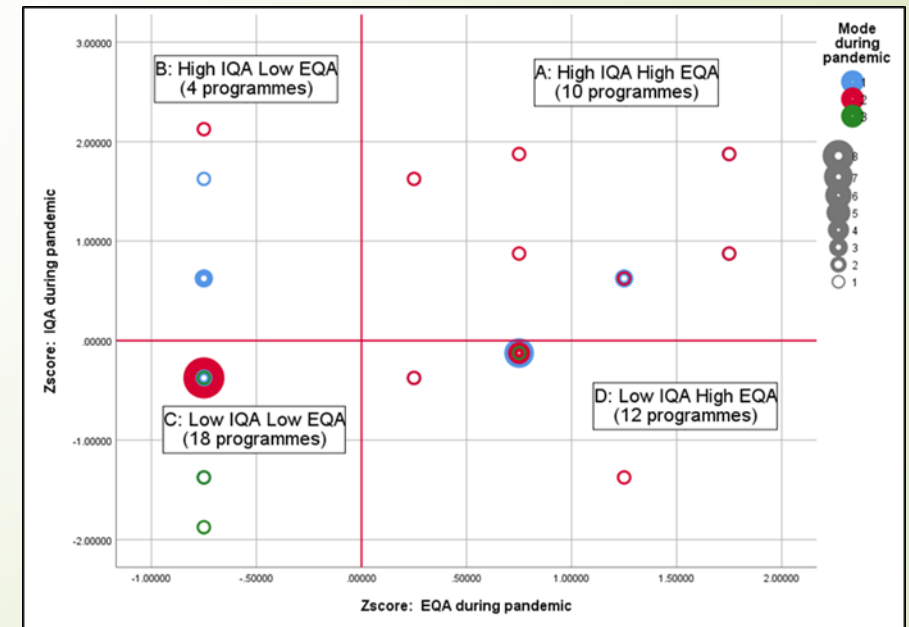
	IQA	EQA	Qualification recognition
Top 1	Having policies and regulations (73.54 %)	National accreditor (38.70%)	Government (55.10%)
Top 2	formulating the process and procedures for student admission and progression	Government	University
Top 3	collecting student feedback	oversea accreditor from partner university	National accreditor

Comparing the IQA and EQA implementation before the pandemic and during the pandemic

- most programs delivered in a physical mode tended to rely on EQA rather than IQA prior to the pandemic. (note: green-physical, red-hybrid, blue-virtual)



- more than 80 % of the program applied either a hybrid or a virtual mode, which inevitably resulted in the decreasing level of IQA as well as EQA



Level of respondents' agreement over different delivery modes

Delivery mode	Mean	SD	Median	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lowest	Highest
value of virtual delivery	3.38	1.12	3.50	3.06	3.70
value of physical delivery	4.48	0.68	5.00	4.29	4.67
Effectiveness of fully online	2.82	1.06	3.00	2.52	3.12
Effectiveness of face to face	4.20	1.03	4.00	3.91	4.49
Effectiveness of hybrid mode	3.78	1.00	4.00	3.50	4.06


The correlation between application of delivery mode and the level of effectiveness of a joint/dual degree program

- the higher level the responding institutions agreed on physical mode, and the higher value of a qualification they would likely recognize

	VV	VP	EO	EF	EH
value of virtual	1				
value of physical	-.16	1			
Effectiveness of fully online	.54	.07	1		
Effectiveness of face to face	-.14	.30	.24	1	
Effectiveness of hybrid mode	.48	-.05	.60	.42	1



Discussions

- ▶ Are Asian governments ready to new quality assurance practices in the era of the post pandemic?
 - ▶ Does physical mobility matter in quality assurance of joint / dual degree programmes by top ranked universities in Asia?
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Conclusion

- In most Asian nations, national accreditors are obligated to monitor quality of local universities and colleges, **but they are not commissioned to serve as the gatekeepers of quality and qualification of joint and dual degree programs.**
- **a convergence between quality assurance and qualification recognition was not formed** yet in most Asian nations.
- **joint/ dual degree programs via physical mode is preferred and recognized by universities.**
 - However, **hybrid mode** has been widely accepted during the pandemic and in the post pandemic era.
- moving toward **a convergence of quality assurance and qualification recognition** would affirm **value of a joint qualification** in the future.



Q & A

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