

“Student Satisfaction Cycle” in Accredited Institutions of India

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Track 4: Effectiveness of Quality Assurance

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**- Quality, Assurance
and Diversity**

II. THE CONTEXT

- ❖ Decade of NAAC.**
- ❖ Impact of first cycle of Accreditation.**
- ❖ Quality Initiatives.**
- ❖ Sustenance issue and effectiveness.**
- ❖ Emphasis in re-accreditation.**
- ❖ Paper focuses on analysis of sustenance issue with regards to student support.**

III. THE FRAME WORK

Four different approaches:

- 1. Survey on student feedback practices.**
- 2. Diversity of mechanism to ensure feedback - analysis – action cycle.**
- 3. Sustenance of quality initiatives over a period of accreditation cycle of 5 years.**
- 4. Initiation and Impact of student support initiatives during accreditation process.**

IV. THE STUDENT FEEDBACK PRACTICES – A SURVEY

❖ Various formats prescribed by NAAC.

A – Student feedback on courses

B – Student feedback on teachers

C – Overall rating of programme of study by students

D – Exit questionnaire for graduating students

Advisory nature – not mandatory.

❖ Method of Survey.

- Questionnaire to 100 HEIs accredited one year before.

- Moderate response – 32 responses considered.

V. FINDINGS OF SURVEY

A. Various formats used:

- ❖ 75% HEIs obtain student feedback on teachers.**
- ❖ 60% HEIs get student feedback on courses.**
- ❖ Program rating – 50%.**
- ❖ Exit Questionnaire for graduating students – 50%.**
- ❖ Mix of 2 or 3 of above mentioned formats are used by some HEIs.**

VI. FINDINGS OF SURVEY

B. Major Suggestions Reflected:

i. Student feedback on courses

- 1. Request for computer courses.**
- 2. Demand for More job oriented courses [JOC] & other skill based short term courses.**
- 3. To hold English fluency programmes and skill based job-oriented programmes.**
- 4. i) Freedom in choice of optionals.
ii) Inter-disciplinary courses to be introduced.**

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5. Pedagogical Courses should be reduced and Courses on teaching subjects be strengthened.

6. Course should be made more relevant & course content should be more in depth.

The response of HEIs is mainly limited to forwarding the requests to university and sending the proposals wherever necessary.

ii. Student Feedback on teachers

- 1. Motivate students to ask questions**
- 2. i. Guidance for personality development is needed.
ii. Friendly behaviour with the students be maintained.**
- 3. i. Dictation of notes on time.
ii. Revision with objective methods.**
- 4. Some teachers who use lecture method in the class should give sometime before the end of their lecture for inviting queries from the students and Demonstrations lessons on different aspects of English language be arranged.**

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- 5. Teachers to update their knowledge & teachers can go for higher education (Research).**
- 6. Subject matter needs simplification further.**

Students desired more discussion in the class room. Teachers who were more interactive than diactic were rated higher and teachers who interacted more as facilitators than instructors were preferred.

There is widespread belief in HEIs that this practice gives better score in A & A by NAAC as teaching learning and evaluation is the major criteria of assessment carrying 40% weightage. Therefore actions taken in this aspect have also been reported prominently. There are some cases where institution prefers to maintain the teacher evaluation “Confidential”.

iii. Overall Rating of programme of study by students

- 1. Conducting more seminars, workshops and debates.**
- 2. Request that there be more extra curricular activities, possibly inter- collegiate.**
- 3. Practice teaching be strengthened and monthly/terminal test be introduced.**
- 4. Expecting intensive class tests etc.**
- 5. Job oriented courses.**
- 6. Programme should become more practical oriented.**

iv. Exit Questionnaire for Graduating Students

- 1. More of curriculum – linked activities and capacity building of the students through group dynamics.**
- 2. i) Book issue to be well managed.
ii) Special coaching for needful students.**
- 3. Need of an auditorium and improvement in hostel mess facilities.**
- 4. Demand for more social science courses.**
- 5. Demand for employment cell and career guidance cell.**
- 6. Demand for more seats in Hostel and better library.**

VII. PROCEDURE FOR COLLECTING STUDENT FEEDBACK & ENSURING ACTION

45% HEIs participated in survey have some mechanism in place. Viz.

