



Assessment of Higher Education: A Brief Study on the Assessment Process in Engineering Colleges

¹Aruna Kumari Kanuri, ²Mounika Arimilli, ³William Kery Kokkirigadda

¹Assistant Professor of English, Vishnu Institute of Technology, Bhimavaram, AP.

²Assistant Professor of English, Vishnu Institute of Technology, Bhimavaram, AP.

³English Teacher, Kripa Kamal School, Saripalli, AP.

Abstract:

Education plays a crucial role in all civilizations, as its products are directly linked to the development of the society. The unique characteristic of higher education is its ability to establish strong bond between the universities and society. The higher education system faces a raft of challenges, among which the issue of access and quality rank at the top. In the countries like India, where the environment is very dynamic after globalization and privatization, which throws challenge to the universities to rejuvenate themselves accordingly to impart the quality education. With the advent of enormous number of private institutions along with the government institutions, the maintenance of quality standards has been decreased which calls the need for assessment and accreditation of the institutions. Reform plans for the assessment of institutions are aimed at lessening the intense focus and cramming that currently occurs at the end of each academic year. In this paper, we take a look at the need for assessment and accreditation of higher education, the present process of assessment and the changes to be made in its process so as to make assessment more effective which has its direct effect on the nation.

Key words: Assessment process, higher education, engineering colleges, changes

Importance of Higher Education:

Education plays a crucial role in all civilizations, as its products are directly linked to the development of the society. As India is moving to the knowledge society where the congruence of the various processes form the basis for the development, for which higher education acts as a base. This will give the country a special competitive advantage of global competitiveness over other countries by developing human resource.

Need For Assessment:

For India, today, quality of the higher education is the key priority. The assurance of quality in education necessitates the assessment of

institutions imparting it. For that assessment, understanding or defining the term quality in the context of higher education is very important. Quality refers to the ability of the features of the product to satisfy the implied or expected needs i.e., the fitness for the purpose at the minimum cost to the society. The question of debate in many countries is that whether their education system provides proper training to the students, that caters to the needs of the society or not. The same is the case with India where we find the increase in the number of institutions in the post globalised society. The quality maintenance has become a major issue now.



NAAC:

Owing to the degradation of quality in higher education, the government of India brought forth the concept of assessment and accreditation of institutions through its national policy on education in 1986. In response to it, the university grants commission (UGC) established an organization, NAAC (national assessment and accreditation council) to assess and accredit the higher education institutions in India. It has excellence, credibility, relevance as its motive.

Key Areas :

The key areas that NAAC considers for its assessment, particularly in engineering colleges are

1. Academic aspects
2. Process of imparting education
3. Research consultancy and extension
4. Infrastructure and learning resources
5. Student support and progression
6. Governance and leadership
7. Innovative practice

1. Academic aspects:

NAAC identifies whether the mission statement of a particular college is communicated and imbibed at various levels in the organization and how the curriculum design is linked to it. The flexibility of the curriculum to the changes in the environment is also considered.

2. Process of imparting education:

This criterion examines the aspects such as, the actual process of admission into the college, the steps to be taken to cater to the needs of students who are from

different back grounds, approach of the faculty, use of various techniques like seminars, paper presentations, focused group discussions (student centric), Process of evaluation of the students as well as the faculty.

3. Research consultancy and extension:

NAAC concentrates on the organizational sustainability and viable practices to motivate its faculty and its students towards research, publications (in various international journals), so as to come up with the innovative ideas or inventions that help the society.

4. Infrastructure and learning resources:

Learning resources refer to the Infrastructure. NAAC observes whether the organization has adequate physical facilities for the teaching and learning process to be carried on effectively. It includes ICT (digital library), availability of books & journals in the library, laboratories, Audio-Visual aids, workshops, and proper use of them by students and faculty. The organizational strategies for continuous extension of infrastructure and its optimal use also play a crucial role in this aspect.

5. Student support and progression:

NAAC examines the organizational policies for student academic progression or employability, student helping approach like providing grievance redressing cell, placement cell, cultural club etc. which results in the overall development of the student's personality.

6. Strategic governance and Leadership:

The organizations capability to anticipate changes and capacity to incorporate important changes in its strategic plan, transparency in the procedures, the



institution's policies for human resource management (planning for requirement, recruitment, employee turn over), financial management etc. were considered by the NAAC as they determine governance and leadership that prevail in that particular engineering college.

7. Innovations:

Innovative procedures that are followed in the Engineering colleges make the teaching as well as learning, interesting and beneficial not only to the students but also to the society. This helps in developing responsible citizens.

Suggestions:

- Assessment and accreditation by NAAC should be made compulsory for every organisation.
- A holistic approach which links all the key areas should be developed for assessment.
- Maintenance of quality assurance cell should be made compulsory in every organisation to provide more qualitative products as well as to facilitate the assessment procedure.
- Methods for assessing the strategies taken by the institutions for overall personality development of the students should also be considered. As education refers to the overall development.

Conclusion:

Higher education is more than an aid for lucrative career. It makes students deal with the real life situations effectively. It is all about developing a student into a better individual. As education is the movement from darkness to light, imparting it qualitatively is more important which can only be achieved

and maintained through proper and effective assessment and accreditation procedures.

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