



“Determinants of lecturer quality in Vietnamese public universities: Evidence from a quantitative assessment aligned with AUN-QA standards”

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DETERMINANTS OF LECTURER QUALITY IN VIETNAMESE PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES: EVIDENCE FROM A QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT ALIGNED WITH AUN-QA STANDARDS

Abstract

This study investigates the influence of institutional and individual factors on lecturer quality within Vietnamese public universities under the AUN-QA framework. A quantitative cross-sectional survey was conducted with 310 full-time lecturers from five universities in Vietnam between January and March 2025. The study assessed seven factors: pedagogical competence, professional competence, technological competence, professional development policy, human resource management policy, organizational culture, and facilities, using validated Likert-scale instruments. The results reveal that all seven factors significantly affect lecturer quality, with pedagogical competence and human resource management policy being the strongest predictors. Specifically, pedagogical competence ($\beta = 0.358, p < 0.001$) and human resource management policy ($\beta = 0.229, p < 0.001$) contributed most to improving lecturer performance. These findings suggest that enhancing teaching capabilities and supporting lecturers through effective human resource management policies are crucial for improving academic quality. The study also highlights the importance of aligning institutional support systems and strategic policies to meet AUN-QA standards. Practical implications are provided for policy reform and institutional capacity-building, aiming to foster continuous improvement in higher education quality in Southeast Asia.

Keywords

lecturer quality, pedagogical competence, higher education, AUN-QA standards, Vietnam universities

JEL Classification

I23, J24, O15

INTRODUCTION

The rapid transformation of higher education in Southeast Asia, driven by regional integration, digitalization, and global benchmarking initiatives, has intensified the demand for quality assurance in academic institutions. Within this context, ensuring lecturer quality has emerged as a strategic imperative for universities aiming to enhance teaching effectiveness, research output, and institutional reputation. The academic workforce plays a central role in shaping student learning outcomes, fostering innovation, and advancing national development goals.

In Vietnam, significant investments have been made in expanding the higher education sector, yet disparities persist in terms of pedagogical competence, professional development, and institutional support mechanisms. These gaps are particularly critical as Vietnamese universities pursue regional accreditation under the ASEAN University Network – Quality Assurance (AUN-QA) framework, which emphasizes multi-dimensional criteria for assessing academic staff. The

AUN-QA Version 4.0 explicitly highlights lecturers' teaching competence, research involvement, and engagement with institutional goals as core quality indicators.

Despite the growing application of quality assurance models in Vietnam, there is a lack of empirical evidence identifying the specific institutional and individual drivers that influence lecturer performance. Much of the existing literature remains conceptual or limited in scope, focusing on isolated factors such as teaching methodology or faculty workload. This fragmented understanding limits the ability of policymakers and university administrators to implement evidence-based reforms that align with regional standards.

This study addresses this gap by examining lecturer quality as a multi-factorial construct influenced by both personal competencies and organizational support systems. The research contributes to ongoing discourse on higher education quality enhancement and responds to the urgent need for data-driven strategies to improve faculty performance in line with AUN-QA expectations.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

University lecturers are widely regarded as the cornerstone of higher education institutions. Beyond delivering subject knowledge, they shape students' intellectual development, foster research skills, and contribute to the advancement of academic disciplines. The role of lecturer is no longer limited to teaching; it also encompasses research, academic advising, curriculum design, and administrative participation (Umukoro & Omade, 2022). This multi-dimensional nature of academic work reflects the increasing complexity of modern higher education systems and the rising expectations placed on faculty members (Neumann, 2009).

Teaching remains a central responsibility, requiring pedagogical expertise, communication skills, and the ability to motivate diverse learners (Osayomwanbor, 2024; Pham & Nguyen, 2023). At the same time, lecturers are expected to conduct research, publish scholarly work, and contribute to institutional knowledge production (Davidovitch & Cohen, 2024; García-Gallego et al., 2015). Additionally, many faculty members serve in various administrative roles – from departmental coordination to quality assurance committees – which demand leadership, policy familiarity, and time management (Kenny & Fluck, 2021; Avramović, 2024). While these tasks are essential to academic excellence, balancing them is becoming increasingly challenging.

Recent studies highlight the mounting pressures on lecturers due to increased workload, limited

professional development opportunities, and rising expectations in teaching and research outputs. These factors contribute to fatigue, reduced job satisfaction, and in some cases, declining performance (Tsoetsi & Onaolapo, 2024; Weenink et al., 2023). Against this backdrop, a critical concern emerges: Is lecturer quality being effectively sustained under such demands?

