



ROLE OF NAAC IN GOVERNING HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

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Abstract: Higher education plays vital role for creating knowledge and information based society. The mission and vision of higher education is to educate, train, and undertake research activities and service to the community. In such condition, it is necessary to have an effective and efficient quality assurance mechanism in our country. NAAC is a body established by the University Grants Commission of India to assess and accredit institutions of higher education in the country. The role of NAAC in ensuring the quality in defining the element of Higher Education in India through a combination of self and external quality evaluation, promotion and sustenance initiatives. In this context we have focused on how NAAC insists for role NAAC in governing higher education in India and its vision of every higher education institution and advocates the best practices, benchmarking approach for quality enhancement in Higher Education.

Keywords: NAAC, Higher Education, Governing Higher Education in India, IQAC etc.

INTRODUCTION:

The Indian higher education system is one of the largest such systems in the World. It is estimated that during the XIth Five Year Plan period, there will be a tremendous pressure of numbers on this system and a large number of additional students will be knocking at the doors of higher education institutions in the country. There are also new challenges of management and regulation being faced by these institutions, which require serious attention, both at the institutions in the public sector and also those in the private sector now growing at a fast pace. Besides, the demands of the society for equity and accommodation cannot be neglected any more. The new regime under WTO where competence is the cardinal principle of success in international operations has made it

abundantly clear that the country should exploit its excellent potential in higher education and training facilities and prepare itself to export the Indian brand of education to foreign countries. Policy planning and evolving strategies for this task are somewhat new for the country. In this context, an attempt is made in this paper to throw light on the role of National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) which is playing the crucial role in governing higher education in India.

HIGHER EDUCATION GOVERNANCE:

In a society full of diversity, ideologies and opinions, higher education means different things to different people. According to Ronald Barnett there are four predominant concepts of higher education:



- i) Higher education as the production of qualified human resources.
- ii) Higher education as training for a research career.
- iii) Higher education as the efficient management of teaching provision.
- iv) Higher education as a matter of extending life chances.

It has been observed that policy framework is carefully planned at the level of the Planning Commission, Ministry of Human Resource Development and University Grants Commission. However, the policies are not fully implemented mostly because of faulty management of the institutions of higher education. The administrative structure of the Universities, which was devised in the pre-independence period seems to be still continuing. The new challenges facing the system of higher education in the country cannot be met without a total overhaul of the structure of management of higher education institutions. This has become all the more necessary because of globalization, which requires talent, competence, drive, initiative and innovation at several levels. This cannot be achieved without overhauling the administrative set up of Universities/Institutions.

NAAC AND HIGHER EDUCATION

The performance of the colleges affiliated with universities, autonomous colleges and universities is assessed after every five years. The programme of assessing an institution is based on international practices and experiences which the academicians, intellectuals and officials connected with the NAAC receive. It inspects the infrastructure, facilities and also assesses the performance and academic excellence of the teachers of an institution. It gives

grades on the basis of performance and prospects of an institution.

HISTORY of NAAC:

The NATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND ACCREDITATION COUNCIL (NAAC) conducts assessment and accreditation of Higher Educational Institutions (HEI) such as colleges, universities or other recognised institutions to derive an understanding of the 'Quality Status' of the institution. NAAC evaluates the institutions for its conformance to the standards of quality in terms of its performance related to the educational processes and outcomes, curriculum coverage, teaching-learning processes, faculty, research, infrastructure, learning resources, organisation, governance, financial well being and student services. The milestones in the emergence of NAAC can be identified as follows:

- 1986: UGC constituted a 15-member committee on Accreditation and Assessment Council under the chairmanship of Dr. Vasant Gowarikar.
- 1987-1990: Nine regional seminars and a national seminar organized to debate Gowarikar Committee report.
- 1990: Dr Sukumaran Nair"s project report submitted to UGC that reflected a consensus to have an accreditation agency accountable to UGC.
- 1992: The revised New Education Policy reiterated all round improvement of educational institutions.
- 1994: Prof. G. Ram Reddy committee appointed to finalize the memorandum of association and rules and regulation of the accreditation board (July 1994).



- 1994: National Assessment and Accreditation Council established at Bangalore (September 1994).

VISION AND MISSION

Vision:- To make quality the quality defining element of higher education in India through a combination of self and external quality evaluation, promotion and sustenance initiatives.

