

A Study on the Assessment and Accreditation Criteria of NAAC for Colleges of Education (Punjab)

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Abstract

India has the third largest system of higher education in the world; next only to USA and China. To have uniformity in quality of Higher Education in India, the Program of Action (PoA) 1992 of NPE, 1986 emphasized the need for a mechanism to be setup to encourage self-assessment in institutions and also 'Assessment and Accreditation' of the same by an external agency. In this context, the setting up of the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) on 16th September, 1994 was a historic step. To assess the Quality of Higher Educational Institutions including Teacher Educational Institutions, NAAC make use of a 07 point criterion which include assessment of curriculum, research, Infrastructure and governance etc. On the basis of CGPA obtained by any Institution in NAAC's evaluation, grades are accredited to Institutions. But the problem lies in the fact that there is only one criteria of Assessment and Accreditation followed by NAAC for all institutions of Higher education including all Colleges of Education, Physical Education etc. In order to see whether this criteria of Assessment and Accreditation for colleges of education need to be changed or not, this study on the assessment and accreditation criteria of NAAC was undertaken.

1. INTRODUCTION

The **NATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND ACCREDITATION COUNCIL (NAAC)** is an autonomous body established by the University Grants Commission (UGC) of India to assess and accredit institutions of higher education in the country. It is an outcome of the recommendations of the National Policy in Education (1986) that laid special emphasis on upholding the quality of higher education in India. At present, NAAC has assessed and accredited approximately 3858 Colleges and 148 Universities in the country. To assure quality in Higher Education, NAAC has made many collaborations nationally and Internationally. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by NAAC and NCTE in 2002 is a witness of it. The MoU was aimed to foster quality, assurance and quality sustenance in the Teacher Education system of the country. To assess the Quality of Higher Educational Institutions including Teacher Educational Institutions, NAAC make use of a 07 point criterion which is based on various aspects of education such as curriculum, research, teaching learning, Infrastructure and governance etc. On the basis of CGPA obtained by any Institution in NAAC's evaluation, grades are accredited to Institutions. But the problem lies in the fact that there is only one criteria for all institutions of Higher education in India including all Colleges of Education, Physical Education etc. In order to see whether the criteria of assessment and accreditation for colleges of education need to be changed or not, this study on the assessment and accreditation criteria of NAAC was undertaken.

1.1 NEED OF THE STUDY

We all know that to provide quality teacher educators, the qualitative teacher educational institutions are quite important. Hence the accreditation criterion to measure the quality of the teacher education colleges also needs a great attention of all the accrediting authorities and the Government. NAAC being an important council set up under a special Act of UGC carries out this assessment and accreditation processes for different aided and unaided colleges and universities of Education in India. But the criterion used by NAAC for Colleges of education is not different from that of other colleges and universities providing Higher Education in India.

Though a MOU has been signed by NAAC and NCTE in 2002 to foster quality, assurance and quality sustenance in the Teacher Education system of the country and in the light of that certain separate quality indicators for Teacher Education colleges were also proposed later on, but still NAAC is following the same criteria for all types of colleges and Universities including all the 'Colleges of Education' which seems quite contradictory to follow because of the following disparity between colleges of education and other colleges of higher education in India:

- Colleges of Education normally run Diploma and Degree courses in Education for normally one year of duration as compared to 2 or more years of UG and PG programmes in other colleges providing Higher education in India.
- The no. of students on roll, hence, is quite less as compared to other colleges of Higher education which restrict various types of activities that are to be essentially performed under the present criteria of NAAC to get high grade in assessment and accreditation processes.
- Moreover the infrastructural needs of the 'Colleges of Education' vary from that of other colleges of higher education. Hence present criteria of NAAC needed a critical study to measure its effectiveness.

The Investigator had not only tried to study these problems of Colleges of Education but at the same time, tried to study various issues concerning process of Assessment and Accreditation followed by NAAC to achieve its main purpose of assuring quality education in Colleges of Education. Hence it was justifiable to study the problems of 'Colleges of education' as well as the different issues concerning Assessment and Accreditation criteria of NAAC with utmost urgency to provide a sound base for quality Teacher education in India.