- ❖ IQAC to monitor the process.**
- ❖ Principal as the key person for procedure.**
- ❖ Committee of teachers.**
- ❖ Management, Principal and teachers participation.**
- ❖ Involvement of Student Council and parents.**

VIII. ILLUSTRATIONS

1. The college 'B' collects student feedback through questionnaire and also from personal interaction with students, students' council and parents. The principal sorts data and codifies it, he also analyses it and makes notes for suggestions and again the data collected is re-examined in the presence of the teacher concerned. And the process of implementation includes conveying the suggestions of general nature in the staff meeting by the principal specially convened for the purpose in the month of March and June every year. Suggestions pertaining to individual teachers are conveyed personally. The IQAC Unit also monitors the whole process of quality enforcement. The IQAC unit in its bi-annual meeting takes stock of variations in quality benchmarks and suggests measures thereof.
2. The college 'D' has just 60 students in the B.Ed [Degree course in Teacher education] and there exists personal relationship at every level. Therefore, they discuss personally with the students and hence no formal student feedback mechanism.

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3. The college 'F' collects the feedback where the form contains 10 questions about punctuality, competence, communication skills, methodology, personal relationship etc of teachers. The entire students community responds the questionnaire on the basis of 1 – 10 points scale. The response sheet is compiled to arrive the average score on each quality. The rating of each teacher is calculated by taking the percentage. The principal meets every teacher personally and discusses the issues derived from the student response and corrective measures are initiated.

Only the final year students of the college are involved in this exercise. They answer a questionnaire containing questions about their satisfaction level, proposal for new courses and other suggestions. The feedback is discussed in the staff meeting and necessary decisions are taken by Consultancy Body and Governing Body of the college.

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- 4. The college 'H' collects the student feedback by choosing one third teachers for the feedback every year, random sample, of 50 students from all the classes taught, are taken. The management frames the questionnaire and the collected feedback from students are sealed by envelopes and are sent to the management. Further statistical analysis is done by the management. And the concerned teacher is personally called by the management, and the results are discussed with him/her in the presence of the principal. Finally, the management, through principal monitors the progress.**
- 5. The college 'I' distributes the feedback forms to the students to be filled at home with the assurance that the contents of the feedback and identity of the student will not be disclosed. As such, students are not required to write their names. They may even get the forms filled by their relatives or friends so that the feedback may not be traced by their writing style. There is no question of any type of pressure by the teachers on students. The filled formats are folded and collected in a big envelop by the co-ordinator. The feedback is then analyzed by the committee members of Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) and the report is submitted to the Principal. The principal, in consultation with discipline maintenance committee and IQAC, takes proper action to solve the problems and students are informed of the action taken.**

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- 6. The college 'K' has a system of evaluation of teachers' performance by students. The principal of the college meets the outgoing 3rd year students after the results of the selection test of Part II have been declared. The principal distributes a modified schedule II (NAAC Manual for Self-study) and asks honours students to complete the schedule for each teacher in their department in her presence. She collects the schedule and scores each answer on a pre-determined scale of 0-5 and evaluates the overall performance of each teacher. Thereafter she shows the evaluated schedules to the concerned teacher only, in total privacy, to make her aware of the effectiveness of her instruction and activities as well as her own strength and weakness, this motivates the teachers to modify and improve their performance.**
- 7. The college 'I' has prescribed proforma of "feedback" which is issued to the students to obtain the suggestions on important issues and programs of the college. After obtaining the feedback, the suggestions are analyzed and necessary actions are taken and are informed to the students.**

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8. i) The college 'M' has two methods which are used to collect student feedback – a formal, structured, questionnaire-based feedback (a mix of open-ended questions, questions with forced choices and ordinal scale-based answer system) and an informal system where students are free to write any feedback on a blank paper, without revealing their identity, during a specified time, on any random day.

ii) Feedback is analyzed by staff groups (faculty and administrators) through group meetings, presentations, brainstorming sessions and prioritization of quality issues. Modifications planned are discussed with the students and faculty to arrive at informed choices/alternatives

iii) The decisions thus made are communicated to all concerned for implementation over a specified period of time. The same is monitored by Dean Office; regular feedback is taken and mid-course corrections, if any, carried out. Outcomes are analyzed and feedback given to students and faculty by Dean Office.

