



QUALITY ISSUES OF HIGHER EDUCATION USING NAAC DATA

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Abstract

Higher education in India has observed a remarkable growth since independence. However, quality issues are major issues in higher education now-a days. If quality in higher education is focused than Indian youths can become the main manpower in the development of economic growth globally. India stands third rank in the world, in higher education. Various bodies are established by Union Grant Commission for the accreditation of higher education and National Assessment and Accreditation Council is one of them which focuses on quality as a yardstick. There are 759 universities in India which includes Central Universities, Deemed Universities, State Universities, and Private Universities. Gujarat is progressing overall in various areas, especially in education sectors. There was a time when very few colleges of Gujarat were going for accreditation of National Assessment and Accreditation Council.

The paper throws light on National Assessment and Accreditation Council's last ten years data about universities and colleges of Gujarat state which have been accredited by National Assessment and Accreditation Council for the first, second and third cycle. A brief analysis of the National Assessment and Accreditation Council report from 2009 to 2016 universities and colleges of Gujarat is analysed which will help to sustain education as a main pillar for continuous growth and development of social welfare. Based upon this assessment, it focuses on the set of best practices for National Assessment and Accreditation Council's concern for quality as a tool to produce superior results and also highlights to sustain the good practices for maintaining high rating grades in future assessment from National Assessment and Accreditation Council. By attaining quality in education India can be in a privileged position in the monarchy of Higher Education in the entire world, besides enriching the human capital.

Keywords: *Accreditation, Best Practices, Higher Education, India, Universities.*

Introduction

Education is one of the important role in the process of developing growth and better economic condition of any country. With the globalization in the world, there is an urgent need for quality experts and managers in the nation to lead the 21st century with the persistent vision and an abled leadership. These opportunities can be driven by the education that is imparted at the primary school but the significance of the higher education cannot be overlooked. Indian higher education system has seen the increase in the economic growth of India in recent years. In today's era, there are different views, ideologies, and perception about higher education. However, with the increase in number of universities and colleges in India, there is continuous need to check the quality of education provided to the students and also the quality management within the educational institutes to compete and achieve the prominent position. Quality in higher education can be achieved by the effective presence of students, professors, administrators, and the education policy systems. With the no. of students enrolling for studies, different type of courses, change in the structure of the society, and the job profile complexity of quality issues arises in the higher education institutions. Quality in education is influenced by what have learnt, the methodology in which they learn so as to draw the benefit from their education. The journey to safeguard that students to acquire proper skills and values and proper learning outcomes helps them to play a confident role in the world is the main issue of the policy maker of most countries (UNESCO, 1998). Orientation towards the issues of attaining quality in higher education is imparted to the educational policy maker, committee member for planning the education policies, administrators, teachers, professors and other stake holders of the educational system. For accessing and accrediting the educational system and increasing the quality of higher education, National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) is an autonomous body set by government of India in 1994. The paper throws light on NAAC's last ten years data about universities and colleges of Gujarat state which have been accredited by NAAC for the first, second and third cycle.

Quality in Higher Education

Quality initiatives in education sector has established and are fast spreading similar to that of other service industries in India. A tremendous competition is seen among all the educational institution who are under the pressure to attain quality so as to be more responsive to the students need and attain achievement in an upper edge. This demands for the improvement in the teaching activity, transparency in the educational policies, issues related to funds and finance in colleges and universities and an increased focus on effective and efficient management. Transformation in the policies and guidelines of higher education is continuously emphasising on the quality in education (Sahney, Banwet, & Karunes, 2010). The goal behind this



transformation is to face the challenges to prepare graduates for the employers to meet the demand for the medium and small scale industries and also for service sector as in future the quality product and services will be the main aspect.

To move towards the path of excellence in higher education, the education system must mend the quality of services to face the challenges in the competitive market. This calls for the need for a vigorous and careful assessment and analysis of the measurement of quality management in the educational sector against the framework of the unpredictable expectations of the customer, students, and stakeholders along with the issues of problems, conflicts and their limitation. To identify the strategies of specific components for assessing quality, and giving priority to each component for the purpose of modelling the educational system, has thus become crucial (Sahney et al., 2010). An education system is a combination of many subsystems and different processes which includes inputs in the form of the infrastructure of the educational institutes, the team of faculties and the support from the administrative staff and the management; various teaching and learning activity as the processes; and outputs in the form of the students who move of the education system. A blend of these three processes produces better result for the economic growth of the country. Government, which is consider as the highest body is accountable to its persons and society in huge context, is now focused on the issues of quality in higher education for the development of the nation. Thus, special regulatory agencies are established by the government to monitor the standards of education.

