



NAAC assessment : a boon for the higher education

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Abstract

Higher education is a powerful instrument for creating a knowledge and information based society. The mission and vision of higher education is to educate, train, undertake research activities and service to the community. Higher education is nothing but production and dissemination of knowledge. For human resource development, the State Council of Higher Education has emphasized the need to promote quality in every field of higher education. For this reason, it is seen that due to the growing demand for higher education there has been a mushroom growth of Higher Educational Institutions with fancy programmes and sub-standard quality. There is an urgent need to improve the quality of Higher Educational Institutions. Improving the quality and achieving excellence in teaching, examination, research and extension is the greatest challenge faced by all Higher Educational Institutions today. No educational institution can progress without quality. Since NAAC's assessment can judge the quality of a college or a university, it is expected that NAAC's assessment will lead to the academic upliftment and qualitative up gradation in the colleges. The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) follows an internationally accepted methodology for assessment which is a combination of self-study on seven pre-determined criterion and validation of the self - study peer review.

Keywords : Assessment, Higher Education, NAAC.

1. Introduction

Education constitutes the backbone of a country as it produces the human force which plays the most determining role in the advancement of a nation and also in the progress of civilization. Education is one that provides the thrust in getting ahead and building up a powerful democratic society.

The development of any country depends mostly upon its growth of education. Progress of any country is possible only when its citizens are dynamic, resourceful, enterprising and responsible. Therefore, higher education is considered as an important instrument for bringing about social, economic, political and technological progress of any country particularly for a developing country like India.

The scope and demand for higher education is increasing day by day and the most important mission of higher education is the creation of intellects by providing world class education for

promotion of global standards in the Institutions of Higher Education. The most important factor that should be taken care of is to provide higher education without compromising on the quality of education. This paper focuses on the qualitative development of some of the accredited colleges under Gauhati University.

1.1 Higher Education in Assam

Higher education was first started in Assam in Cotton College in the year 1901. After that Gauhati University was established in the year 1948 by an Act of the State Legislature which is one of the largest university in the North Eastern region.

Presently, in this 21st century Assam has become a centre of higher learning with eight universities—Four state universities— a) Gauhati University, b) Dibrugarh University, c) K.K.H. Open University, d) Cotton University.

Two central universities i.e. a) Assam University (Silchar), b) Tezpur Central University (Sonitpur

District), Institute of National importance i.e IIT, one Medical University— Shankardev Medical University, Assam Agricultural University. A number of private universities have also come up like— Don Bosco university, Kaziranga University etc. Three (3) Engineering Colleges, and Law College, one (1) Ayurvedic College, Management Institutes, various centers of Correspondence Education of higher learning of various Indian Universities like IGNOU, Sikkim Manipal University etc. have also come up in the state of Assam besides a large number of colleges affiliated to these universities.

2. National Assessment and Accreditation Council

THE NATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND ACCREDITATION COUNCIL (NAAC) is an autonomous institution. It was established by the University Grants Commission (UGC) of India, to assess and accredit institutions of higher education in the country. The system of higher education in India is expanding rapidly. In spite of the built-in regulatory mechanisms that lead to satisfactory functioning of Higher Education Institutions, there has been a significant increase in the number of institutions of higher education, which perhaps has resulted in the dilution of standards. NAAC primarily focuses on assessment of the quality of eligible Higher Education Institutions of the country. NAAC uses an internationally accepted methodology, which consists of self-assessment and external quality assessment.

3. Need and Significance of the study

Educational system in any country cannot flourish without quality and higher education is no exception to it. With the mushroom growth of the Higher Educational Institutions no doubt quality has degraded. Since NAAC's assessment can judge the quality of a college or a university, it is expected that NAAC's assessment will lead to the academic upliftment and qualitative up gradation in the colleges. In order to find out whether NAAC's assessment to these colleges have brought about academic as well as qualitative up gradation, the investigator took an interest to study the impact of NAAC's Assessment and Accreditation on the academic as well as qualitative development of some of the accredited Colleges under Gauhati University.

4. Objectives of the Study

The present study is conceived with the following objectives—

- To study the impact of NAAC's accreditation on the academic and qualitative development of the colleges.
- To study the views of the teachers of some of the accredited colleges under Gauhati University towards the teaching methods of their colleges before and after NAAC's accreditation.
- To study the views of the teachers of some of the accredited colleges under Gauhati University towards the essentiality of NAAC's assessment.

4.1 Limitation of the Study

The study was limited to the colleges under Gauhati University only.

4.2 Delimitation of the Study

The present study was delimited only to some of the selected urban and rural colleges and the teachers working in the colleges under Gauhati University which were accredited by NAAC.

