



Quality Assurance in Teaching, Learning and Evaluation: Challenges, Strategies and Best practices

*Dr. B.V.R.Naidu, M.Com., MBA., Ph.D, Professor,
Mrs. M.V.Prasanthi, MBA., Asst. Professor,
School of Management Studies, Swarnandhra College of Engg. & Technology,
Seetharamapuram, Narsapur, W.G.Dist., A.P*

Abstract

India has one of the largest and diverse education systems, in the world. Privatization, widespread expansion, increased autonomy and introduction of programs in new and emerging areas has improved access to higher education. At the same time it also led to widespread concern on the quality and relevance of the higher education. To address these concerns, the National Policy on Education (1986) and the Programme of Action (1992) that spelt out strategic plans for the policies, advocated the establishment of an independent National Accreditation Agency. Consequently, the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) was established in 1994 as an autonomous institution of the University Grants Commission (UGC). The parameters relating to minimum applicable standards for all the institutions would have been decided by a regulating body or a commission under the ministry of higher education or an international body. Accreditation is the way through which Higher Education Institutions broadcast the quality of their educational processes to their stake holders including students, parents, recruiters, alumni, staff, management and governing body. Accreditation helps higher education institutions to market their programs nationally and internationally. Keeping in view the above, the present paper analysis some of the challenges, strategies and best practices in Teaching Learning and Evaluation process in quality assurance of education system.

Key words: *broadcast, Learning and Evaluation, Human Resources*

Introduction:

In most countries around the world, the function of accreditation for higher education institutions is conducted by government organizations, such as Ministry of Education or Department of Higher Education in Human Resources Development Ministry. In India, the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) is an organization that assesses and accredits institutions of higher education. It is an autonomous body funded by University Grants Commission of Government of India headquartered in Bangalore. The

National Board of Accreditation (NBA), India was initially established by AICTE (All India Council of Technical Education) undertakes periodic evaluations of technical institutions and programs according to specified norms and standards as recommended by AICTE. India has one of the largest and diverse education systems, in the world. Privatization, widespread expansion, increased autonomy and introduction of programs in new and emerging areas has improved access to higher education. At the same time it also led to widespread concern on the quality and relevance of the higher education. To address these



concerns, the National Policy on Education (NPE, 1986) and the Programme of Action (PoA, 1992) that spelt out strategic plans for the policies, advocated the establishment of an independent National accreditation agency. Consequently, the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) were established in 1994 as an autonomous institution of the University Grants Commission (UGC). The mandate of NAAC as reflected in its vision statement is in making quality assurance an integral part of the functioning of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Quality Accreditation is a type of quality assurance process under which academic programs, student and staff related services offered by a higher education institution are evaluated by an external body known as Accreditation Body or Accreditation Agency which determines whether the higher education institution meets applicable standards or not. If the institution meets applicable standards, accredited status is granted to the institution by the Accreditation Body or Agency.

Process of accreditation:

The accreditation body assesses mainly the institution parameters like: Governance, Leadership and Management, Programs, Courses and Subject/Module specifications-Curriculum, Teaching, Learning and Assessment, Research, Consultancy, Training, Student Support and Student Progression, Innovation and Best Practices, Learning Resources and Infrastructure. The parameters relating to minimum applicable standards for all the institutions would have been decided by a regulating body or a commission under the ministry of higher education

or an international body. The accreditation procedures and process vary with accreditation agencies and the accreditation process may take 6 to 18 months depending on the agency. Accreditation process is carried out by the academicians chosen by the Accreditation Agency and they are drawn from various institutions of repute, which are well versed in accreditation processes. Accreditation is the way through which Higher Education Institutions broadcast the quality of their educational processes to their stake holders including students, parents, recruiters, alumni, staff, management and governing body. Accreditation helps higher education institutions to market their programs nationally and internationally.

Challenges & strategies of quality assurance:

The universities and colleges are encouraged to establish *Internal Quality Assurance Cells* and go through the assessment and accreditation process. Initiatives are taken to encourage the institutions to adapt the Modern Methods of teaching and learning, develop learner friendly teaching materials, and change their Examination system and evaluation method by means of which internal quality can be maintained.

Quality Assurance in Teaching:

Teaching refers to activities that are designed and performed by the teacher to produce desired changes in pupil's behavior. To bring desirable changes in pupils behavior, teaching activities should be followed by certain modernized and systematic plan and



procedure for improving its quality and making it successful.

