



A POAC-Based Academic Quality Management Model to Enhance the Quality of Seminars and Research Proposals in Higher Education Institutions

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ABSTRACT

The quality of academic seminars and research proposals serves as a key indicator of academic excellence in higher education institutions. However, previous studies reveal that the preparation of research proposals and the implementation of academic seminars still face persistent challenges, including weak planning, limited coordination among academic units, inconsistent implementation, and insufficient data-based evaluation. This study aims to develop a POAC-based (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, Controlling) academic quality management model to enhance the quality of seminars and research proposals in higher education institutions. Employing a qualitative approach with a case study design, data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis across three universities in West Java. The findings indicate that the POAC model strengthens academic planning systems, improves the effectiveness of resource organization, enhances the implementation of seminars and proposal supervision, and reinforces evaluation and quality control mechanisms. The proposed POAC-based academic quality management model provides a comprehensive strategic framework for higher education institutions to improve academic service quality, particularly in the processes of academic seminars and research proposal development

INTRODUCTION

Academic seminars and research proposals are two fundamental components within the academic processes of higher education institutions. They not only function as administrative requirements for academic progression, but also serve as indicators of students' ability to formulate research problems, construct theoretical frameworks, and design valid and accountable research methodologies. However, numerous studies reveal that the quality of academic seminars and research proposals – at the undergraduate, master's, and doctoral levels – continues to face significant challenges. These problems include weak planning of research topics, low methodological literacy, insufficient organizational structure to support students during the proposal-writing process, and inconsistent internal evaluation mechanisms regarding proposal quality.

These issues indicate an urgent need for more systematic managerial improvements. In the context of educational management, the POAC framework Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling offers a strategic structure capable of mapping, managing, and enhancing academic processes in a structured manner. The Planning function is essential to ensure that students and academic programs have clear research directions aligned with institutional roadmaps. The Organizing function is needed to allocate roles among supervisors, research coordinators at the thesis/dissertation level, and other academic governance structures. Meanwhile, Actuating refers to the effective execution of seminars and supervisory activities throughout proposal development. The Controlling function represents the final managerial stage that ensures continuous monitoring and quality assurance through systematic evaluation.

At the same time, academic quality demands in higher education are increasing due to global competition, public expectations for high-quality research outcomes, and evolving higher education policies emphasizing academic accountability. High-quality research originates from proposals that are strong, systematic, and relevant to scientific development as well as societal needs. Therefore, improving the quality of academic seminars and research proposals is not only important for students and supervisors, but also constitutes a strategic necessity for higher education institutions to maintain academic credibility, institutional reputation, and research performance.

Thus far, efforts to improve the quality of seminars and research proposals across many universities remain partial, fragmented, and often dependent on the initiatives of individual lecturers or study programs. Few institutions have implemented a comprehensive academic quality management model that integrates POAC principles across all stages of academic supervision. In fact, POAC has been proven effective in various management studies to enhance organizational performance, including within educational settings.

Therefore, a POAC-based academic quality management model is urgently needed to integrate all aspects of academic supervision and governance related to seminars and research proposal development. Such a model is expected to provide a systemic solution for improving student academic

competence, strengthening research governance, and supporting the achievement of national and international academic quality standards. This study seeks to fill this gap by developing and analyzing the implementation of a POAC-based management model aimed at improving the quality of academic seminars and research proposals in higher education institutions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This theoretical review discusses three main conceptual components that form the foundation of this study: (1) the concept of POAC management, (2) academic quality management, and (3) the quality of seminars and research proposals. The integration of these three concepts serves as the basis for developing a POAC-based academic quality management model.

The Concept of POAC Management

POAC management Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling is a foundational managerial framework introduced by George R. Terry. This framework has been widely applied across various organizations, including educational institutions, to ensure the existence of well-structured planning, effective organizing, efficient implementation, and continuous control. In higher education settings, the POAC functions are highly relevant for managing academic quality, particularly in guiding students through the preparation of research proposals and the implementation of proposal seminars.

