

The Revised Accreditation Framework of NAAC and Role of Management

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***Abstract-** To go for NAAC accreditation is now compulsory for all the educational institutes providing higher education, including the colleges giving professional education like engineering etc. The grants providing agencies of the government such as UGC, RUSA etc. essentially asks for the NAAC accreditation. This paper attempts to look over the new accreditation framework of NAAC prescribed for the colleges and how the power of a management as a governing body of an educational institute, plays an important role in the overall process. The management is the prime stakeholder of an institute. The role of management in the overall accreditation process as well as in maintaining the quality of the higher education institute is overlooked. It is found that management is the decision making authority in aided or non-aided private colleges, has the rights to take the financial decisions. The vision and mission of the institute are decided by management. Appointing the qualified, energetic and good quality staff is the responsibility of the management. Though principal is the academic and administrative head of an institute, properly balanced monitoring by the management is very much important in maintaining the quality. If one goes through the key indicators of all seven criteria, it is found that all the stakeholders have equal importance in the accreditation process. The management also has a crucial and unique role as a decision maker in the process. With the findings of this paper one can agree with the statement of Willa A. Foster "Quality is never an accident; it is always the result of high intension, sincere effort, intelligent direction, and skillful execution; it represents the wise choice of many alternatives.*

Key Words- NAAC, Higher Education, Accreditation Framework, Role of Management, Accreditation, and Assessment

Introduction: It is the era of globalization which necessitated inculcation of competitive spirit at all levels. Our government is working for the overall development of the education system in India to compete with fast global changes. If we want to compete in the world we must work for bringing the quality of higher standards to every sphere. It is said that "Education is not the learning of facts, but the training of mind to think"

If we look over the world it is found that the Indian education system is

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one of the largest and diverse education systems. Though it is a duty of all education providing institutes to maintain the quality in education, the major responsibility is on the shoulder of the institutes providing higher education. The unwieldy affiliating system, inflexible academic structure, uneven capacity across various subjects, eroding autonomy of academic institutions, and the low level of public funding are some of the problems of the Indian higher education system.² The higher education system has many issues of concerns like financing and management, equity and relevance, inclusion of health consciousness, values and ethics in programs and enrichment of the quality with assessment and accreditation. Higher education is a powerful tool to build a knowledge based information society of the 21st century.³ The higher education pursuing students are mature enough to judge themselves. You only need to guide them properly, to help them out to know them and to inspire for setting and achieving the goals.

National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) is an independent agency of government which works for maintaining the quality in higher education institutes. It arranges the periodic assessment of the institutions providing higher education and gives the accreditation. The methodology of NAAC for the administrative and academic assessment of the HEIs is very much resembled with the other quality assessing agencies throughout the world. The accreditation by NAAC is now mandatory for all the institutes providing the higher education in India, including the engineering colleges too which were excluded previously. The Assessment of the HEi's by NAAC is carried out by the well-defined process, in which the role of all stakeholders is special and equally important.

This paper tries to have a glance at the new accreditation framework of NAAC and elaborates the role of management in the overall process of accreditation.

Need to Establish NAAC:

Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, former President of India quoted that, *“Education according to Indian tradition is not merely a means of earning a living; nor is it only a nursery of thought or a school for citizenship. It is initialization into the life of spirit and training of human souls in the pursuit of truth and the practice of virtue”*.

It is understood that the purpose of education is not for earning only, but to create a good human being and thus a good citizen. The process of higher education is a long-term social investment scheme which results in the cultural and economic development of the nation. It is the tool which helps in the enhancement of social bonding, equity, and justice. It is believed that it is necessary to give quality education for building a quality nation.

Today if we look around the scenario we can say that there is a tremendous worldwide demand for the highly qualified and trained human resources.

According to FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry), “By 2030, India will be amongst the youngest nations in the world. With nearly 140 million people in the college-going age group, one in every four graduates in the world will be a product of the Indian Higher Education System.”⁴ After considering this fact, it must be our priority to upgrade the higher education in order to fulfill the increasing demand for highly qualified and trained human resources.