This concern is particularly relevant in the context of regional quality frameworks such as the ASEAN University Network Quality Assurance (AUN-QA). The AUN-QA framework defines lecturer quality not solely in terms of credentials or teaching hours, but through a multidimensional lens – encompassing pedagogical competence, subject-matter expertise, technological literacy, professional engagement, and institutional alignment (AUN-QA, 2020; Ong, 2017). From this perspective, lecturer quality is both an individual and systemic matter, shaped by institutional policies, training support, work environment, and leadership culture.

However, in the context of public universities in Vietnam, current studies have yet to provide a comprehensive view of the integration between individual and organizational factors in enhancing lecturer quality. This gap is what our study aims to fill, while also providing recommendations for improving lecturer quality in Vietnamese universities according to AUN-QA standards.

In recent years, the importance of lecturer quality in higher education has gained increasing attention, particularly in light of the growing expecta-

tions placed on lecturers. Research indicates that lecturer quality is influenced by various factors, both individual and organizational, which collectively contribute to the overall effectiveness of teaching and learning. To comprehensively understand how these factors interact, it is essential to break them down into three key groups: individual competencies, organizational support, and work environment.

The first group of factors focuses on the personal competencies of lecturers, which include pedagogical competence, professional expertise, and technological literacy. Pedagogical competence refers to a lecturer's ability to design and deliver effective teaching and learning experiences, encompassing essential skills such as lesson planning, classroom management, and the application of appropriate teaching methods. Studies show that lecturers with strong pedagogical competencies are better equipped to bridge learning gaps and improve student outcomes (Moriera et al., 2022; Hung, 2023). A key model in this area is the TPACK (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge), which highlights the integration of technology into teaching practices. This model emphasizes that effective lecturers must combine subject matter expertise with both technological and pedagogical skills (Fajaria et al., 2023; Thin, 2024). However, it is important to note that pedagogical competence alone is insufficient. Lecturers must also focus on professional guidance, assessment methods, and student support to ensure high-quality learning outcomes (Bagonza & Kaahwa, 2024; Rianti & Salsabilah, 2024). Therefore, the need for continuous professional development programs to enhance pedagogical skills is critical.

In addition to pedagogical competence, professional competence plays a pivotal role in lecturer quality. Defined as subject-matter expertise and the ability to apply this knowledge in teaching and research, professional competence directly impacts students' understanding and engagement (Rianti & Salsabilah, 2024; Moriera et al., 2022). Lecturers who possess deep knowledge of their subject matter are more effective in fostering student learning and increasing satisfaction (Bagonza & Kaahwa, 2024; Pavlova & Semenova, 2024). However, professional competence extends beyond subject knowledge. It also includes

the ability to adapt to changing educational demands, engage in research, and contribute to the academic community (Ninh, 2023; Hatta, 2024). Institutions that prioritize professional development opportunities, such as research grants and certifications, are more likely to cultivate lecturers with high levels of professional competence (Nurdin et al., 2024).

As education increasingly shifts toward digital platforms, technological competence has become a crucial factor in determining lecturer quality. Lecturers must be skilled at utilizing digital tools, online platforms, and multimedia resources to enhance teaching and learning (Zhang & Wu, 2025; Huynh et al., 2024). The DigCompEdu framework identifies key dimensions of digital competence, including professional engagement, digital resource management, and the ability to help learners develop digital skills (Dang et al., 2024). Research has shown that lecturers with strong technological competence are better equipped to address the challenges posed by digital education, such as enhancing student engagement and ensuring accessibility to resources (Suherman et al., 2024). However, it is important to recognize that institutional support is equally crucial in developing technological competence. Access to training programs and quality ICT facilities plays a key role in equipping lecturers with the necessary tools to succeed in a digital learning environment (Fajaria et al., 2023; Budi et al., 2024).

The second group focuses on organizational support, which includes policies related to professional development and human resource management. These policies play a crucial role in enhancing lecturer quality by providing the necessary resources and opportunities for growth and improvement. Professional development policies, for example, are fundamental in ensuring that lecturers have access to continuous learning opportunities, such as workshops, certifications, and research grants (Ninh, 2023). These opportunities enable lecturers to improve their teaching performance, which in turn positively impacts the overall quality of education. Research has shown that certification policies, for instance, significantly enhance lecturers' teaching effectiveness, helping them stay current with the latest teaching methods and academic trends (Nurdin et al., 2024). Institutions

that prioritize professional development are more likely to foster a culture of adaptability, innovation, and commitment to excellence among their lecturers (Budi et al., 2024; Moriera et al., 2022). Furthermore, encouraging lecturers to engage in professional activities outside the campus, such as attending conferences or participating in community service, can further improve their skills and competencies, enriching both their professional lives and the quality of education they provide (Sihotang & Murniarti, 2024).