The first function, Planning, refers to the process of formulating direction, goals, and strategic steps before academic activities are carried out. In student research, planning includes developing a research vision for the study program, establishing proposal quality standards, preparing seminar guidelines, designing a research roadmap, and creating an academic calendar. Good planning provides a strong foundation to ensure that research activities proceed with clear direction and measurable targets.

The second function, Organizing, concerns the structuring of resources including human resources, information, and facilities so that academic objectives can be achieved effectively. In higher education institutions, organizing involves the distribution of roles among supervisors, the establishment of research-quality assurance units, the formulation of standard operating procedures (SOPs) for proposal seminars, and the management of academic administration that supports students' research processes. This function ensures efficient coordination and minimizes the overlap of responsibilities.

The third function, Actuating, refers to the process of motivating and mobilizing all relevant actors to perform tasks according to the established plans. In the context of student research, actuating includes structured supervision, the implementation of proposal seminars, research methodology workshops, proposal clinics, and the use of academic management information systems. This stage ensures that planned academic activities are effectively executed.

The fourth function, Controlling, involves monitoring and evaluating the implementation of activities to ensure compliance with standards. Quality control in student research is carried out through proposal reviews, seminar

assessments using standardized rubrics, evaluations of supervisory effectiveness, academic quality audits, and continuous feedback mechanisms. The controlling function ensures that the research process adheres to quality standards and supports ongoing improvement.

The POAC model operates as a dynamic and continuous cycle. The integration of POAC enables higher education institutions to manage student research processes systematically and measurably, supporting the overall improvement of academic quality.

Academic Quality Management in Higher Education

Academic quality management is a systematic approach to maintaining and improving the quality of educational processes, services, and outcomes in higher education. Academic quality is assessed not only through final outputs such as grades or graduation rates but also through the learning process, the effectiveness of research supervision, adherence to national and international standards, and the academic contributions produced by students.

Conceptually, academic quality is grounded in several key principles, including relevance to scientific developments and societal needs, the effectiveness and efficiency of academic processes, institutional accountability, and continuous improvement. These principles align with Total Quality Management (TQM) approaches widely applied in educational settings to encourage the participation of all university stakeholders in quality enhancement.

In the context of student research, academic quality is reflected in the clarity of problem formulation, the relevance of theoretical foundations, methodological rigor, research validity and originality, and the quality of academic writing. Strong supervision, standardized research procedures, and consistent evaluation mechanisms are essential in maintaining research quality. Institutions that implement sound academic quality management typically demonstrate stronger research reputations, increased student publications, and improved accreditation performance.

Quality of Seminars and Research Proposals

The quality of proposal seminars and research proposals is an essential indicator of students' readiness to conduct academic research. A high-quality research proposal includes a clear title and focus, a precise problem formulation grounded in research gaps, an updated and relevant theoretical review, an appropriate and logical methodology, and well-constructed academic arguments. However, students often face challenges such as overly broad research problems, poorly structured theoretical frameworks, inappropriate methodologies, and limited access to current literature.

The proposal seminar serves as an academic forum to assess students' preparedness and evaluate the feasibility of their research plans. High-quality seminars are characterized by systematic and persuasive presentations, the student's ability to respond to examiners' questions, mastery of methodology, and adherence to time constraints. Effective seminar implementation is typically supported by institutional SOPs, standardized evaluation rubrics, and active participation from academic supervisors.

Integration of POAC in Improving the Quality of Seminars and Research Proposals

The integration of POAC functions within academic quality management helps institutions establish a comprehensive and effective system for guiding student research. In the Planning stage, institutions develop research guidelines, academic calendars, and proposal quality standards. The Organizing stage involves forming research quality units, assigning the roles of supervisors and examiners, and strengthening academic administration. The Actuating stage includes conducting methodology workshops, proposal clinics, intensive supervision, and regular seminars. Lastly, the Controlling stage is implemented through monitoring research progress, rubric-based proposal assessments, evaluations of supervision quality, and periodic academic quality audits.

The integration of POAC ensures that the process of supervising student research becomes more organized, controlled, and measurable. This model significantly enhances the quality of proposal seminars and student research proposals, thereby strengthening the academic quality and institutional reputation of higher education institutions.