IX. Student Satisfaction Cycle - Salient Trends

- 1. Major focus on evaluation of teachers by students.**
- 2. Feedback on courses are considered less meaningful or useful for colleges due to affiliating system.**
- 3. Principal as the nodal person in obtaining feedback and initiating necessary steps.**
- 4. Separate agency or in-house mechanism like Internal Quality Assurance cell are yet to be widely used for student satisfaction surveys.**
- 5. Lack of formal structure or body to ensure feedback-action-information loop in majority of HEIs.**
- 6. Evidence of secrecy and skepticism about teacher evaluation by the students.**
- 7. Sustenance or continuation of regular student feedback mechanism is matter of concern.**
- 8. Proper reporting of feedback outcome and action taken to be strengthened.**
- 9. Some of the institutions, especially autonomous ones are experimenting variety of feedback methods to enrich campus experience of students.**
- 10. Exit questionnaires are gaining popularity in professional course providers.**
- 11. Immediately before and after NAAC accreditation feedback mechanism gained momentum.**

X. SUSTENANCE OF QUALITY INITIATIVES A CYCLE OF ACCREDITATION

- ❖ **The first batch for re-accreditation in year 2004-05 – 19HEIs.**
- ❖ **SSR vs. RAR.**
- ❖ **Comparison on key issues with respect to student support and progression.**
- ❖ **Support services:** During the course of time support services have been increased - Computer center, Internet facility, Gymnasium, rest room, medical facility, student counseling center etc. have been added to the support services in most of the HEIs in last five years.
- ❖ **Credit system for course completion:** Credit based choice system was not much followed by most of the institutions at the time of accreditation.. During the time of reaccreditation the percentage of HEIs following the credit system has been increased by 5 to 8%.

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- ❖ **Working hours of the library;** The working hours of the library continues to be averaged between 6 to 8 hours per day. During the examination time the number of hours would increase by 1 to 3 hours more for reference purpose and research.
- ❖ **Computers in the Library:** At the time of first accreditation 30 to 40% of the colleges were using computers in the College library. During the course of time it has been increased to almost 95%. Most of the libraries have been computerized and have internet browsing facility.
- ❖ **Health care facilities offered to students, faculty staff:** Most of the institutions are having health care facilities for the students, faculty and staff. Around 60% of the college have medical center with doctors for regular medical checkup.
- ❖ **Collection of Feedback from students:**At the time of accreditation 40 to 50% institutions were collecting feedback from the students. During the course of time it has been gradually increased. Almost 90% HEIs in first batch of re-accreditation are collecting feedback from the students.

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- ❖ **Employment cell& placement office:** About 70% Accredited institutions have placement cell. The number of students benefiting from the cell ranges from 50 to 100 students per annum.
- ❖ **Alumni Association :** The Self Study Reports indicate that 90% accredited institutions opted for re-accreditation have formed registered alumni associations.
- ❖ **Criteria for admission, rules and regulations:** The 95% institutions have been communicating admission related details through prospectus and notice boards at the time of first accreditation. During the time of reaccreditation, in addition to prospectus and notice boards, institutions are advertising through media, website and other modes of communication.
- ❖ **Recreational/leisure time facilities:** There is marked increase in the facilities to the students for recreation in leisure time. The students make use of recreational/leisure time by playing indoor games and make use of college facilities to improve their mental and physical capabilities.

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Teacher – Student Ratio: During the first accreditation the student teacher ratio varied from 20:1 to 38:1. However during the reaccreditation the student teacher ratio deteriorated in range of 40:1 to 55:1 The number of students increased substantially but the teacher population remained more or less same in most of the HEIs.

- ❖ **Temporal plan of the institution:** During the time of first accreditation, about 40% of the institutions were following semester system, 40% annual system and 20% both annual and semester system. During the course five years till reaccreditation the pattern of temporal plan of the institutions has been changed. 70% follow semester system, 15% annual system and 15% have both annual as well as semester system in place.

The data with special reference to student support services taken from these sets of reports throws light on areas that need to be strengthened further in the Student Satisfaction Cycle. Comparison on most of the issues pertaining to student support and progression indicates that level of sustenance of quality initiatives needs to be further improved.

XI. Sustenance of various quality initiatives regarding student support – a survey on Impact of Accreditation.

- ❖ **SSR induced impact.**
- ❖ **Continuation through IQAC and AQAR.**
- ❖ **Findings of Survey.**
- ❖ **Alumni Association:** -The survey indicates that 65.62% accredited higher education institutions have formed Registered Alumni Associations. Many of the colleges are engaged in collection of funds from the alumni. Most of the colleges register an average of 20 to 30 alumni per year.
- ❖ **Placement Cell:** -The survey indicates that 53.12% accredited higher education institutions have formed Placement Cells.
- ❖ **Career Guidance Cell:** -The survey indicates that 87.5% accredited higher education institutions have formed Career Guidance Cells. The number of students benefiting from the cell ranges from 200 to 500 per annum.