5. Definition of the Key Terms

- National— Relating to or typical of the whole country and its people, rather than to part of that country or to other countries.
- Assessment— The act of assessing; appraisal; evaluation.
- Accreditation— To officially recognize, accept or approve of someone or something.
- Council— A group of people elected or chosen to make decisions or give advice on a particular subject, to represent a particular group of people, or to run a particular organization.

6. Data Collection

The investigator had visited 30 NAAC assessed colleges under Gauhati University (both urban and rural) from the selected 10 districts of lower and middle Assam the colleges of which comes under Gauhati University. From those 30 colleges, 15 NAAC accredited colleges were selected from the urban areas and 15 NAAC accredited colleges were selected from the rural areas. The total number of teachers selected for the study was 500 who were selected by using the random sampling technique

from both the urban and rural colleges. Again from the sample of 500 teachers, 250 teachers were selected randomly from the urban colleges and 250

teachers were selected from the rural colleges as representative sample by following the random sampling technique.

Table - 1 : Districts selected for the study

Sl. No.	Districts
1.	Kamrup
2.	Nagaon
3.	Baksa
4.	Nalbari
5.	Bongaigaon
6.	Barpeta
7.	Udalguri
8.	Darrang
9.	Sonitpur
10.	Goalpara

Table - 2 : List of NAAC Accredited colleges under Gauhati University selected for the study

Sl. No.	Urban Colleges	Grade Obtained	Sl. No.	Rural Colleges	Grade Obtained
1.	Cotton College, Panbazar, Guwahati	A	1	Jawaharlal Nehru College Kamrup, Boko	C++
2.	Handique Girls College Guwahati	B+	2.	Dimoria College, Kamrup, Khetri	B+
3.	B. Borooah College, Guwahati	B++	3.	Raha College, Nagaon, Raha	C++
4	A.D.P. College, Nagaon	B	4.	Lanka Mahavidyalaya, Nagaon, Lanka	B
5.	Nowgong College, Nagaon	B+	5.	Barama College, Baksa (Barama)	B+
6.	M. N. C Balika Mahavidyalaya, Nalbari	B++	6.	Tihu College, Nalbari	B+
7.	Nalbari College, Nalbari	B+	7.	Bijni College, Bongaigaon	C++
8.	Nalbari Commerce College, Nalbari	C+	8.	Nirmal Haloi College Barpeta, Patacharkuchi	C++
9.	M. C. College, Barpeta	B	9.	Udalguri College, Udalguri	C++
10.	B. H. College, Howly Barpeta	B++	10.	Tangla College, Udalguri, Tangla	B

11.	Bongaigaon College Bongaigaon	B+	11.	Sipajhar College Darrang, Sipajhar	C++
12.	Mangaldai College Darrang	C++	12.	T.H.B College, Sonitpur	C++
13.	Tezpur College Sonitpur	C+	13.	Rangapara College Sonitpur	B+
14.	Darrang College Tezpur	B++	14.	Dudhnoi College Dudhnoi, Goalpara	B
15.	Goalpara College Goalpara	B+	15.	Bikali College Dhupdhara, Goalpara.	C++

The investigator constructed a questionnaire which was examined by the experts. Responses were collected through a few open-ended and few close-ended questions. Analysis was done only through percentages and interpreted accordingly. The following tables show the total responses of the respondents.

7. Analysis and Interpretation of Data

7.1 College Environment

Item Specified

Satisfaction with the college environment.

Table - 3 : College Environment

Item Specified :		Urban		Rural	
		Total Response	% age	Total Response	% age
1.	Yes	210	42.00	160	32.00
	No	40	8.00	90	18.00
Total		250	50	250	50

Total Percentage Table - (i)

Question Number	Total Respondents	Total positive % age	Total negative % age
1.	500	74%	26%

As regards the college environment 42.00% teachers from the urban colleges and 32.00% teachers from the rural colleges i.e a total of 74% teachers from both the urban and rural colleges responded that they are satisfied with the present atmosphere of the college but 8.00% teachers from the urban colleges and 18.00% teachers from the

rural colleges i.e a total of 26% teachers from both the urban and rural colleges gave a negative reply.

7.2 NAAC Assessment and Quality Development Items specified

- 1) Accreditation by NAAC
- 2) Environmental upgradation
- 3) Qualitative Improvement

Table - 4 : NAAC Assessment and Quality Development

Q. No	Urban					Rural				
	Yes	No	Total Response	% age Positive	% age Negative	Yes	No	Total Response	%age Positive	%age Negative
2.	250	0	250	50.00	0.00	250	0	250	50.00	0.00
3.	207	43	250	41.40	8.60	226	24	250	45.20	4.80
4.	235	15	250	47.00	3.00	212	38	250	42.40	7.60

Total Percentage Table (ii)

Question Number	Total Respondents	Total Positive % age	Total Negative % age
2.	500	100%	0%
3.	500	86.60%	13.40%
4.	500	89.40%	10.60%

A total of 100% teachers responded positively that their college has been accredited by NAAC. 41.40% teachers from the urban colleges and 45.20% teachers from rural colleges i.e. a total of 86.60% teachers from both the urban and rural colleges stated that environmental upgradation have taken place in their colleges after NAAC's assessment. Further it has been found that 47.00% sample teachers from the urban colleges and 42.40% teachers from the rural colleges i.e. a total of 89.40% teachers of both urban and rural colleges from whom data were collected replied that qualitative

improvement have taken place in their colleges after NAAC's assessment but a total of 10.60% teachers gave a negative reply.