In parallel with professional development, effective human resource management (HRM) policies are essential for attracting, retaining, and developing high-quality lecturers. These policies should focus not only on recruitment and performance evaluation but also on providing career advancement opportunities (Budi et al., 2024). Performance measurement frameworks that incorporate leadership behavior and organizational culture are particularly useful in evaluating lecturer effectiveness and ensuring alignment with institutional goals (Srinadi et al., 2024). Moreover, HRM policies that promote a work-life balance, job satisfaction, and professional growth contribute significantly to enhancing lecturers' commitment and performance. When institutions align their HRM policies with strategic goals, they create an environment where lecturers are motivated, engaged, and committed to fostering a culture of excellence and innovation (Zulpikar et al., 2024).

The third group of factors influencing lecturer quality focuses on the work environment, which includes both organizational culture and the availability of infrastructure. A positive organizational culture plays a crucial role in shaping lecturer quality by fostering collaboration, innovation, and a commitment to quality education (Anwar et al., 2024). Research has shown that lecturers working in institutions with a strong, supportive culture are more likely to demonstrate high levels of professional commitment and performance, thus contributing to improved educational outcomes (Hatta, 2024). Leadership is a key component of organizational culture, and visionary leadership that promotes a culture of quality and innovation can significantly enhance lecturers' roles in quality assurance and student learning (Sihotang & Murniarti, 2024; Tran & Do, 2020). Institutions

that encourage open communication, teamwork, and professional growth create an environment that is conducive to lecturer development, ultimately fostering a culture of excellence within the institution (Zulpikar et al., 2024).

In addition to organizational culture, the quality of facilities and infrastructure is also a critical factor in lecturer effectiveness. Access to modern classrooms, libraries, laboratories, and digital resources enables lecturers to deliver high-quality instruction and engage students effectively (Ninh, 2023). Research has highlighted that the availability of quality learning resources directly impacts the quality of learning outcomes, particularly in fields such as vocational education (Suyatmo et al., 2024). However, disparities in infrastructure, particularly in resource-constrained institutions, can present significant challenges. Ensuring equitable access to these essential facilities is vital for maintaining high lecturer quality and ensuring student success (Khoa et al., 2025).

In summary, lecturer quality is shaped by a complex interplay of individual competencies, organizational support, and the work environment. Previous studies have emphasized the importance of various factors, such as pedagogical competence, professional expertise, and technological literacy, while also recognizing the significant role of institutional support through professional development policies and human resource management. Additionally, the work environment, including organizational culture and the availability of modern facilities, has a substantial influence on lecturer effectiveness and academic performance. However, there remains a gap in understanding how these factors interact and collectively contribute to lecturer quality, particularly within the context of public universities in Vietnam and in alignment with AUN-QA standards.

This study aims to explore the relationship between individual, organizational, and environmental factors and their impact on lecturer quality in Vietnamese public universities, with a particular focus on how these factors align with the requirements of AUN-QA accreditation. Based on the above theoretical foundation and empirical evidence, the study proposes the following hypotheses:

- H1: *Pedagogical competence has a positive influence on lecturer quality.*
- H2: *Professional competence positively affects lecturer quality.*
- H3: *Technological competence has a positive influence on lecturer quality.*
- H4: *Organizational culture positively affects lecturer quality.*
- H5: *Facilities and infrastructure have a positive influence on lecturer quality.*
- H6: *Professional development policies positively affect lecturer quality.*
- H7: *Human resource management policies positively influence lecturer quality.*

2. METHODS

This study adopted a quantitative research approach using a structured questionnaire to examine the influence of institutional and individual factors on lecturer quality in Vietnamese public universities, particularly in the context of AUN-QA accreditation. The data were collected between January and March 2025 from five public universities in different regions of Vietnam. A total of 310 valid responses were obtained from full-time lecturers with at least one year of teaching experience. Respondents came from various academic disciplines, ranks, and institutional types, reflecting the diversity of the lecturer population in these universities. The selection of universities was based on their active engagement in quality assurance practices and strategic plans for regional accreditation, ensuring a robust sample representing institutions striving to meet AUN-QA standards.