NAAC – An overview

To meet the quality aspect of current higher education system to attain international standards and excellence, quality assurance is the tool which is used by the government of India in recent years. The improvement for the run towards quality in all aspect in higher education cannot be achieved without the change in attitude and mind-set of and individual. Total quality management (TQM) which is consider as the ‘Complete Food’ with the synchronization of various tools and techniques, different methods of working in system, obeying the principles and incorporating harmoniously. The roadmap for quality management is control by the specified authority established by the Union Grant Commission (UGC) in the name of National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). NAAC enables the assurance of quality in higher education by involving the all the stake holders from all the colleges in which ever universities they belong in every state of India. (Petare, 2016). The main motto of the NAAC for assessment and accreditation is to bring improvement and development in quality by ways of personal guideline, review by peer team members and self-imposed integrity in all domains of movement (Sahu, Shrivastava, & Shrivastava, 2013). Hence, with the support of NAAC, initiative should be taken for TQM movement in higher education. TQM is a process which is driven by a person and requires change in the person’s attitude. It deals with continuous involvement of the process so as to bring out the best result from the stakeholders and also from the colleges and universities (Zabadi, 2013). The assessment of the universities and colleges for quality is based on the seven quality criteria including 33 Key Aspects in all for giving the accreditation of the college or the universities. Every five years the process of accreditation is assessed after the first cycle of accreditation so as to attain sustainability in quality in higher education. There are 759 universities in India which includes Central Universities, Deemed Universities, State Universities, and Private Universities. Gujarat is progressing overall in various areas, especially in education sectors. There was a time when very few colleges of Gujarat were going for NAAC accreditation. The paper throws light on NAAC’s last ten years data about universities and colleges of Gujarat state which have been accredited by NAAC for the first, second and third cycle. A brief analysis of the NAAC report from 2009 to 2016 universities and colleges of Gujarat is analysed which will help to sustain education as a main pillar for continuous growth and development of social welfare. Based upon this assessment, it focuses on the set of best practices for NAAC’s concern for quality as a tool to produce superior results and also highlights to sustain the good practices for maintaining high rating grades in future assessment from NAAC.

NAAC Criteria and Key Aspects for Accrediting of Institutions

The seven criteria of NAAC, as shown in Figure 1 which are considered as the backbone of the assessment and accreditation focuses on the main functions and activities of an institution which have a direct control on teaching-learning, research, community development and the holistic development of the students. The assessment of the processes and values of the higher education institutes are identified by the key aspects under each of the seven criteria (<http://www.naac.gov.in>). Overall NAAC provides seven main criteria for ranking of institutions covering overall 33 key aspects, namely: i) Curricular Aspect ii) Teaching-Learning and Evaluation iii) Research, Consultancy and Extension; iv) Infrastructure and Learning Resources; v) Student Support and Progression; vi) Organization and Management; and vii) Healthy Practices



Figure 1: NAAC Seven Criteria

Table 1: NAAC Criteria for Assessment and Accreditation

<p align="center"><u>Curricular Aspects</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Curriculum Design and Development (<i>For Universities and Autonomous Colleges</i>) 2. Curriculum Planning and Implementation (<i>For Affiliated/Constituent Colleges</i>) 3. Academic flexibility 4. Curriculum Enrichment 5. Feedback System 	<p align="center"><u>Teaching-Learning and Evaluation</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student Enrolment and Profile 2. Catering to Student Diversity 3. Teaching-Learning Process 4. Teacher Quality 5. Evaluation Process and Reforms 6. Student Performance and Learning Outcomes
<p align="center"><u>Research, Consultancy and Extension</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promotion of Research 2. Resource Mobilization for Research 3. Research Facilities 4. Research Publications and Awards 5. Consultancy 6. Extension Activities and Institutional Social Responsibility 7. Collaborations 	<p align="center"><u>Infrastructure and Learning Resources</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Physical Facilities 2. Library as a Learning Resource 3. IT Infrastructure 4. Maintenance of Campus Facilities
<p align="center"><u>Student Support and Progression</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student Mentoring and Support 2. Student Criterion I Progression 3. Student Participation and Activities 	<p align="center"><u>Governance, Leadership and Management</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Institutional Vision and Leadership 2. Strategy Development and Deployment 3. Faculty Empowerment Strategies 4. Financial Management and Resource Mobilization 5. Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS)
<p align="center"><u>Innovations and Best Practices</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Environment Consciousness 2. Innovations 3. Best Practices 	
<p>Source: 1. www.naac.gov.in/criteria_assessment.asp 2. http://mhrd.gov.in/</p>	

Table 2: Total No. of Universities and colleges in India as on 05.07.2016

Universities	Total No. of Universities	
	In India	In Gujarat
State Universities	350	27
Deemed to be Universities	123	3
Central Universities	47	1