Previous Studies

A number of prior studies have examined efforts to improve academic quality, particularly related to the development of research proposals and the implementation of academic seminars. Rahman (2021) investigated the implementation of POAC management functions in enhancing the effectiveness of academic administration in higher education institutions. His findings indicate that planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling contribute significantly to the quality of academic services, especially in curriculum planning and academic activity management. The study emphasized that the planning and controlling functions are key elements in maintaining academic quality consistency.

Furthermore, a study conducted by Suryani and Putra (2022) highlighted strategies to improve the quality of student research through strengthened supervision, the implementation of standard operating procedures (SOPs), and the reinforcement of internal quality assurance units. Their findings show that the quality of research proposals improves when effective supervision systems and clear seminar guidelines are established. However, their study did not employ the POAC management framework; instead, it focused more on internal regulatory mechanisms and quality assurance procedures within universities.

Another study by Hamzah et al. (2023) examined the factors influencing the success of proposal seminars at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Their research found that seminar outcomes are strongly influenced by seminar management, students' methodological readiness, and the intensity of communication with supervisors. Nevertheless, the study did not connect its findings to any specific management model, including POAC, resulting in a lack of an integrated conceptual framework.

Compared to these earlier studies, the present research shares several similarities. Like the three aforementioned studies, this research focuses on improving students' academic quality, particularly regarding their ability to prepare research proposals and participate in academic seminars. All three

studies emphasize the importance of planning, supervision, and quality control in the proposal development process.

However, this research also presents several notable differences. Rahman (2021) applied the POAC framework, but only within the broader context of general academic administration, not specifically for improving proposal and seminar quality. Meanwhile, the studies by Suryani and Putra (2022) and Hamzah et al. (2023) did not employ the POAC framework at all. Previous studies also tended to examine individual aspects of the research process – such as supervision, seminar management, or quality assurance – without proposing an integrated managerial model.

The strength of this study lies in its development of a conceptual model that comprehensively integrates all POAC functions (planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling) within the context of enhancing the quality of seminars and research proposals. Thus, this study does not merely identify problems but also offers systematic, applicable solutions for higher education institutions. In addition, it provides practical contributions by proposing structured strategies that can be utilized by study programs, quality assurance units, and academic supervisors to improve the quality of students' research processes.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design, as its primary objective is to comprehensively understand how POAC (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling) strategies are implemented to improve the quality of academic seminars and research proposals in higher education institutions. This approach allows the researcher to explore managerial processes holistically, examine interactions among stakeholders, and uncover dynamics that cannot be captured through quantitative methods.

The research was conducted within an academic program at a higher education institution that routinely organizes research proposal seminars. The research subjects were selected through purposive sampling, focusing on individuals directly involved in the planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation stages of proposal seminars. These participants included the head of the study program, academic supervisors, examiners, students participating in proposal seminars, and academic administrative staff. They were selected because their knowledge and experiences were deemed valuable and relevant to the focus of the study.

Data were collected using three primary techniques. First, in-depth interviews were conducted with program leaders, lecturers, and students to explore how POAC strategies are planned and implemented, as well as their perceptions of seminar and proposal quality. Second, direct observations were carried out by attending proposal seminars to observe real practices related to POAC implementation, including presentation dynamics, actor interactions, and assessment mechanisms. Third, document analysis was conducted to gather data from academic guidelines, proposal assessment rubrics, seminar schedules, evaluation minutes, and samples of student proposals.

The main instrument in this research was the researcher, functioning as a human instrument, supported by interview guides, observation sheets, and documentation checklists prepared beforehand. All collected data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive analysis model, which consists of three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was conducted by selecting key information related to POAC implementation; data display was carried out through thematic categorization and matrix development; while conclusions were drawn gradually and continuously verified throughout the research process.

To ensure data validity, the study employed source triangulation, technique triangulation, member checking, and an audit trail. All research procedures adhered to ethical standards, including obtaining informed consent from participants, ensuring confidentiality of identities, and using all data strictly for academic purposes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that the implementation of the POAC strategy plays a significant role in improving the quality of research seminars and proposal presentations in higher education settings. Field data show that the aspects of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling are integrated and form a unified managerial strategy capable of enhancing the quality of academic processes, particularly in proposal seminars that serve as the initial gateway for assessing the feasibility of student research.