Mission:-

- i) To arrange for periodic assessment and accreditation of institutions of higher education or units thereof, or specific academic programmes or projects;
- ii) To stimulate the academic environment for promotion of quality of teaching-learning and research in higher education institutions;
- iii) To encourage self-evaluation, accountability, autonomy and innovations in higher education;
- iv) To undertake quality-related research studies, consultancy and training programmes, and
- v) To collaborate with other stakeholders of higher education for quality evaluation, promotion and sustenance.

Guided by its vision and striving to achieve its mission, the NAAC primarily assesses the quality of institutions of higher education that volunteer for the process, through an internationally accepted methodology.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE OF NAAC:

NAAC's working is governed by the General Council (GC) and the Executive Committee (EC) on which University Grants Commission (UGC), All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Association of Indian Universities (AIU), Universities, Colleges and other professional

institutions are represented. Senior academics and educational administrators are nominated as members on these two bodies.

President- General Council: - Prof. Ved Prakash has held eminent positions in a number of premier organizations dealing with Higher education, School education, and Personnel selection. Chairman- Executive Committee: - Clause 19(b) of the Rules of NAAC- Every meeting of the executive committee shall be presided over by the Chairperson of the executive committee and in his/her absence by the Vice Chairman of UGC, and in the absence of both the senior most member of the Executive Committee.

NAAC functions through its General Council (GC) and Executive Committee (EC) and other academic, advisory and administrative sub committees. NAAC draws its expertise from senior academics of undoubted integrity from all over India. Important committees under NAAC are as follows:

1. General Council
2. Executive Committee
3. Finance Committee
4. Building Committee
5. Appeals Committee
6. Purchase Committee
7. CRIEQA Committee

FUNCTIONS OF NAAC:

NAAC has been entrusted with the following functions, which are expected to reflect the above mentioned vision, mandate and core value framework.

Primary Functions:- To assess and accredit higher education institutions which include the following: 1. Assessing and Accrediting Institutions/ Departments/ Programmes, 2. Evolving appropriate instruments of accreditation



and fine tuning them whenever necessary. 3. Identifying, enlisting and creating a pool of dependable assessors, 4. Providing appropriate training to assessors, 5. Preparing in-house pre-visit documents for the perusal of assessors and 6. Co-coordinating the 'on-site' visit to its effective completion.

Complementary Functions:- To organize promotional activities related to quality in higher education, and Assessment & Accreditation, which include the following: 1. Develop pre- and post-accreditation strategies, 2. Disseminate the NAAC processes and quality enhancement mechanisms through relevant publications, 3. Organize Seminars/Workshops/Conferences to share and discuss education quality-related issues, 4. Provide guidance to institutions for preparing their Self-study Reports (SSRs), 5. Partner with stakeholders for promoting A/A, 6. Promote the establishment of Quality Assurance units, 7. Internal Quality Assurance Cells (IQAC), 8. State level Quality Assurance Co-ordination Committee (SLQACC), 9. State Quality Assurance Cell (SQAC) and 10. Establish collaborations with other National and International professional Agencies of A/A.

CORE VALUES OF NAAC:

Throughout the world, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) function in a dynamic environment. The need to expand the system of higher education, the impact of technology on the educational delivery, the increasing private participation in higher education and the impact of globalization (including liberal cross-border and trans-national educational imperatives), have necessitated marked changes in the Indian higher education system. These changes and the

consequent shift in values have been taken into cognizance by NAAC while formulating the core values. Accordingly, in order to ensure external and internal validity and credibility, the QA process of NAAC is grounded within a value framework which is suitable and appropriate to the National context. The accreditation framework of NAAC is thus based on five core values detailed below.

(i) Contributing to National Development:- Most of the HEIs have a remarkable capacity to adapt to changes and at the same time, pursue the goals and objectives that they have set forth for themselves. Contributing to national development has always been an implicit goal of Indian HEIs. The role of HEIs is significant in human resource development and capacity building of individuals, to cater to the needs of the economy, society and the country as a whole, thereby, contributing to the development of the Nation. Serving the cause of social justice, ensuring equity and increasing access to higher education are a few ways by which HEIs can contribute to the national development. It is therefore appropriate that the assessment and Accreditation (A&A) process of NAAC looks into the ways HEIs have been responding to and contributing towards national development.