7.3 Academic Scenario

Item Specified

- 5) Provision of computer training.
- 6) Use of internet for transacting educational programme.
- 7) Flexibility to the students to move from one discipline to another.
- 8) Tutorial classes for students.

Table - 5 : Academic Scenario

Q. No	Urban					Rural				
	Yes	No	Total Response	% age Positive	% age Negative	Yes	No	Total Response	%age Positive	%age Negative
5.	180	70	250	36.00	14.00	110	140	250	22.00	28.00
6.	108	142	250	21.60	28.40	98	152	250	19.60	30.40
7.	156	94	250	31.20	18.80	139	111	250	27.80	22.20
8.	208	42	250	41.60	8.40	211	39	250	42.20	7.80

Total Percentage Table (iii)

Question Number	Total Respondents	Total Positive % age	Total Negative % age
5.	500	58%	42%
6.	500	41.20%	58.80%
7.	500	59%	41%
8.	500	83.80%	16.20%

From the table it is clear that 36.00% teachers from the urban colleges and 22.00% teachers from the rural colleges i.e a total of 58% teachers from both the urban and rural colleges said that there is provision for providing computer training to all the students in their colleges. But 14.00% teachers from the urban colleges and 28.00% teachers from the rural colleges i.e. a total of 42% teachers gave a negative reply.

21.60 % teachers from the urban colleges and 19.60% teachers from the rural colleges i.e. a total of 41.20% teachers from both the urban and rural colleges said that their colleges makes use of internet for transacting educational programmes. Further it

has been found that, 31.20% teachers from urban colleges and 27.80% teachers from rural colleges i.e. a total of 59% teachers from both urban and rural colleges stated that the college provides flexibility to the students to move from one discipline to the other. 41.60% teachers from urban colleges and 42.20% teachers from rural colleges i.e. a total of 83.80% teachers from both the urban and rural colleges said that there are provision for having tutorial classes in their colleges.

7.4 Method of Teaching

Item specified

- 9) New Innovative teaching methods
- 10) Modern teaching aids in class rooms

Table - 6 : Method of Teaching

Q. No	Urban					Rural				
	Yes	No	Total Response	% age Positive	% age Negative	Yes	No	Total Response	%age Positive	%age Negative
9.	136	114	250	27.20	22.80	109	141	250	21.80	28.20
10.	120	130	250	24.00	26.00	105	145	250	21.00	29.00

Total Percentage Table (iv)

Question Number	Total Respondents	Total Positive % age	Total Negative % age
9.	500	49%	51%
10.	500	45%	55%

From the above tables it is evident that 27.20% teachers from the urban colleges and 21.80% teachers from the rural colleges i.e. a total of 49% teachers from both the urban and rural colleges replied that new innovative teaching methods are adopted after NAAC's assessment. As regards to the use of modern teaching aids while providing instruction in the classroom, 24.00% teachers from

the urban colleges and 21.00% teachers from the rural colleges i.e. a total of 45% teachers from both the urban and rural colleges replied positively by saying that they use modern teaching aids while providing instruction in the classroom.

7.5 Importance of NAAC's Assessment

Item specified

11) Essentiality of NAAC's assessment.

Table - 7 : Importance of NAAC's Assessment

Q. No	Urban					Rural				
	Yes	No	Total Response	% age Positive	% age Negative	Yes	No	Total Response	%age Positive	%age Negative
11.	240	10	250	48.00	2.00	235	15	250	47.00	3.00

Total Percentage Table (v)

Question Number	Total Respondents	Total Positive % age	Total Negative % age
11.	500	95%	5%

From the table it is clear that 48.00% teachers from the urban colleges and 47.00% teachers from the rural colleges i.e. a total of 95% teachers from both the urban and rural colleges revealed that NAAC's assessment is very essential for the quality development and upliftment of the college.

8. Major Findings

- 1) As regards the college environment 42.00% teachers from the urban colleges and 32.00% teachers from the rural colleges i.e a total of 74% teachers from both the urban and rural colleges responded that they are satisfied with the present atmosphere of the college but 8.00% teachers from the urban colleges and 18.00% teachers from the rural colleges i.e a total of 26% teachers from both the urban and rural colleges gave a negative reply.
- 2) 50.00% teachers from the urban colleges and 50.00% teachers from the rural colleges i.e a total of 100% teachers responded positively

that their college had been accredited by NAAC.