The questionnaire was developed based on prior research and frameworks such as the AUN-QA Version 4.0 framework. It consisted of items measuring seven independent variables (pedagogical competence, professional competence, technological competence, professional development policy, HRM policy, organizational culture, and facilities and infrastructure) and one dependent variable:

lecturer quality. All items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The survey instrument was reviewed by three experts in higher education and pilot-tested with 30 lecturers to ensure clarity and relevance. The final version demonstrated good reliability across constructs, with Cronbach's alpha values exceeding 0.7.

Pedagogical Competence (NLSP) was assessed using four items adapted from Rubeba (2025) and Hoang (2024). Also, Professional Competence (NLCM) was measured with five items based on Narmaditya et al. (2024) and Hoang (2024). Technological Competence (NLCN) is grounded in Rubeba (2025). Professional Development Policy (PTCM) was measured through four items adapted from Trung et al. (2021). Human Resource Management Policy (NLL) was assessed using four items from Nguyen (2023). Organizational Culture (VHTC) was measured using five items from Hiswara et al. (2023). Facilities and Infrastructure (CSVC) were assessed with four items adapted from Kustra (2014). Finally, Lecturer Quality (CLGV) is the dependent variable based on Trung et al. (2021). Each scale demonstrated conceptual alignment with the AUN-QA quality framework, enabling robust analysis of the factors influencing lecturer quality in Vietnam's higher education context.

In terms of respondent characteristics, as shown in Table 1, the sample included a balanced representation of genders, with 67.7% of the respondents being female and 32.3% male. The lecturers' experience varied significantly: more than half (52.3%) had fewer than five years of teaching experience, while only 3.9% had 15 years or more. Regarding qualifications, the majority of respondents (82.6%) held a master's degree, with a smaller proportion (14.2%) holding a PhD. In terms of academic roles, 89.4% of the participants were lecturers, with a smaller proportion serving in leadership positions such as heads or vice heads of departments or faculties. These characteristics are important as they reflect the diversity of perspectives and experiences among the respondents, which enriches the analysis of how different factors influence lecturer quality.

Data were analyzed using SPSS version 26. Descriptive statistics were used to profile the

sample. Multiple linear regression analysis was employed to test the relationships between the seven independent variables and lecturer quality. Assumptions of linearity, homoscedasticity, multicollinearity, and normality were tested and met. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were all below 10, indicating no multicollinearity issue. The regression model was used to identify the most significant predictors and the proportion of variance explained in lecturer quality.

Participation in the study was voluntary, and respondents were informed of their rights to confidentiality and anonymity. No identifying personal information was collected. The research protocol was approved by the institutional ethics committee of the University of Transport Technology, and all procedures adhered to national and institutional ethical standards.

Table 1. Respondents' demographic profile (N = 310)

Demographics	Groupings	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	100	32.3
	Female	210	67.7
Tenure (years)	Under 5	162	52.3
	5-9	84	27.1
	10-14	52	16.8
	15 and above	12	3.9
Highest qualifications	Master	256	82.6
	PhD	44	14.2
	Other	10	3.2
Positions held	Lecturer	277	89.4
	Head/Vice head of subject	18	5.8
	Head/Vice head of faculty	15	4.8

3. RESULTS

Table 2 summarizes the mean scores, standard deviations, and Cronbach's alpha values for the eight constructs measured in the study. All items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). The results indicate that Pedagogical Competence (M = 4.075) was rated highest among the independent variables, followed by HRM Policy (M = 3.723). The lowest mean score was found for Professional Development Policy (M = 3.471). The dependent variable, Lecturer Quality, had a mean score of

3.590. All constructs demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.737 to 0.890. These descriptive results reflect a generally positive perception among lecturers regarding their own competencies and institutional support, while also highlighting areas for development, particularly in professional development and organizational culture.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics and reliability of constructs

Scales	α	Mean	SD
Pedagogical Competence (NLSP)	0.850	4.075	0.766
Professional Competence (NLCM)	0.870	3.565	0.827
Technological Competence (NLCN)	0.737	3.535	0.577
Professional Development Policy (PTCM)	0.880	3.471	0.798
HRM Policy (NLL)	0.804	3.723	0.535
Organizational Culture (VHTC)	0.890	3.375	0.640
Facilities and Infrastructure (CSVC)	0.889	3.709	0.707
Lecturer Quality (CLGV)	0.881	3.590	0.570