(ii) Fostering Global Competencies among Students:- The spiraling developments at the global level also warrant that the NAAC includes in its scope of assessment skill development of students, on par with their counterparts elsewhere in the world. With liberalization and globalization of economic activities, the need to develop skilled human resources of a high caliber is imperative. Consequently, the demand for internationally acceptable standards



in higher education is evident. Therefore, the accreditation process of NAAC needs to examine the role of HEIs in preparing the students to achieve core competencies, to face the global challenges successfully. This requires that the HEIs be innovative, creative and entrepreneurial in their approach. Towards achieving this, HEIs may establish collaborations with industries, network with the neighborhood agencies/bodies and foster a closer relationship between the “world of competent-learning” and the “world of skilled work”.

(iii) Inculcating a Value System among Students:- Although skill development is crucial to the success of students in the job market, skills are of less value in the absence of appropriate value systems. The HEIs have to shoulder the responsibility of inculcating desirable value systems among students. In a country like India, with cultural pluralities and diversities, it is essential that students imbibe the appropriate values commensurate with social, cultural, economic and environmental realities, at the local, national Manual for Universities NAAC for Quality and Excellence in Higher Education and universal levels. Whatever be the pluralities and diversities that exist in the country, there is a persisting concern for inculcating the core universal values like truth and righteousness apart from other values emphasized in the various policy documents of the country. The seeds of values such as cooperation and mutual understanding during the early stages of education have to be reiterated and re-emphasized at the higher education also through appropriate learning experiences and opportunities. The NAAC assessment therefore examines how these essential and

desirable values are being inculcated in the students, by the HEIs.

(iv) Promoting the Use of Technology:- Most of the significant developments that one can observe today can be attributed to the impact of Science and Technology. While the advantages of using modern tools and technological innovations in the day-to-day-life are well recognized, the corresponding changes in the use of new technologies, for teaching learning and governance of HEIs, leaves much to be desired. Technological advancement and innovations in educational transactions have to be undertaken by all HEIs, to make a visible impact on academic development as well as administration. At a time when our educational institutions are expected to perform as good as their global partners, significant technological innovations have to be adopted. Traditional methods of delivering higher education have become less motivating to a large number of students. To keep pace with the developments in other spheres of human endeavor, HEIs have to enrich the learning experiences of their students by providing them with state-of-the-art educational technologies. The campus community must be adequately prepared to make use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) optimally. Conscious effort is also needed to invest in hardware and to orient the faculty suitably.

In addition to using technology as a learning resource, managing the activities of the institution in a technology-enabled way will ensure effective institutional functioning. For example, documentation and data management in the HEIs are areas where the process of assessment by NAAC has made a



significant impact. Moving towards electronic data management and having institutional website to provide ready and relevant information to stakeholders are desirable steps in this direction. In other words, effective use of ICT in HEIs will be able to provide ICT literacy to the campus community, using ICT for resource sharing and networking, as well as adopting ICT-enabled administrative processes. Therefore, NAAC accreditation would look at how the HEIs have put in place their electronic data management systems and electronic resources and their access to internal and external stakeholders particularly the student community.

(v) Quest for Excellence:- Contributing to nation-building and skills development of students, HEIs should demonstrate a drive to develop themselves into centres of excellence. Excellence in all that they will contribute to the overall development of the system of higher education of the country as a whole. This 'Quest for Excellence' could start with the assessment or even earlier, by the establishment of the Steering Committee for the reparation of the Self - Study Report (SSR) of Manual for Universities an institution. Another step in this direction could be the identification of the strengths and weaknesses in the teaching and learning processes as carried out by the institution. The five core values as outlined above form the foundation for assessment of institutions that volunteer for accreditation by NAAC. The HEIs may also add their own core values to these in conformity with the goals and mission.

CHANGING SCENARIO:

Role of NAAC in the changing scenario of higher education needs to be redefined with respect to recognition cum accreditation, programme accreditation, national level ranking of universities, preparation of national benchmarks, national and international database, research and development centre, developing reports and policy papers to Government of India (GOI), accreditation of multiple accreditation agencies, recognition of regional/state level accreditation bodies etc. Assessment and Accreditation by NAAC may be made mandatory for all higher education institutions of the country. NAAC may start programme accreditation Ranking of institutions may not be very much relevant when compared to grading All accreditation agencies including NAAC are to be accredited once in three years. While NAAC could be accredited by recognized international accreditation bodies, NAAC could perform this function for all the multiple accreditation agencies getting recognized by Government of India (GOI). NAAC grading and duration of accreditation may be linked and longer period of accreditation may be considered for the third cycle of institutional accreditation. NAAC needs to continue to be an Apex Assessment and Accreditation body for higher education institution, in the country providing vision and leadership.