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- ❖ **Personal counselling Cell:** -The survey indicates that 78.12% accredited higher education institutions have formed personal counseling Cells.
- ❖ **Mentor/Tutor System:** -The survey indicates that 62.5 % accredited higher education institutions have the Tutor system. Almost all students are benefited under the tutor system, where it is in place.
- ❖ **Student Feedback Mechanism:-**The survey indicates that 62.5% accredited higher education institutions have the student feedback mechanism. Most colleges have the mechanism for collection of data from no. of students varying from 500 to 1000.
- ❖ **Reprographic Facilities:** -The survey indicates that 68.75% accredited higher education institutions have Reprographic facilities.
- ❖ **Internet Facilities:** -The survey indicates that 71.87% accredited higher education institutions have Internet facilities. Most of the colleges have been providing free internet facilities except in case of some, where Rs. 5/- to Rs.20/- per hour is charged.
- ❖ **Grievance Redressal Cell:** -The survey indicates that 59.37% accredited higher education institutions have formed Grievance Redressal Cells. An average of about 10 cases per year are being solved.

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- ❖ **Open access in Library:** -The survey indicates that 25% accredited higher education institutions have open access in Library. Very few colleges are providing open access in Library for the students.
- ❖ **Awards to meritorious students:** -The survey indicates that 71.87% accredited higher education institutions give awards to meritorious students. No of awards given varies from 1 to 20.
- ❖ **Remedial courses:** -The survey indicates that 68.75% accredited higher education institutions have Remedial courses. No of students availing benefit of remedial courses varies from 40 to 500.
- ❖ **Special training for advanced learners:** -The survey indicates that 56.25% accredited higher education institutions have the special training for advanced learners. The number of beneficiaries varies from 40 to 100.

The various findings listed above also out that several quality initiatives in respect of student support and progression are triggered due to accreditation process of NAAC. But a proper mechanism and/ or voluntary drive to sustain these initiatives is yet to consolidate.

XII. Towards strengthening the student satisfaction cycle in Accredited Institutions of India.

Observations and Suggestions :

1. Low key return of questionnaires on student feed back status indicates that many HEIs have lost track of these initiatives after first accreditation is over. Efforts need to be made so that student feed back mechanism gets integrated as inbuilt part of governance of HEIs.
2. The variation in reporting about student support initiatives at the time of first accreditation, a year or two after accreditation and at the time of reaccreditation indicates that there is need of consistency in information seeking formats from HEIs during various stages of accreditation as well as post accreditation period.
3. To check the tendency of discontinuity of initiatives, the system of Annual Quality Assurance Reports (AQARs) need to be fine tuned and streamlined so that the data captured over the period of five years can be used as the basis of reaccreditation.

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4. The sustenance of initiatives as reflected through annual reports of accredited HEIs needs to be given proper weightage and the same should be made known to all stakeholders.
5. The student satisfaction surveys may be conducted by independent agencies and the outcome may be shared with management of HEIs as well as accrediting agency i.e. NAAC. The possibility of nation wide student satisfaction surveys along with national skill tests by agency like NAAC may be explored.
6. If the analysis of student feed back is to form part of assessment and accreditation process of HEI then such feed back should be obtained and analysed independently by accreditation agency i.e. NAAC.
7. When the purpose of student feedback is to serve management information and internal reforms, the work may be entrusted to Internal quality Assurance cells for which the NAAC gives guidelines from time to time.

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8. 'Student feedback on courses' and 'Overall rating of programmes' surveys may be primarily designed and conducted by affiliating universities as they are responsible for curriculum design and reforms in affiliating system prevalent in India.
9. The reports of scepticism and fabrication of 'teachers evaluation by students' in view of accreditation by NAAC need to be taken seriously. It needs to be made clear that existence of proper mechanism to obtain student feed back is important and not the outcome of the analysis. (It is observed that in most of the HEIs, most of the teachers are rated above eight or nine on ten point scale)

Exit questionnaire for graduating students can be extensively used and the same may also carry the element of teacher appraisal.

11. Possibility of linking student satisfaction surveys with various forms of funding like special assistance, development grants, maintenance grants and student subsidies may be explored as the Government continues to be the major provider of higher education funding in India.
12. Extensive use of ICT mode to maintain, transfer and process data on student feedback as well as other quality initiatives may be encouraged.

The Advocacy by NAAC

- IQAC & AQAR.**
- Adoption of the Student Charter.**
- Dissemination of Best Practices.**

Much Remains to Be Done

- Voluntary nature of accreditation.**
- Diversity & Complexity of HE system in India.**

THANK YOU

THE END OF PRESENTATION.

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