To assess the reliability of the measurement scales used in this study, Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each of the eight constructs. The results indicated that all scales demonstrated acceptable to excellent internal consistency, with alpha coefficients ranging from 0.737 to 0.890. According to Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), a value of 0.70 or higher is generally considered acceptable for social science research. The constructs with the highest reliability were Organizational Culture ($\alpha = 0.890$) and Facilities and Infrastructure ($\alpha = 0.889$), reflecting strong consistency in participants' responses concerning institutional environmental factors. Although Technological Competence had the lowest alpha value ($\alpha = 0.737$), it still met the minimum threshold for internal reliability, indicating stable measurement across its items.

Construct validity was examined through exploratory factor analysis (EFA), using principal component extraction with Varimax rotation. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was above 0.80, and Bartlett's test of sphericity yielded a significant result ($p < 0.001$), confirming the suitability of the data for factor analysis. All item loadings exceeded the recommended value of 0.60, and no substantial cross-loadings were observed. This factor structure was consistent with the theoretical constructs proposed in the research model, thus supporting both convergent and discriminant valid-

ity. The EFA results demonstrate that the measurement items adequately captured the intended latent variables, providing a sound foundation for subsequent hypothesis testing and structural analysis.

To explore the relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable, a Pearson correlation analysis was conducted. This preliminary analysis provided insights into the strength and direction of the linear associations among the study constructs.

The results indicated that all independent variables were positively and significantly correlated with Lecturer Quality at the 0.01 significance level, suggesting that increases in each factor are generally associated with higher levels of perceived lecturer quality. Among them, Pedagogical Competence exhibited the strongest correlation with Lecturer Quality ($r = 0.594$), underscoring the essential role of instructional ability in shaping perceived teaching effectiveness. This was followed by HRM Policy ($r = 0.466$), Technological Competence ($r = 0.415$), and Professional Development Policy ($r = 0.415$), suggesting that institutional support mechanisms and digital proficiency are also influential. Meanwhile, Professional Competence ($r = 0.366$), Organizational Culture ($r = 0.381$), and Facilities and Infrastructure ($r = 0.284$) showed moderate yet statistically significant relationships with Lecturer Quality.

The correlation matrix also revealed that multicollinearity was not a concern in the dataset, as none of the correlations among independent variables exceeded the threshold of 0.80 (Gujarati & Porter, 2009). This finding supports the suitability of the data for subsequent multiple regression analysis.

Overall, the results provide preliminary support for the hypothesized model, in which each of the seven independent variables contributes positively to explaining variation in lecturer quality. A detailed examination of these effects through regression analysis is presented in the following section.

To test the proposed hypotheses ($H1-H7$) and determine the extent to which each independent variable influences Lecturer Quality

(CLGV), a multiple linear regression analysis was conducted. The regression model included all seven predictors: Pedagogical Competence (NLSP), Professional Competence (NLCM), Technological Competence (NLCN), Professional Development Policy (PTCM), HRM Policy (NLL), Organizational Culture (VHTC), and Facilities and Infrastructure (CSVC).

The overall model was statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), indicating a good fit to the data. The model's explanatory power was substantial, with an R^2 of 0.609, meaning that 60.9% of the variance in Lecturer Quality could be explained by the combined effects of the seven independent variables.

All predictors were found to be statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), thereby supporting all seven hypotheses. Among them, Pedagogical Competence ($\beta = 0.358$, $p < 0.001$) showed the strongest influence on Lecturer Quality, followed by HRM Policy ($\beta = 0.229$, $p < 0.001$) and Professional Competence ($\beta = 0.196$, $p < 0.001$). These results underscore the importance of both individual lecturer capacity and institutional support mechanisms in determining lecturer effectiveness. Other variables also contributed meaningfully to the model: Technological Competence ($\beta = 0.178$, $p < 0.001$), Professional Development Policy ($\beta = 0.176$, $p < 0.001$), Organizational Culture ($\beta = 0.140$, $p < 0.001$), and Facilities and Infrastructure ($\beta = 0.093$, $p = 0.014$). Although the standardized effect sizes of the latter were lower, their significance affirms their relevance within a comprehensive quality assurance strategy.

Furthermore, multicollinearity diagnostics confirmed the absence of collinearity problems. All tolerance values were above 0.80, and variance inflation factor (VIF) values ranged from 1.099 to 1.221, well below the common threshold of 10 (Hair et al., 2010).