Private Universities	239	24
Total	759	55 (7.3%)
	In India	In Gujarat
No of Colleges	38056	2055 (5.4%)
<i>Source: www.ugc.ac.in</i>		

Few states like Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu are moving towards the road of quality by applying total quality management concept in the field education with the purpose to make world class educational hub. Similarly government of Gujarat is also now focusing on quality in higher education by following the educational model of Kerala and Tamil Nadu (timesofindia.indiatimes.com). For this reason and to decide upon the uniformity in academic and administrative policies for all the universities and colleges of the state, majority of them are applying for the NAAC accreditation. Thus, the main purpose of this research paper is to study last ten years data of universities and colleges of Gujarat state which have been accredited by NAAC for the first, second and third cycle. A brief analysis of the NAAC report from 2005 to 2016 universities and colleges of Gujarat is analysed which will throw light on the quality aspects and help to sustain education as a main pillar for continuous growth and development of social welfare. The major rules and regulations of the educational policies are given by the Universities to their respective groups of colleges to follow the norm of syllabus, examination pattern and other research policies. University acts as a role of the father for developing the insight in attaining and sustaining the quality issues in colleges. Thus, both Universities and colleges record are studied for developing quality in higher educational hub. Based upon this assessment, it focuses on the set of best practices for NAAC's concern for quality as a tool to produce superior results and also highlights to sustain the good practices for maintaining high rating grades in future assessment from NAAC.

Analysis of Colleges

The NAAC annual report and reports from the meeting of the Standing Committee of the NAAC team members from 2005 to 2016 (till September 2016) are used to study the accreditation received by various colleges and Universities of Gujarat States. Few of the colleges and universities have applied for second and third cycle of accreditation.

Table 3: Cycle wise college grade for NAAC result from 2005 to 2016

Accreditation Cycle	Grade given by NAAC to Colleges								Grand Total
	A	B	B+	B++	C	C+	C++	D	
1	21	243	42	23	72	6	11	1	419
2	26	59	2	2	2				91
3	1	1	1						3
Grand Total	48	303	45	25	74	6	11	1	513

It is worth noting that the observation of the grade given by the NAAC peer Team for Gujarat since 2005. The result shows that out of overall 2055 colleges spread over various districts and villages of Gujarat only 419 colleges have applied for the NAAC accreditation process, which is only 20% of the colleges. Further, it is seen from the chart that

1. Only 4.1% of the colleges have received grade A
2. Whereas 60.1% of colleges have got grade B, B+ and B++, which is more than 50 %.
3. Only 17.7% of the colleges have gone through the process of second cycle for the NAAC accreditation.
4. While 1% of them have gone for the third cycle of NAAC grading.
5. This means that only 21 colleges have satisfied all the criteria of teaching pedagogy and the best practise as per the norms of NAAC for achieving excellence in quality in higher education.
6. It is seen that in second cycle 28.5% of the colleges have received grade A, and 64.8% of the colleges have received grade B. This means that more number of colleges have sustained the criteria of NAAC policies and continue to follow their best practices.
7. Further the Figure 2 below it is seen that there is vast decline in the colleges applying for the third cycle of the accreditation.

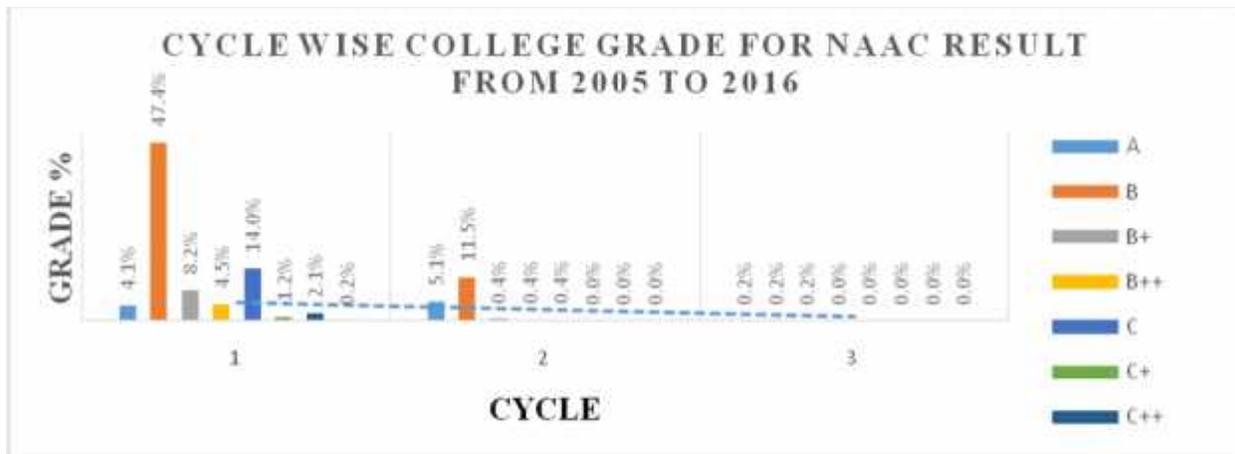


Figure 2: Chart of cycle wise grade of colleges.

