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CONNECTING NODES: QUALITY INITIATIVE, QUALITY SUSTENANCE AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

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Abstract

In the ever changing society which is driven by advanced technology in diverse ways, it remains significant for the professionals to keep pace with and retain themselves for employment. In such a scenario, it is imperative to study the impacts of innovations on a society in an all - inclusive fashion. And this eventually will enhance Higher Order thinking, Deeper Learning, Creative Problem Solving, Team Work and Communication Skills. The above mentioned facets can be some of the significant traits that a Higher Education Institution can look for. In order to bring the connectivity between all the criterions a for Quality , the researcher would be trying to string in all the beads together for an easy understanding of what NAAC is actually aiming at and how far the HEIs are enabled to imbibe and implement them in the true spirit.

The role of Higher Education continues to be substantial for the society and its responsibility has been doubled with the complex challenges in tech – advanced era.

INTRODUCTION

Connecting Nodes is an outcome of deliberations throughout the journey of our teaching experiences amassed over the years. Policies, Innovations and Technology has played an important role in the dissemination of knowledge since the inception of education system in India.

The traditional mode of imparting knowledge was very conventional in its form, but the advent of technology in its advanced form found a strong and inseparable footing in the



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system of education. In the ever changing society which is driven by advanced technology in diverse ways, it remains significant for the professionals to keep pace with and retain themselves for employment. In such a scenario, it is imperative to study the impacts of innovations on a society in an all - inclusive fashion. This eventually will enhance Higher Order thinking, Deeper Learning, Creative Problem Solving, Team Work and Communication Skills. The above mentioned facets can be some of the significant traits that a Higher Education Institution can look for.

The teaching learning and evaluation process is exhaustive in itself. As an educator one can easily make out the difference between qualitative and quantitative assessment. Assessing a student on the basis of quantitative evaluation is really difficult. The topic is a debateable one but the system makes it mandatory with a certain criterion mentioned in the policies of education to evaluate and score on the basis of the performance ; written and oral.

When National Accreditation and Assessment Council marks an institute, the emphasis that is far more essential and scaring is Criteria -Two, The Teaching - Learning Process.

In order to bring the connectivity between all the criterions a for Quality , the researcher would be trying to string in all the beads together for an easy understanding of what NAAC is actually aiming at and how far the HEIs are enabled to imbibe and implement them in the true spirit.

The first criteria that I would like to bring into the centre of all discussions is the sixth Criteria named as Governance , Leadership and Management, which holds a significant place in the entire scheme of the marking and most of the times which is undermined only relating it to administration. But the essentiality of governance is far reaching with all its powers to planning, execution and creating a Standard Operating System for any HEIs to function in a highly competitive environment.

The creation of the Vision and Mission statement-

The initial step towards surging ahead is a clear road map carved out with the participation of all the stakeholders in chalking out a vision and mission statement. This statement can be subject to changes with the changing times incorporating all the ever evolving needs of any educational Institution. Vision and Mission of an institution is a reflective of its stake in the



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education Sector. Therefore a careful planning and choosing of appropriate structure and clear idea of what has to be achieved in the journey of creating a child for the journey of life makes the vision and mission statement all the more enduring.

The inclusion of all the stakeholders in deciding the vision and mission brings in a participative management. Further to this participative decision process the accountability of the stakeholders here is now fixed to an extent, that it becomes a social and collective responsibility of all involved to give the society an ideal youth who can take decisions appropriate to the situations. Thus such instances exemplify a composed and concern for the upbringing a child who becomes a future decision maker for tomorrow.

The second level of participation now lies within the institution itself. All the daily functioning of the college is the prime of any educational institution. The decision involving the betterment of the students, who are the centre of everything should be involved in the process. Delegation and execution of work is not the sole responsibility of the office of the Principal but a collective one. Committees for various events can bring in a sense of Team Spirit and better Communication skills and Leadership Qualities can be nurtured through this process.

The most important of all for accreditation is the formation of Internal Quality Assurance Cell which acts as a catalyst. The composition though defined by NAAC is the responsibility of the institution to be all inclusive with the other stakeholders. The process of accreditation stands as a collective responsibility of all those are a part of the institution and just not the coordinator. This method fetches a sense of accountability in all those concerned. Thus the essence of sixth criteria which NAAC supposedly expected from HEIs fulfils the objective in a true sense. At every stage the three aspects on which NAAC tries to assess are; students, teachers and the institution.