These findings affirm that the proposed conceptual model is both statistically robust and theoretically grounded. A summary of the regression results is provided below.

Table 3. Summary of multiple regression results

Variable	Standardized Beta (β)	p-value	Hypothesis
Pedagogical Competence (NLSP)	0.358	< 0.001	Supported (H1)
Professional Competence (NLCM)	0.196	< 0.001	Supported (H2)
Technological Competence (NLCN)	0.178	< 0.001	Supported (H3)
Professional Development Policy (PTCM)	0.176	< 0.001	Supported (H4)
HRM Policy (NLL)	0.229	< 0.001	Supported (H5)
Organizational Culture (VHTC)	0.14	< 0.001	Supported (H6)
Facilities and Infrastructure (CSVC)	0.093	0.014	Supported (H7)
Model R ²	0.609	–	

4. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide empirical evidence that both individual competencies and institutional mechanisms significantly influence lecturer quality in the context of Vietnamese higher education, particularly as universities pursue regional accreditation under AUN-QA. Among the seven factors examined, pedagogical competence emerged as the strongest predictor of lecturer quality, underscoring the central role of teaching ability in shaping academic performance. This result aligns with prior research suggesting that effective pedagogy, including appropriate methods and learner-centered approaches, directly enhances student engagement and learning outcomes (Moriera et al., 2022; Hung, 2023).

Human resource management (HRM) policies were also found to have a substantial effect. This suggests that transparent recruitment practices, performance-based evaluation systems, and structured career development plans contribute meaningfully to academic staff performance. This finding supports earlier work by Budi et al. (2024) and Srinadi et al. (2024), who emphasized the role of HRM alignment in institutional quality culture.

Professional development policy was another significant driver, reinforcing the argument that universities must provide ongoing learning opportunities for faculty to remain effective and adaptive. This includes not only training workshops and academic conferences but also incentives for research participation and international collaboration. These findings resonate with Nurdin et al. (2024), who noted that professional development correlates strongly with teaching innovation and academic productivity.

Interestingly, while technological competence had a positive and significant effect on lecturer quality, its influence was moderate compared to the more traditional competencies. This may reflect differing levels of digital readiness across institutions or challenges in integrating technology beyond basic use. Still, the result highlights the growing importance of digital tools in higher education and supports calls for broader digital transformation strategies (Zhang & Wu, 2025; Dang et al., 2024).

Professional competence and organizational culture also demonstrated significant but smaller effects. The moderate impact of professional competence may be attributed to its indirect role—supporting research and knowledge depth more than direct teaching performance. The relatively weaker effect of organizational culture could suggest that while institutional values matter, their influence may be more nuanced and long-term.

Contrary to expectations, facilities and infrastructure did not have a statistically significant effect on lecturer quality in the regression model, despite showing positive correlations. This result may indicate that lecturers can maintain performance even under limited resource conditions or that infrastructure alone does not directly translate into quality teaching without being coupled with training and policy support.

Collectively, these findings confirm that enhancing lecturer quality requires a balanced approach—addressing both individual skillsets and systemic enablers. While teaching competence remains paramount, universities must also invest in institutional policies that create supportive environments for faculty growth. In the context of AUN-QA, where lecturer quality is assessed through multifaceted indicators, such an integrated strategy is particularly crucial.

CONCLUSION

This study sought to explore how both institutional conditions and individual lecturer competencies influence academic quality in Vietnamese public universities. Grounded in the AUN-QA framework, the research provided a multi-dimensional view of lecturer quality, beyond traditional measures such as qualifications or seniority.

The findings reveal that pedagogical competence remains the most influential factor, followed by HRM policies and professional development support. These results highlight the importance of not only equipping lecturers with the necessary teaching skills but also embedding them in supportive institutional environments. While other factors, such as technological competence and organizational culture, also contribute, their impact appears more context-dependent and may vary across institutions.

From a policy perspective, the study reinforces the need for universities pursuing accreditation to prioritize both faculty development and structural enablers. Academic quality cannot be achieved through individual effort alone; it must be cultivated through comprehensive systems that recognize, support, and sustain lecturer performance.

Future studies could expand on these findings by employing longitudinal methods or comparative analysis across countries within the ASEAN region. In addition, further research could explore how student learning outcomes mediate the relationship between lecturer quality and institutional effectiveness under quality assurance frameworks like AUN-QA.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

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