More over, the development of quality human resources is highly related to the quality of higher education and the corresponding institute. We know that plants are flourished by proper cultivation and nourishment and men by education and knowledge.

The policy for developing the quality of higher education is governed by the “*National Policy on Education*” of 1968 (modified in 1986 and 1992) and its ‘*Program of Action*’ (PoA) adopted in 1992. These policies of education are based on the very famous report of ‘*Radhakrishnan Commission*’ on University Education (1948).

The commission eloquently articulated the reforms needed in the education sphere in following words: “The most important and urgent reform needed in education is to transform it, to endeavor to relate it to the life, needs, and aspirations of the people and thereby make it the powerful instrument of social, economic and cultural transformation necessary for the realization of the national goals. For this purpose, education should be developed so as to increase productivity, achieve social and national integration, accelerate the process of modernization and cultivate social, moral and spiritual values.”⁵

To meet these goals, National Policy on Education (NPE, 1986) and the program of Action (PoA, 1992) felt a need to establish an independent agency to look after the quality of higher education institutes.

NAAC at A Glance:

The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) is an autonomous institution of The University Grants Commission (UGC) established in 1994. It is now responsible for maintaining the quality in Higher Education Institutes. There are widespread concerns about the quality and relevance of higher education. NAAC has to play an important role to address these concerns.⁶

There are some well-defined Core values of NAAC, which clearly reflects the motive behind the establishment of such agency and the importance of values in the education system. The core values are:

- Contribution to National Development
- Fostering Global Competencies among Students
- Inculcating a Value System among Students

- Promoting the Use of Technology
- Quest for Excellence

NAAC has to work for maintaining the quality of higher education institutions while maintaining the proper balance with its core values.

A famous scientist Albert Einstein said that *“I never teach my pupils, I only provide the conditions in which they can learn.”* Thus a higher education institute works as an incubation center for the development of their student.

Need of the Change in the Accreditation Framework of NAAC:

It is said by Nelson Mandela, the famous leader of Africa that, *“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”*. Furthermore, the words of the report of ‘Radhakrishnan Commission’ suggests, there is a need to change the education system. Assessment and accreditation in higher education, through transparent and informed external review process, are the effective means of quality assurance in higher education. NAAC proceeds with some steps towards the reform in the education system by changing the assessment framework.

Revised Accreditation Framework of NAAC:

Considering the changing trends in higher education and tremendous transformation in global education scenario, NAAC changed its accreditation framework and published its new guidelines in July 2017, for the assessment and accreditation of higher education institutes.

Core Working Group (CWG) and Sectoral Working Groups (SWG) were created by UGC for designing Revised Accreditation Framework (RAF). The Revised Accreditation Framework (RAF) is the result of the combined efforts made by these groups, UGC and MHRD.⁷

The new framework is found to be more ICT enabled, objective, transparent, robust and scalable.

Highlights of the Revised Accreditation Framework:

- The RAF is more technology-based and user-friendly
- The process is based on seven criteria; these criteria are again divided into various key indicators. Thus there are total thirty-four key indicators
- All the questions are classified into two categories as qualitative Matrix (indicated as Q₁M) and quantitative Matrix (indicated as Q_nM)

Role of Management in NAAC Accreditation:

According to the guidelines of NAAC, the framework of assessment and accreditation of all cycles is essentially based on the core values, the seven criterion of assessment and the key indicators under these criteria. According to NAAC the assessment lays focus on institutional developments with reference to three aspects: Quality initiative, Quality sustenance, and Quality enhancement.

The criterion on “Governance, Leadership and Management” promotes

values such as participation, transparency, teamwork, systems view, justice, self-reliance and probity in public finance. Without the active participation and support of the governing body of an educational institution, the improvement cannot be possible.