The next to which the node is connected is the Student Support and Progression. Any institution with aim of its mission and vision should keep a tab on the objectives which it has planned to achieve. This mainly includes the Students. The institution can implement innovative approaches for the betterment of the students in various ways depending on the resources and the location advantages. Value added courses, guidance cell for competitive



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examinations, gainful employment opportunities and self-funded skill imparting courses can be a major support for the students to progress. There is still a wide gap between the exposures the students who get education in any urban place as compared to the rural one. The topic is debatable and every HEI whether in urban or rural has its own challenges to face. The best out of all this can be an initiative by HEIs to cluster and share resources for the benefit of the student community at large. There can be a workable solution to certain issues which any single HEI might not be able to fulfil. The workable compromise can be in the form of Student Exchange, Faculty exchange at all levels. And at an institution level there can be a collaboration on all levels.

The Knowledge Resource Centre known as the Library can play a very important role in the students' progression. The out of the box approach can create a difference in terms of employment and future prospects to advanced learning opportunities available. This may require a certain kind of upgradation in the existing infrastructure but with a minimal intervention, even this feat can be achieved.

The assumption that affiliated colleges has least to innovate in Curricular Aspects which happens to be the first criteria in the scheme of assessment of NAAC. The teaching unit is the institute which carries out the academic and administrative process. The implementation of academic and administrative procedures with a different perspective can earn a good score. A careful schedule planner in tandem with the academic calendar of the University can ease out certain confusions prevailing. All activities that are being carried out can be planned as per the convenience so that there is no clash in the academic as well as examination processes. This will aid in better execution as it becomes a part of the standard operating system. The mechanism involves all stakeholders in the process leading to sustainable quality in all aspects of curricula.

The most significant criteria that would be discussed here is the Teaching – Learning and Evaluation Process which happens to be the crux of the entire education system and hence carries a unsurmountable weightage. The most imperative element in this criteria is the Teacher who is vital to the system of teaching and evaluation process. The process involves the recruiting of teacher to empowering them to cater to the ever evolving nature of education



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in a globalized world . The use of technology driven syllabus to the dissemination of the knowledge through advanced modes of learning involve a teachers' active involvement. Providing outstanding and diverse faculty with contemporary research exposure and acumen will benefit the students to prepare them for life. Inter-disciplinary research work and promotion of such activities in research can motivate the teachers to come up with solutions pertaining to the local problem. Thus such research can include at their levels of understanding, exposing them to a Quality learning. Some researches can generate skilled workforce with social responsibility and gainful employment thereby complying with the norms laid down by NAAC. Such Standard Procedures if sustained by any HEI can support a student in their all- round development. Other than these mentioned there can be skill based courses which aid in self – employability. Tapping of the local resources into converting the learners' acumen into employable workforce , providing incentives for their participation in all the activities can be achieved by proper planning , initiating and executing the policies decided by the stake holders which were discussed in criteria six.

The education remains incomplete without instilling the habit of ethical practices and values which enables them to be empowered to take challenges in life.

Suggestions and Conclusion

- Strengthening the advisory body inclusive of all stakeholders
- Considering the potentials of all the stakeholders & planning a road map to elevate the levels of Teaching Learning Process.
- Amendment in the existing process through interpolations.
- Addition of new Career Oriented Programmes
- Functional MoUs, Tie Ups, Linkages & Collaboration with various Government & Non- Governmental Organizations for better sustainability.
- Firming up a strong research in the programmes run by the institution and extending the same for the benefit of the society.
- Identifying experts & setting up of courses with potential in contemporary scenario(especially skilled based)



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- Contribution of the alumni & exploiting their expertise for the accelerated growth of the Institution, thus connecting them to their alma mater and encouraging their stakes.
- Funding/Support extended for skill upgradation
- Extended services of Knowledge resource centre to the local community. Provide smart classrooms
- Encourage the faculty to take up projects based on ICT, Assignments, and Content Development etc. Projects based on ICT MOOC, MOODLE, E- Content, and GOOGLE Classroom etc should be prioritized.

Conclusion

Higher Education in Indian faces challenges in terms of supply and demand ratio as it has low enrolment in Higher Education or even if it has the drop- out rate is very high. The dearth of quality teaching and learning further hampers the experience. Rigid curricula and pedagogy, lack of quality assurance and lack of accountability, constraints on research and teaching and innovation, are a few reasons to elaborate other than the reasons cited above there is huge mismatch between what is being taught in schools , colleges and what the organizations are looking for in students . The role of Higher Education continues to be substantial for the society and its responsibility has been doubled with the complex challenges in tech – advanced era. The Higher Education Institutions in such a scenario are bound to deliver vibrant, strong, value based knowledge for social mobility and economic progress of any nation.

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