

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

Domains	University	Autonomous colleges	Affiliated colleges
Curricular Aspects	150	150	100
Teaching-learning and Evaluation	200	300	350
Research, Consultancy and Extension	250	150	150
Infrastructure and Learning Resources	100	100	100
Student Support and Progression	100	100	100
Governance, Leadership and Management	100	100	100
Innovations and Best Practices	100	100	100

Grading pattern

Cumulative Grade Point Average (Range)	Letter Grade	Performance Descriptor	Interpretation of Descriptor
3.01 - 4.00	A	Very Good (Accredited)	High level of academic accomplishment as expected of an institution
2.01 - 3.00	B	Good (Accredited)	Level of academic accomplishment above the minimum level expected of an institution
1.51 - 2.00	C	Satisfactory (Accredited)	Minimum level of academic accomplishment expected of an institution
\leq 1.50	D	Unsatisfactory (Not Accredited)	Level of academic accomplishment below the minimum level expected of an institution.

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
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