To assure quality in teaching, following points are to be taken for consideration.

- In modern view, teaching should be democratic in nature, in which a teacher teaches his students according to their needs, interests, abilities and feelings and a free interaction between the teacher and learners is seen in the class i.e., both are equally active in the class and influence each other.
- In teaching process a teacher should go through the three phases of teaching such as: (i) Pre-active phase, (ii) Interactive phase and (iii) Post-active phase.
 - (i) **Pre-active phase** Pre-active phase is exclusively related to the analysis of the teaching task at the time of planning. In this phase teacher prepares himself by preparing lesson plans before entering to the class.
 - (ii) **Interactive phase** In interactive phase of teaching, activities are done by the teacher after entering the class. These activities are done according to the pre-active phase. Some modifications are, however, allowed if need arises.
 - (iii) **Post active phase** Teacher comes to the Post active phase when teaching tasks is over; here he asks written or oral questions in order to measure the changes in the behavior. Only after the evaluation, the teacher comes to know whether the objectives are achieved or not.
- Teaching affects learning directly and indirectly and Learning depends on the level of teaching of the teacher. What a teacher wants to make his students by his teaching depends on what the objectives of his teaching are?

It means that as soon as level of teaching changes, its objectives and way of attack also change and evaluation of students also changes accordingly.

- Teacher should follow the principles of teaching or maxims of teaching at the time of teaching-learning process.
- Teaching of any teacher can be improved by drilling different strategies, techniques and core of teaching skills. Many teaching skills and techniques have been developed by the science of educational technology in order to transform teaching from *Art to Science*.

Quality Assurance in Learning:

Teaching at higher education essentially means acquiring knowledge, generating new knowledge and adding to the existing knowledge and also transmitting knowledge which implies learning. In other words, learning is the process by which relatively permanent change in behavior occurs as a result of practice, training and experience. In modern times to assure quality in learning, different factors and principles should be given importance.

- a) Environment and heredity
- b) Adequate practice and training.
- c) Learning should be made meaningful & purposeful.
- d) Strength of connection between Stimulus and response
- e) Learning should be satisfying.

Generally, learning takes both formally and informally. Human being acquires knowledge and develops his skill by coming into contact with different agencies like home, school, society, mass media etc. In college and university also the students learn by interacting with teachers, classmates, equipments,



chemicals and other such components that are designed purposively to cause students learning. This type of learning generally happen in a formal way and, therefore many experts called it as Formal Learning. School, college, or formal agencies are not only source of imparting knowledge rather individual acquires vast amount of knowledge in his lifetime from society or from informal agencies. Hence both formal and informal knowledge greatly help in changing the behavior of the learner. Individuals learn informally. So environment of the institution should be arranged in such a manner, which helps to bring socially desirable change in students' behavior. Learning in an individual does not take place in isolation. The individual interacts with one or more components in the environment, which results in learning.

Strategies for Quality Assurance in Evaluation System.

Following are some of the suggested statements which may be taken care of for maintaining the quality in evaluation system—

- Improving questions by making them specific in terms of objectives, content and language along with appropriate weightage to objectives, content areas.
- Improving scoring procedures by developing scoring keys, marking scheme with suitable Instructions to examiners.
- Expanding the techniques of evaluation to continuous-comprehensive evaluation (internal as well as external)
- Continuous internal assessment is the way to make learning more interesting and creative. So continuous internal assessment should be

introduced for improving the quality of evaluation.

- Appointing appropriate paper setters with right qualification and experience.
- Developing scientific mechanism for conducting smooth examination.
- Secrecy should be maintained regarding setting, printing, stocking, mailing of question papers.
- To minimize impersonation, stress should be on admitting card along with photograph and request for centre change should be discouraged.
- To overcome the chances of malpractices, strict instruction should be given to reach at least 15 minutes before the commencement of examination, so that mass checking could be possible.
- The seating arrangement and invigilators schedule at the exam halls-should be frequently changed.
- Strict instructions should be given to the both examinees and invigilators regarding their work during the examination hours.
- External observers and flying squads should be appointed for each exam centre.
- Coding and decoding of answer papers should be done on confidentially.

After completion of all the evaluation works, suitable methods should be adopted for declaring of results and issue of certificates. There should be provision for re-evaluation and rechecking and also provision for supplying Xerox-evaluated answer papers to the candidates.

Best practices in teaching, learning & evaluation.