IMPACT OF NAAC ON HIGHER EDUCATION:

IQAC funds from UGC: Quality is primarily the responsibility of higher education itself. Each institution should develop an efficient Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) to ensure a quality culture at the institutional level. Annual Quality Assurance Report



(AQAR) is to be submitted annually to NAAC. UGC is funding the College for establishment of IQAC with rupees three (3.00) lakhs and Universities with rupees five (5.00) lakhs. Quest for excellence is a continuous process of enhancing the competencies and potentiality of the Institutions to the highest level of standards. For applying for the UGC schemes like the “Universities with Potential for Excellence” (UPE) Universities of Excellence (UoE) Status, applying institutions should have Accreditation by NAAC with Grade “A”. Further Colleges with Potential for Excellence” (CPE) will also be decided by the UGC with respect to the NAAC Accreditation status either “B’ or “A”. Only such of the colleges which are accredited with ‘A’ grade with more than 3.5 CGPA will be eligible for consideration as College of Excellence (CE) under the Scheme.

Many policy decisions such as UGC Autonomous College Status, continuation of Autonomy by UGC (NAAC/NBA certificate, Whether college has been accredited by NAAC/NBA, mention the rating). One of the major consideration for applying for Deemed to be University Status or Deemed University to open new campus is depends on NAAC Accreditation. Mandatory Assessment and Accreditation of Higher Educational Institutions Regulations (2012): All Institution of Higher Learning will have to compulsorily undergo the accreditation from an accrediting agency. Many Institutions are applying to NAAC for the purpose of Accreditation. More than 5000 accredited Institutions have established Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC): Quality enhancement need to be encouraged and Quality must be embedded in the institutional culture.

The Academic Audit, need to be periodic process in the HEIs. IQAC has to operate as an internal mechanism of an institution which would work 365 days for qualitative improvement in all activities of the institution. More than 26 states have established State Level Quality Assurance Cells (SLQAC), in turn those states have conducted more than 400 workshops in their jurisdiction.

Facilitated more than 2500 seminars/conferences across the country on quality related issues like use of Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC), Use of ICT for Quality Enhancement, Best practices in Higher Education, Students Participation for Quality Enhancement, Teaching, Learning and Evaluation, Academic and Administration Audit, Curriculum Design and Development. Accreditation has become a powerful weapon in the battle for job placement, Advertising for the Colleges and Universities, draw good staff, attracting good students, management taking interest to improve the Infrastructure, support service, wi-fi campus, library automation, disabled friendly campus, motivating staff and students, Alumni hunt, meet, support, and resource mobilization, etc., are happening on the verge of Accreditation. Rising significance of the Accreditation is reflected in competition among HEIs and student enrolment in the campuses. The societal recognition, competitive market forces on employability and its acceptability has risen in the recent years.

Many Universities are taking the cognizance of the NAAC accreditation status for granting permanent affiliation etc. and to apply for UGC Act 1956, 12B status. The Department of Science and Technology under its scheme Faculty



improvement in Science and Technology (FIST) utilizes the NAAC accreditation.

The Department of Biotechnology (DBT) identifies colleges with potential for excellence and provides academic and physical infrastructure for achieving excellence in teaching and unique exposure of students to experimental sciences. Most of the colleges which are the acumen towards research in biotechnology have applied to the DBT availed the grants. Most of the North Eastern States have applied for Star College scheme and got the funding states like Assam, Meghalaya & Aizawl. Consideration for expansion in terms of courses and student in-take in teacher education institutions by NCTE, have been decided based on the NAAC grading.

Accreditation motivates faculty to participate actively in academic and related Institutional / departmental activities. The CAS, API schemes has been implemented by the Colleges and Universities facilitates the Improvements at the Individual level initially and further it enhances the involvement of the faculty for institutional growth. Accreditation opens up a sound and challenging academic environment in the Institutions, and adds value to the overall performance of the institution and contributes to social and economic development of the country by producing high quality technical manpower. Accreditation promotes intra-institutional and inter institutional initiatives. Communication Channels has been established for bottom up approach in many institutions. Relationships and papers written by faculty have been increased in the recent years. Inter institutional collaborations, research work, faculty exchange, students exchange has been invented for mutual benefits.

Many publications has been brought out within NAAC and in collaboration with UNESCO, APQN, COL Training Programmes for Teacher Educators etc., More details can be obtained from the NAAC website. Many parents, students, employers, Government Agencies, funding agencies, Foreign Universities, Collaborating agencies, are looking the NAAC website for information about status of the Institutions. Many of the foreign Universities are looking for the NAAC accreditation before admitting the students for respective courses. A few Universities have given the fee waive, accommodation, scholarships to the students who are from India and from the accredited Institutions.