In our country, most of the colleges are run by private management, which are aided or non-aided. In these colleges, the management is the prime decision making body. The management has to adjust the entire financial requirement which may be generated through the fees collected and the various schemes of UGC, DST and other government as well as some private agencies. Therefore the role of management is very much important in the process of NAAC accreditation. The management is mainly responsible for planning the issues regarding human resources, recruitment, training, performance appraisal & financial management.

The accreditation process is impossible without proper planning, transparency in the work and improvement of teamwork. Management plays an important role by giving the right directions, by making provisions of financial management by using all the management tools with its correct application.

All the seven criterion of on which NAAC assessment based, can successfully be fulfilled only by the effective leadership and participative decision making process promoted by the management. The duties performed by management are elaborated here

Vision and mission of the institute:

It is the responsibility of management to provide clear vision and mission to the institution. The vision and mission of an institute completely reflect the mindset of the management and governing body. It should be clear as it shows the institution's culture and commitment towards the need of society, its tradition, and orientation towards the values. The formal and informal arrangements in the institution to coordinate the academic and administrative planning and implementation, reflects the institution's efforts in achieving its vision.

Development and deployment of the work:

The good governance plays a key role in grooming the leadership in institution building. Deployment of power and work is an essential tool of management skills; NAAC also gave emphasis on it since it is useful for grooming leadership quality among the stakeholders.

For the designing and implementation of policy and plans various committees are established in the college under the supervision of management. Some important committees like Local Management Committee (LMC), Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) have given the extra power and freedom to work for maintaining quality. The principal is the authority to decide on courses, curriculum and other matters related to the academics.

The good management provides the roadmap and general guidelines for quality policy in order to create a revising learning environment and preserve the ethos of academic excellence set up by the college.

Planning of human resources:

The process includes recruitment of best candidates, monitoring their performance using the mechanisms evolved for regular performance appraisal of staff, arranging programs for professional development, adopting appropriate feedback system, its analysis and change in planning accordingly. Efforts should be made to upgrade the professional competence of the staff.

The management has to make efforts for the involvement of staff and students in improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the institutional processes. Suggestions and recommendations are used to review and revise the action plan periodically. It should be ensured that grievances and complaints are promptly attended to and resolved effectively; a mechanism should be set up to analyze the nature of grievances for promoting better stakeholder relationship.

Financial management and arranging other resources:

It is the basic duty of management to make financial provisions on education and the infrastructure development of the college such as construction, maintenance, and provisions for facilities to departments, students as well as to provide extra human recourses as per requirement. Management is responsible for establishing the proper procedures for planning and allocation of financial resources. Planning and management board, purchase committee, LMC, IQAC plays the important role in this process under the supervision of management.

The institution should develop strategies for mobilizing resources and ensures transparency in the financial management of the institution. The income and expenditure of the institution should be subjected to regular internal and external audit. The deficit should be managed by searching the receipt and funding sources.

Conclusion:

The NAAC accreditation of the institutes providing higher education is as good as compulsory. Every institute should go for the assessment with all efforts. The process is completely a teamwork. All the stakeholders of the institute such as management, principal, IQAC, teaching and non-teaching staff, students as well as alumni have equally important and different role in the process. Being the highest policy making body management have to play a crucial role in the process. Since in all the process money is the key factor the management must have the courage to spend money. The support of management is the backbone of the whole process. The various activities should be identified and the tasks should be completed as per the vision and mission of the institute. A good management, who believes in democracy,

gives functional autonomy to college and departments, distributes the responsibility, and believes in the decentralization of work. It interacts with its stakeholders through meeting and some recreational programs and reinforces the culture of excellence.

It is the famous quote from **Sir Albert Einstein** that, *“I never teach my pupils; I only provide the conditions in which they can learn.”* A management with a clear vision, positive attitude, awareness towards the new trends, willingness to do something with excellence, supportive for grooming the leadership and liberal in attitude is definitely helpful in providing such learning conditions to the pupils and to get a good grading in the NAAC accreditation.

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