Approach to quality in higher education in India

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The problem statement

- Indian students do well in good universities abroad
- Indian professors are well respected
- Indian higher education institutions are not held in high esteem.
- India has oasis of quality institutions among vastness of poor quality institutions
- India has two problems: i) Even the best institutions of India do not appear at the top positions in the global ranking; ii) Quality variations among institutions are very substantial
Indian development strategy

- The development strategy at independence focussed on economic growth with self-reliance and social justice.

- The tryst with destiny speech promised the ending of ‘inequality of opportunity’.

- Development led by the public sector.
Approach to quality of education

- **Human capital approach**: the move from investing in education is rewarding to investing in quality in education is rewarding.

- **Human rights based approach**: quality education is a right in itself and as instrumental in the development of other rights.

- **Social justice based approach**: to ensure all learners achieve specified learning outcomes – an inclusive approach to quality.
Indian approach to Quality in HE - Stage 1

- Quality higher education is pre-condition for self-reliance - establishment of IITs and IIMs
- International collaboration was seen as an assurance for quality
- Expansion and quality improvement were seen as conflicting objectives – retain the elite character of HE
- Expanding higher education mostly through public institutions
- Quality regulations by regulatory bodies - UGC, AICTE, MCI etc.
Stage 1 effects

- HE education remained a sector for the elite
- HE opportunities were denied to most secondary school graduates
- Slow growth and low GERs
- Inequalities in quality were less pronounced
Indian approach to quality in HE: Stage 2

- Establishment of External quality (EQA) agencies NAAC and NBA
- Accreditation becomes desirable but voluntary
- Creation of internal quality assurance cells (IQAC)
- NAAC focused on Institutional accreditation while NBA on programme accreditation in technical education
Effects of stage 2

- Very few institutions approached for accreditation
- Elite institutions refused to be accredited
- Institutions and academics found less value in accreditation
- Accreditation agencies did not impact on quality
Indian approach to quality in HE: stage 3

- IQACs were established in the HE institutions
- Private institutions became eager to accredit
- Accreditation becomes mandatory for public funding
- Absence of Indian institutions in top positions in the world ranking becomes a public debate
- Government moves from accreditation to other interventions to enhance quality
Effects of stage 3

- Acceptance of accreditation as necessary process
- National ranking systems - for technical, management and general
- Establishment of world class universities
- Qualification framework – focus on learning outcomes and competency of graduates
- Focus on infrastructure and teaching learning conditions - RUSA
- Focus on teachers and teaching and learning processes – PMMMNMTT
- Reliance on Indian version of MOOCs – SWAYAM – for quality improvement
NAAC Mission

- Facilitate periodic assessment and accreditation of institutions of higher education
- Promotion of quality of teaching-learning and research in higher education institutions;
- Encourage self-evaluation, accountability autonomy and innovations in higher education;
- Undertake quality-related research studies, consultancy and training programmes, and
- Collaborate with other stakeholders of higher education for quality evaluation, promotion and sustenance
NAAC accreditation process

- Nationally evolved criteria
- Collaborative effort by the NAAC and the institution being assessed.
- Self study report by the institution
- In-house analysis by NAAC
- Peer-group evaluation of the document
- Visit of the institution by the peer team
- Peer team Report
- Accreditation by the EC of NAAC
NBA accreditation process

- Institution applies for the accreditation
- NBA forms an evaluation team
- Evaluation team makes visits and submits a draft report
- The moderation committee examines the report by the evaluation team
- Sends the report to the institution for review
- After receiving the comments from the institution, prepares a final report to be submitted to Evaluation and Accreditation Committee (EAC)
- The EAC prepares a report and submit to the sub-committee of the academic advisory committee (EAC)
- The EAC report is considered by the General Council for final decision
Domains for NAAC evaluation

- Curricular Aspects
- Teaching-learning and evaluation
- Research, consultancy and extension
- Infrastructure and learning resources
- Student support and progression
- Governance, Leadership and Management
- Innovations and Best Practices
Weights in assessment by type of institution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domains</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Autonomous colleges</th>
<th>Affiliated colleges</th>
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<tr>
<td>Curricular Aspects</td>
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<td>Teaching-learning and Evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cumulative Grade Point Average (Range)</td>
<td>Letter Grade</td>
<td>Performance Descriptor</td>
<td>Interpretation of Descriptor</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.01 - 4.00</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Very Good (Accredited)</td>
<td>High level of academic accomplishment as expected of an institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.01 - 3.00</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Good (Accredited)</td>
<td>Level of academic accomplishment above the minimum level expected of an institution</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.51 - 2.00</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Satisfactory (Accredited)</td>
<td>Minimum level of academic accomplishment expected of an institution</td>
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<tr>
<td>&lt; 1.50</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory (Not Accredited)</td>
<td>Level of academic accomplishment below the minimum level expected of an institution.</td>
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Institutions accredited (end of 2015)

- Universities - 243
- Colleges - 6027
- Second cycle Universities - 119
- Second cycle colleges - 2157
- Third Cycle universities - 23
- Third cycle colleges 157 Colleges
Challenges

- Massification of the sector - with enrolment of 34.0 million, GER of 24%, 800 universities and nearly 40,000 colleges, India is the second largest Higher education system in the world
- Dominance of private sector
- Massification and student diversity
- Quality becomes a constraint to expand the system
- Teacher shortages
- Capacity of accreditation agencies
Conclusion

- Very few institutions are accredited
- Needs a more comprehensive approach to enhance quality rather than relying only on EQA and IQAC
- Separate programmes for infrastructure, teacher development planned