1.2 DELIMITATION

The present study was restricted to the 'Colleges of Education' which had been assessed and accredited by NAAC in Punjab till 2011 only.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The followings were the main objectives of the study:

- To critically analyse the present criteria for assessment and accreditation for 'Colleges of Education' as followed by NAAC in the light of needs and limitations of these colleges.
- To study the present level of quality consciousness of 'Colleges of Education' assessed and accredited by NAAC in Punjab.
- To study the initiatives undertaken by different Colleges of Education for improving the quality of Teacher Education in their colleges after NAAC accreditation.
- To give suggestions to improve the existing Criteria of NAAC for assessment and accreditation for 'Colleges of Education'.

1.4 HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

1. The Colleges of Education do not differ significantly in their opinion regarding the change of present 7 point criteria of NAAC for Assessment and Accreditation of Colleges of Education.
2. Majority of Colleges of Education are aware of excellence & quality with induction of NAAC in the 'Colleges of Education' in Punjab.
3. Majority of Colleges of Education have taken initiatives to improve the quality of Teacher Education in their colleges after NAAC accreditation.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 TOOL:

In order to conduct the present descriptive study, self constructed questionnaire was used to collect the requisite data.

2.2 SAMPLE:

The questionnaire was posted to all the 75 Colleges of Education and 03 Universities (where the Department of Education exist) in Punjab which have ever been assessed and accredited by NAAC till 2011.

3. STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED

t-test for testing the significance of Percentages when percents are correlated was used to test the first hypothesis. In addition to this, **Average method** was used to test the second hypothesis. Whereas **Percentage comparison technique** was used in case of third hypothesis. Pie chart, Tables and figures have been used for graphical presentation of data.

3.1 PROCEDURE:

After finalizing the tools, the questionnaire was posted to all the universities running Department of Education and colleges of Education in Punjab. In addition to this, Experts' suggestions and observations of Investigator have also constituted an important part of Methods and Procedure for collecting and analysing the data.

4. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

4.1 Comparison of percentages and correlation coefficients:

To find whether *The Colleges of Education differ significantly in their opinion regarding the change of present 7 point criteria of NAAC for Assessment and Accreditation of Colleges of Education*, *t-test for testing the significance of Percentages when percents are correlated* was used.

Table 4.1.1 clearly shows the percentage responses for Question no. 34 i.e. 'Do you feel that the main criteria of NAAC for Assessment and Accreditation of Colleges of Education should be different from its present 7-point criterion?' and Question no. 35 i.e. 'Should the 7-point criteria of NAAC for Assessment and Accreditation for Colleges of Education differ from that for any other Colleges of Higher Studies in India'.

Table no. 4.1.1 Percentage responses to Question no. 34 & 35

Question no. 34				
Question no. 35	YES	NO	YES	Total
	NO	15%	46%	61%
		39%	0%	39%
	Total	54%	46%	100%

After calculations, the values turned out to be as shown below:

Table no. 4.1.2 P, Q, $r_{(P1-P2)}$, S.E._(P1-P2), D and t- value for all the Colleges of Education for Question no.34 & Question no. 35

P	Q	$r_{(P1-P2)}$	S.E. _(P1-P2)	D	t- value	Result
54%	46%	.73	.102	15%	1.49	Not Significant. Hence H ₀ was not rejected at both the levels of significance.

We also came to know that approximately 40% of the Principals of Colleges of Education were in favour of having a separate criterion from the present 7-point criterion of Assessment and Accreditation of NAAC. Whereas 90% of the Faculty of Education were strongly affirmative in having a separate criteria of Assessment and Accreditation for Colleges of Education in Punjab. Thus, it can be concluded that

- The Colleges of Education are significantly unanimous in demanding a separate criterion of Assessment and Accreditation for Colleges of Education by NAAC.
- There is significant need to develop and design a separate criteria of Assessment and Accreditation for Colleges of Education as the present criteria is not suitable to assess and accreditate the quality of Colleges of Education.