- 3) 41.40% teachers from the urban colleges and 45.20% teachers from rural colleges i.e. a total of 86.60% teachers from both the urban and rural colleges stated that environmental upgradation has taken place in their college after NAAC's assessment. But 8.60% teachers from urban and 4.80% teachers from rural colleges i.e. a total of 13.40% teachers discarded the statement.
- 4) 47.00% sample teachers from the urban colleges and 42.40% teachers from the rural colleges i.e. a total of 89.40% teachers of both urban and rural colleges replied that qualitative improvement has taken place in their colleges after NAAC's assessment but 3.00% teachers from the urban colleges and 7.60% sample teachers from the rural colleges i.e. a total of 10.60% teachers gave a negative reply.

- 5) 36.00% teachers from the urban colleges and 22.00% teachers from the rural colleges i.e a total of 58% teachers from both the urban and rural colleges said that there is provision for providing computer training to all the students in their college. But 14.00% teachers from the urban colleges and 28.00% teachers from the rural colleges i.e. a total of 42% teachers gave a negative reply.
- 6) 41.60% teachers from urban colleges and 42.20% teachers from rural colleges i.e. a total of 83.80% teachers from both the urban and rural colleges said that there are provision for having tutorial classes in their colleges but 8.40% teachers from urban colleges and 7.80% teachers from rural colleges i.e. a total of 16.20% teachers gave a negative reply by saying that there is no such provision for tutorial classes for the slow learners. Only general and major classes are taken regularly and there is no such provision for special or extra classes for the slow learner group.
- 7) 27.20% teachers from the urban colleges and 21.80% teachers from the rural colleges i.e. a total of 49% teachers from both the urban and rural colleges replied that new innovative teaching methods such as field study, extension education, project works, demonstration classes besides the usual lecture method are adopted after NAAC's assessment but 22.80% teachers from the urban colleges and 28.20% teachers from the rural colleges i.e a total of 51% teachers gave a negative reply.
- Majority of the teachers have replied that though almost all the departments except the science stream use lecture method of teaching but after NAAC's assessment it was observed that emphasis is laid more on practical oriented teaching rather than the lecture method to motivate the students towards the teaching learning process.
- 8) As regards to the use of modern teaching aids while providing instruction in the classroom, 24.00% teachers from the urban colleges and 21.00% teachers from the rural colleges i.e. a total of 45% teachers from both the urban and rural colleges replied positively by saying that

they use modern teaching aids in the classroom instruction but 26.00% teachers from the urban colleges and 29.00% teachers from the rural colleges i.e. a total of 55% teachers responded negatively.

The teachers of the urban and rural colleges, have opined that before NAAC's assessment very few colleges used the modern teaching gadgets like over head projectors, slides, computers, internet, audio-video CD's and cassettes etc while delivering lecture in the classroom. In the process of data collection it was found that NAAC had strictly advised the teachers in particular and the college authority in general to use the modern electronic gadgets in the classroom because these gadgets will no doubt make the education process more interesting and help them to understand the subject matter more easily. So majority of the colleges in the urban as well as the rural areas are trying to take up steps to use these gadgets while teaching in the classroom. But unfortunately it was found that due to lack of funds, orthodox attitude and apathy on the part of the college authority and teachers, these modern teaching gadgets are not used in many urban as well as the rural colleges while teaching. Moreover, some teachers from the urban and the rural colleges have complained that their college have these modern teaching gadgets but the college authority have failed to provide proper training to the teachers for using these gadgets in the classroom teaching process. Apart from it, lack of proper supply of electricity stands as an obstacle in using these gadgets in the classroom while teaching since these gadgets require sufficient amount of power supply.

9. Conclusion

NAAC has brought about drastic changes in the field of higher education. Education is considered as a back bone of any nation. A nation can-not progress without education. Higher education is no doubt very important for qualitative development of a nation. Higher Education means university education which guides the human race to march towards higher objectives. NAAC's assessment has made great attempts in bringing about quality culture among the Higher Educational Institutions of Indian

Universities in general and Gauhati University in particular.

'Quality' has been enhanced in the scheme of higher education not only in Assam or the colleges under Gauhati University but all through out the country. Quality is the major life giving force in the institutions of higher education. Without quality higher education is of no use to any one. In the recent past there has been a mushroom growth of higher educational institutions with sub-standard

quality of education. Such education does more harm to the aspirants of higher education than good. But after NAAC's inception, there has been a massive change in the total scenario of higher education. During this study the investigator had found that NAAC's assessment has brought about quality development in the colleges under Gauhati University in particular. The investigator had found that there has been major improvement in the academic and non-academic activities of the college.

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