In the planning aspect, the study reveals that the success of proposal seminars is highly dependent on the clarity of planning from the outset. Study programs that have established written academic guidelines, defined proposal quality standards, and developed systematic schedules for supervision and seminar implementation tend to produce more refined and focused proposals. Planning is not merely related to technical matters such as scheduling and venue preparation, but also includes establishing assessment rubrics, strengthening research methodology training through workshops, and aligning research topics with supervisor expertise. When planning is insufficient, student proposals often undergo repeated revisions and fail to meet expected academic standards.

In the organizing aspect, the study shows that the quality of proposal seminars depends on the effectiveness of resource management. Organizing is reflected in the clear division of roles among supervisors, examiners, moderators, and administrative staff. The research finds that selecting examiners who match the topic area results in sharper and more relevant feedback. Additionally, the availability of facilities—such as seminar rooms, presentation equipment, and online platforms—forms an integral part of organizing that influences the smooth execution of seminars. When organizing is effective, students are better prepared, and the seminars proceed in an orderly manner.

In the actuating stage, the study emphasizes that the quality of proposal seminars is influenced by the effectiveness of interactions among students, supervisors, and examiners. A well-executed seminar is characterized by constructive feedback from examiners, appropriate direction from supervisors,

and effective moderation. Students who receive clear guidance and feedback show significant improvement in preparing their proposals. Conversely, if implementation is ineffective—for example, due to examiner absence, student unpreparedness, or weak coordination the seminar becomes suboptimal and negatively affects proposal quality.

The controlling aspect serves as the final determinant of academic quality. Control is conducted through standardized proposal assessment rubrics, plagiarism checks, and evaluation meetings among faculty members. The study finds that an effective control mechanism enables study programs to maintain consistent academic quality and ensure that students revise their proposals according to standards. Additionally, post-seminar evaluations allow institutions to refine standard operating procedures (SOPs), improve supervision workflows, and enhance academic services sustainably.

Overall, this study demonstrates that POAC implementation has a tangible impact on improving the quality of proposal seminars and research proposals. Students become better prepared to present their ideas, proposal structures become more systematic, and methodological errors can be minimized early on. Effective coordination among all parties also fosters a more professional, conducive, and quality-oriented academic environment.

Thus, the POAC strategy functions not only as a managerial concept but also as a strategic approach that practically strengthens academic governance during the proposal seminar stage. Consistent implementation of POAC has been proven to enhance the quality of student research and support the study program's vision of producing more qualified and relevant scholarly work.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study concludes that the implementation of the POAC strategy (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling) plays a significant role in enhancing the quality of student research seminars and proposal development. The findings indicate that the success of proposal seminars is not solely dependent on students' individual abilities but is strongly influenced by systematic and structured academic governance.

The planning aspect serves as the foundational element in improving proposal quality, as clear planning—including academic guidelines, assessment standards, structured schedules, and strengthened methodological training—provides students with appropriate direction from the beginning. The organizing aspect is proven to determine the effectiveness of the seminar process, particularly in relation to the distribution of lecturer roles, the readiness of facilities, and administrative coordination that ensures smooth implementation.

Furthermore, the actuating aspect demonstrates that well-directed academic interactions among students, supervisors, and examiners produce constructive feedback, thereby significantly improving proposal quality. Meanwhile, the controlling aspect functions as a regulatory instrument to ensure academic standards are met through evaluation, plagiarism checks, and the consistent use of assessment rubrics.

Overall, this study affirms that the application of the POAC strategy is an effective managerial approach to improving the proposal seminar process and

enhancing the quality of student research. POAC implementation not only strengthens academic governance but also provides positive outcomes for student preparedness, methodological accuracy, and the alignment of proposals with the scientific standards set by the study program. Thus, this research offers practical contributions to higher education institutions in designing strategies for academic quality improvement, particularly in the early stages of student research.

FURTHER STUDY

This research still has limitations, so it is necessary to conduct further research related to the topic of A POAC-Based Academic Quality Management Model to Enhance the Quality of Seminars and Research Proposals in Higher Education Institutions in order to perfect this research and increase insight for readers.

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