4.2 Average method:

To find out whether the *Majority of Colleges of Education are aware of excellence & quality with induction of NAAC in the 'Colleges of Education' in Punjab or not*, comparison of averages method was used.

Table 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 clearly show the mean and S.D. of the responses of the questions who were designed to check the quality awareness of Colleges of Education in Punjab due to induction of NAAC.

Table 4.2.1 Mean, S.D. and C.I. calculations of the respondents

Mean	Standard Deviation	Confidence Interval
10.23	1.26	8.98 – 11.48

Table 4.2.2 Percentage distribution of Colleges of Education according to their level of Quality Awareness after NAAC's Induction

Level of Quality Awareness	Percentage of Colleges of Education
Below Average	0
Average	76.92
Above Average	23.07

On the basis of the percentage scores of the Colleges of Education, we found that almost all the colleges of Education are falling in Average and Above Average level of Quality awareness. Thus our hypothesis i.e. *'Majority of Colleges of Education are aware of excellence & quality with induction of NAAC in the 'Colleges of Education' in Punjab'* is not rejected.

Along with the 'Not Rejection' of 2nd hypothesis, we found various results in item wise analysis which are depicted in figure 4.2.1 and 4.2.2

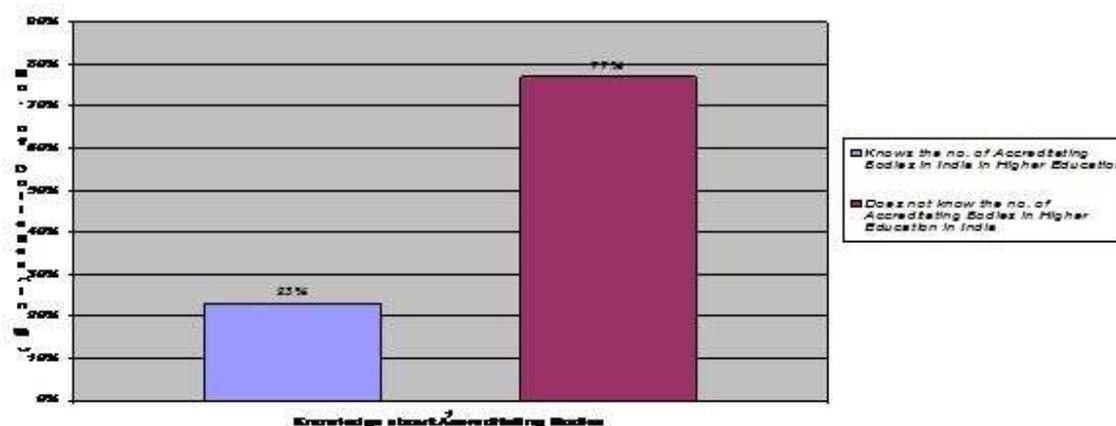


Figure 4.2.1 Position of Colleges of Education in sense of Knowledge of Accrediting Bodies in India