Quality has become the defining element of education in the 21st century



mainly in the context of new social realities. The question that comes to our mind is that what exactly do we mean by best practices? Best Practices, which add commendable value to an institution and its various stakeholders, are considered as reliable benchmarks or standards of quality

Best Practices as Institutional Quality Index

NAAC is advocating the best practices benchmarking approach for quality enhancement in higher education. However, this practice is widespread in the corporate world—where there are systematic means of measuring and comparing work processes of an organization with others. For example, comparing the work processes of Wipro with TCS vice-versa. Best practices as benchmarks help institutions to find their anchor for self-improvement. If we look back in 1996 Commonwealth Higher Education Management Service (CHEMS), it launched an international “University Management Benchmarking Club” for universities from the Commonwealth.

Implementation of Best Practices

The implementation of best practices is a difficult activity. The academicians are fond of debates and discussions and most of us consider words as wisdom— but we should always keep in mind that words have to be transformed into actions. Otherwise the implementation of best practices will be a dream, it will never happen in reality. Instead of solutions, “academic eminence” may lead us to find problems in every solution. There are various implementation strategies planning, resource mobilization, capacity building, monitoring and evaluation. Of these,

planning comes first. The plan should be firm and solid. The next strategy is resource mobilization. Total Quality Management is an approach of implementation which focuses on quality of all aspects of operations with participation of everyone in the organization. Then only the implantation of the best practices will become successful.

Institutionalization of Best Practices

The process of making the best practices an integral part of the institutional working is important. NAAC had conducted a symposium on 26th, 27th July 2004 where 90 heads of colleges and universities participated, shared their experiences of application of best practices. One important point that came out after discussion was that many best practices are institution specific and managed by individuals— there is a risk factor, if that particular individual resigns or retires the entire system collapses. Moreover— best practices seem to require an extra effort. Most of us are not ready to put in that extra effort. Institutionalization is an effort to make it more institution centric rather than leader or individual centric. The focus should be to make the best practices as normal practice.

Internalization of Best Practices

It refers to making things a part of one’s nature by conscious learning and assimilation. Internalization of best practices means making excellence an integral part of one’s habit and nature. We should all remember the age old dictum “We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then is not an act but a habit.” After all it is the attitude which matters in imparting quality education.



Dissemination of Best Practices

Peer learning is to be encouraged. There should be no communication gaps---information should percolate from top to bottom. The institutions should have a database of good practices. There should be review forums, recording evidences for success etc. among the institutions.

Conclusion:

To conclude, one can say that there should be an inductive approach to quality management in higher education institutions with a focus on practice and continuous improvement. The Management has to provide proper infrastructure, effective governance and leadership. The universities and colleges should encourage establishing Internal Quality Assurance Cells and going through the assessment and accreditation process. Initiatives should be taken to encourage the institutions to adapt the Modern Methods of teaching and learning, develop learner friendly teaching materials and change their Examination system and evaluation method by means of which internal quality can be maintained. It is better to adopt more and more innovative practices which will take care of stakeholder relationship, as well as introduction of internal quality assurance system. It should be remember that the teachers are to play a critical role if they want the best practices adopted by them to become successful. In fact, the onus lies on their shoulders. Last but not the least, these best practices are meant for the students. It is for the students to decide what they want.

References:

1. Ansari, M.S.(2009), Educational Technology (UGC NETGuide) Ramesh Publishing House, New Delhi.
2. Boyd, D.C., Singer, F., (2011), The meaning and evolution of teaching excellence: a radical case study from Radford University, Virginia.
3. Brew, A., (2007), Integrating Research and Teaching: Understanding Excellence. In: Skelton, A., ed. International perspectives on teaching excellence in higher education: improving knowledge and practice, Routledge, Abingdon, Oxon.
4. De Corte, E., (2003), Excellence in Higher Education, Portland Press, London.
5. El-Khawas, E (1998). Accreditation's Role in Quality Assurance in the United States, Higher Education Management, 10, no. 2.
6. Harvey, L., Green, D., (1993), "Defining Quality"- Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education, vol. 10.
7. Law, S., (2011), Recognising excellence in teaching and learning, Higher Education Academy, York.
8. Sharma, M.C.(2006), Instruction in Higher Education, Maidan Garhi, New Delhi.
9. Vemal, L.(2004) Questioning as a communication tool for pedagogy, University News, New Delhi, Vol.42, No.-21, May 24-30
10. World Bank. (1994a). Higher Education: The Lessons of Experience. Development in Practice Series. World Bank: Washington, D.C.