It is seen from the **Table 4** that in the 2006-7 106 colleges had applied for the first cycle of accreditation where only 7.5 % of the colleges had received grade A and 19.8 had received grade B. A drastic change in the grade C is seen from the Figure 3 from 2005 to 2016 which means that colleges are now aware of the quality issues and have started focusing for the best.

Table 4: Year wise college grade for NAAC result from 2005 to 2016

Year	Grade given by NAAC to Colleges								Grand Total
	A	B	B+	B++	C	C+	C++	D	
2005-06		2	3	3					8
2006-07	8	21	39	20	1	6	11		106
2007-8		30			6				36
2008-9	4	80			26			1	111
2009-10	2	69			28				99
2010-11		19			8				27
2011-12	10	18			1				29
2013-14	6	11			1				18
2014-15	4	22			2				28
2015-16 (till September 2016)	14	31	3	2	1				51
Grand Total	48	303	45	25	74	6	11	1	513

Figure 3: Year wise college grade for NAAC result from 2005 to 2016

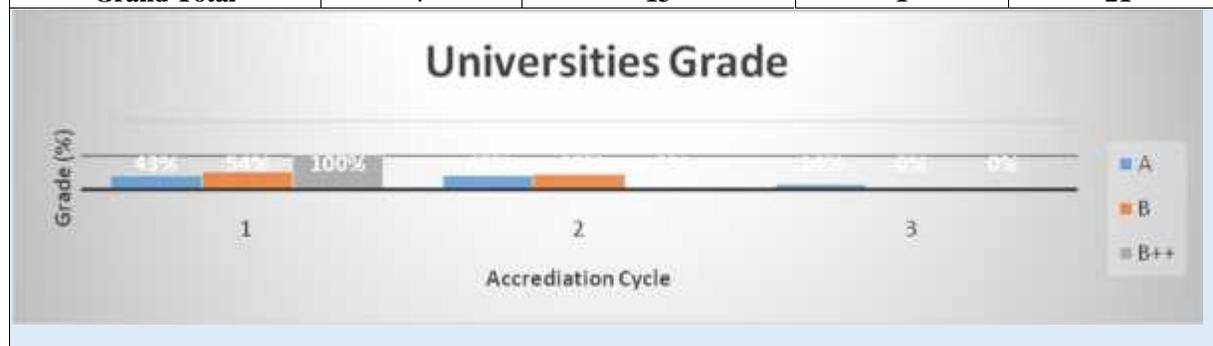
Analysis of Universities

No of total Universities in Gujarat	55
No. of Universities applied for NAAC till September 2016	11 (20%)
No of total Colleges in Gujarat	2055
No. of Colleges applied for NAAC till September 2016	419 (20%)

Another findings from the NAAC report show the accreditation received by the different Universities of Gujarat. From the total of 55 universities in Gujarat only 20% of them have applied for the first cycle for accreditation of grade. And among those 11 universities only 9 universities have applied for the second cycle of grading process. It is seen from the Table 5 that the universities with A grade has not increase. This means that the identified weakness of the B grade accredited universities have not improved to a large extent.

Table 5: Cycle wise Universities grade for NAAC result from 2005 to 2016

Accreditation Cycle	Grade given by NAAC to Universities in Gujarat			Grand Total
	A	B	B++	
1	3	7	1	11
2	3	6		9
3	1			1
Grand Total	7	13	1	21



Thus from the above result, the various best practises from the grade ‘A’ colleges and Universities should be studied and implemented. With proper implementation of the identified Key Aspects under each of the seven criteria quality in higher education is sure to achieve as the assessment is made on this criteria which reflect the processes and values of the higher education institutes and universities on which assessment is made. Thus, for achieving quality in education, proper management concepts have to be implemented before and after the NAAC process for accreditation. This cannot be achieved without proper planning, team work, transparency in the institution, coordination, proper direction and financial support system throughout the journey of achieving quality in higher education.

Conclusion

The finding suggests that the management should be focused and keep a watch for the teaching policy initiatives and implementation, proper use of the funds for research, infrastructure and training. Periodically there should be training programs for the academician and the administrative staff members to update with the new teaching pedagogy and technology. The Universities and colleges has to enhance their preparation to come across emerging challenges through proper implementation of the criteria defined by NAAC for achieve quality in higher education. More universities and colleges should participate in the educational mission through continuous improvement process to understand their strengths, weakness, potentials and their limitations to provide quality education to the students which will ultimately help the economic growth and development of the nation.

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