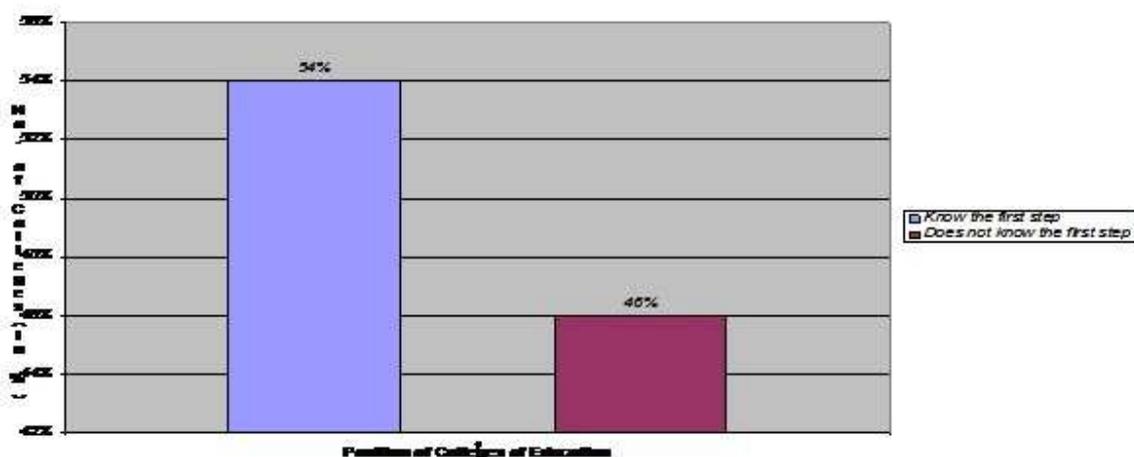


Figure-4.2.2 Knowledge about the First step of Assessment and Accrediting Process of NAAC

In an in depth study to all the questions meant for checking the quality awareness of Colleges of Education, we found that though majority of Colleges of Education were aware of Quality consciousness after NAAC's induction in their Colleges, yet they were not aware of different Accrediting Boards meant for Assessing and Accrediting different Institutions of Higher Studies in India. After considering responses, we found that

- Only 23 % of the Colleges of Education were aware of the no. of Different Accrediting Boards in India which is really surprising.
- Only 54% of the Colleges of education were aware of the first step of Assessment and Accrediting process of NAAC i.e. Letter of Intent.

4.3 Percentages comparison:

To find out whether Majority of Colleges of Education has taken initiatives to improve the quality of Teacher Education in their colleges after NAAC accreditation or not, percentages comparison method was used.

For this purpose, some indirect questions were asked. For calculation purposes, all the questions were divided into 4 major parts to study information about the different initiatives taken by Colleges of Education to improve the quality of Teacher Education in their colleges. These major parts were

- Faculty Improvements,
- Improvements in Physical Infrastructure,
- New Collaborations/ Programmes added in Colleges; and;
- Other initiatives taken for improving the Quality of Teacher Education in the colleges after NAAC accreditation.