SUGGESTIONS

AND

RECOMMENDATIONS:

For Higher Education Institution:-

The following are the few important suggestions and recommendations for the overall enhancement of Higher Education Institution in India in the near future:

1. The Governmental control in the Universities must be reduced, so that the University autonomy and accountability are strengthened and academic decisions are taken on merit.
2. New methods and procedures of financial regulations should be devised and direct interference of the finance department in the financial management of Universities, which is counterproductive, should be stopped.
3. As the Colleges are the feeding sources of the Universities, a better coordination in their working and activities is very much required. The participation of the teaching faculty in through a democratic process should be ensured.



4. Complete transparency should be maintained in the working of Executive/ Academic Bodies and other Governing Councils of the Universities. There is an urgency to review the University Acts in different States and revise the same in the light of the new requirements and the challenges being faced by the Universities. New technologies of information and communication should be utilized for obtaining administrative efficiency.
 5. Higher Education should be developed as an infrastructure for social and economic growth of the Country.
 6. Student's involvement in the area of University/College governance should be encouraged.
 7. Political interference in the appointment of University teachers and administrators should be totally stopped.
 8. To initiate UGC scale salary to all the NAAC accredited colleges and universities in India.
 9. Encouraged NAAC accreditation to all the colleges and universities of India.
 10. To initiate awareness programme to all parents or guardian of the students.
 11. Regular supportive supervision to NAAC accredited colleges and universities by a NAAC nominated team etc.
- For NAAC:-** NAAC suggestions for overall development of the higher educational institutions, given below;
- 1) Since the state Govt. is deputing a large number of teachers for undergoing B. Ed programme, this is making the classes a bit crowded.
 - 2) Further, the Govt. colleges in the state are under the dual control of the University on one side and the Govt. on the other. Would it be possible for the Govt. & the University to make these colleges as constituent colleges of the University, thus paving the way for their better growth & development?
 - 3) In view of the increased number of seats & diversification of courses, the college needs to have more number of teachers, especially in languages.
 - 4) Laboratory facility needs to be enriched and expanded.
 - 5) College should have a well equipped language lab, especially in view of the fact that every B.Ed Trainee opts for one language.
 - 6) The college caters to the academic needs of the students who came from far off areas like Kargil and Ladakh; it needs to have hostels for boys and girls students.
 - 7) As internship & practice of teaching are separately shown in the syllabus, internship needs to be streamlined & broad based.
 - 8) Provision of some merit cum means scholarships need to be made for students from weaker section of society in view of the trend of increase in fee structure every year.
 - 9) The suggestions put forth by the faculty to the University that the Project work should not be group work, needs immediate attention to avoid discrimination.
 - 10) The Computer lab should be expanded, have more qualified Teachers; Faculty improvement programme should be strengthened.

CONCLUSION:

NAAC accreditation is playing a major role in ensuring quality in higher



educational institutions and colleges with NAAC accreditation should not aim at just getting higher grades, but should aim at quality education in real sense. If our higher education institutions and regulatory bodies failed to maintain quality aspects in delivering the quality education service; those Institutions definitely will disappear from the education map of India. Sustaining quality is possible only through continuous monitoring with the support of Internal Quality Assurance Cell of every Higher Education institution, Therefore, NAAC acts as a stimulator for the institutions planning to acquire International Accreditation

Accreditation plays a critical role in the institutional overall improvement, enhancing its societal image and status. It helps the institution to know its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, challenges and identifies internal areas of planning and resource allocation. It also enhances interpersonal relationships and collegiality on the campus. Many Institutions have updated the curriculum and initiated innovative and modern methods of pedagogy for the benefit of students. Accreditation gives the institution a new sense of direction and identity with greater sense of accountability and enhanced credibility. The impact study on NAAC assessment was not taken up in a systematic manner. The methodology should be robust to elicit the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the process. Good evaluation requires that evaluation efforts themselves be evaluated. Many things can and often do go wrong in evaluation work. Accordingly, it is necessary to check evaluations for problems such as bias, technical error, administrative difficulties, and misuse. Such checks are needed both to improve ongoing

evaluation activities and to assess the merits of completed evaluation efforts. A meta-evaluation needs to be undertaken by NAAC at the earliest.

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