The responses received came out with the following figure no.4.3.1

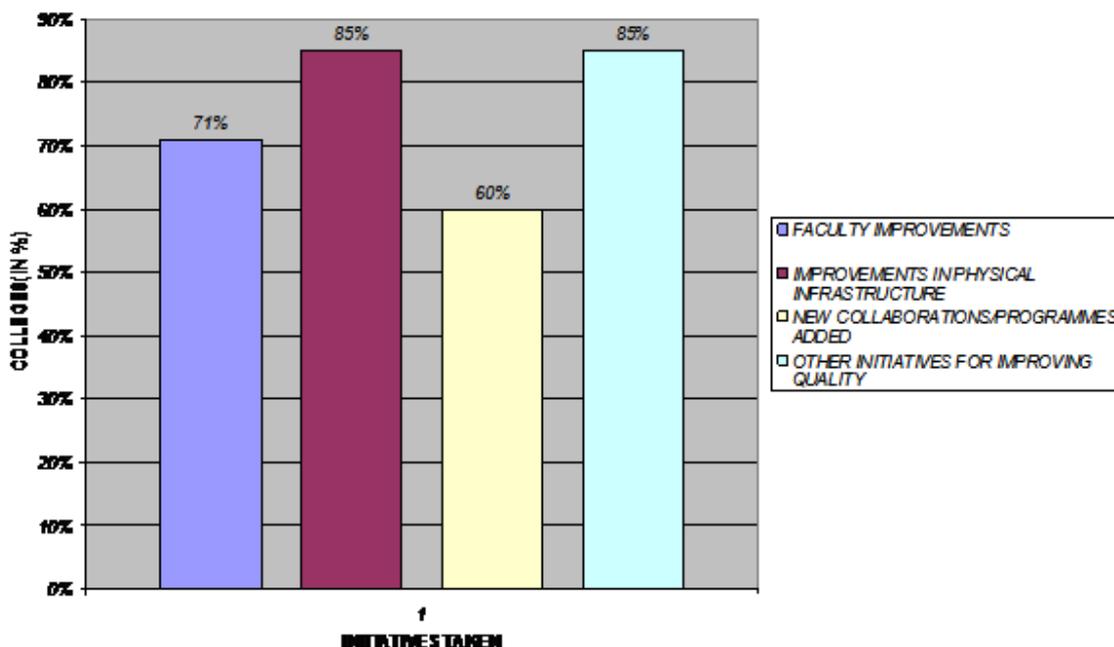


Figure 4.3.1 INITIATIVES TAKEN BY COLLEGES OF EDUCATION TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF TEACHER EDUCATION

Hence, it is quite clear that the initiatives have been taken in almost all the 04 major areas to improve the Quality of Teacher Education after being assessed and accredited by NAAC. Thus, our hypothesis i.e. ‘Majority of Colleges of Education has taken initiatives to improve the quality of Teacher Education in their colleges after NAAC accreditation’ was not rejected.

A further churning of responses came out with following data as shown in Table 4.3.1, Table 4.3.2.

Table 4.3.1 Faculty Improvement in Colleges of Education after NAAC Accreditation

Basis for Faculty Improvement	Yes	No
Faculties registered for Ph.D.	90%	10%
Faculties got their research work published	53%	47%

TABLE 4.3.2 SHOWING COMPOSITION OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF IMPROVEMENTS IN PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE OF COLLEGES OF EDUCATION

Sr. no.	Types of Improvements	Percentage Contribution	Percentage Share of Total Improvement in Physical
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		of Colleges	Infrastructure
1	Improvement in Various Labs	45%	15%
2	Improvement in Library	80%	28%
3	Educational Clinics	50%	17%
4	ICT and Learning Resources	75%	25%
5	Improvement in College Building and Maintenance	45%	15%

Here after analysis, the Investigator came to know that 60% of the Colleges of Education have either started new collaborations, added new programmes or add on courses in their colleges. Only 40% of the Colleges of Education have started new Collaborations with various National and International Bodies, 80% of the Colleges have started with new programmes like ETT course, FDPs etc. and 60% of the Colleges have started add on courses like Arts, Music and Computer etc.

Hence, we can say that majority of Colleges of Education have taken initiatives to improve the quality of Teacher Education after NAAC accreditation in their colleges.

5. SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING THE PRESENT CRITERIA OF NAAC

While conducting the present study and collecting data for the same, the Heads of the Colleges of Education and Faculties gave a number of suggestions to improve the present criteria of NAAC to make it suitable for them. These suggestions are enlisted as below:

- There should be a separate criteria of Assessment and Accreditation exclusively for Colleges of education based on their needs and requirements.
In the present criteria also, following things are to be paid attention:
- Questions related to ICT/Technology Packages should be either a part of main Key aspect of Teaching-Learning and Evaluation or a separate Key aspect. It is so because ICT is most prominently used as a means of Teaching-Learning process.
- In Innovative practices, foreign countries curriculum integration and ICT integration should be emphasized.
- In Students' mentoring and support, the sought information is more of theoretical nature. So generally, the Colleges of Education present the rosy picture or stresses the students to give positive feedbacks. It thus prevents the real picture to come out.
- Open and Distance Learning is also a popular methodology of getting Education these days. The field of Education too cannot remain untouched with it. Hence in the evaluation criteria, the Colleges who run Distance education courses in Education should also be given some weightage.
- There should be surprise checks by NAAC of the accredited institutions in order to see whether the quality benchmarks are followed by institutions after accreditation or not.

- There should be no compromise on quality of higher education. Hence irrespective of whether an institution is self financed or an aided one, quality of teachers and physical infrastructure is not be relaxed upon in any circumstance.

Thus, we can say that all these suggestions given by different Colleges of Education are to be taken care of while deciding a criteria of Assessment and Accreditation for Colleges of Education by NAAC in order to improve the quality of Teacher Education as

‘the destiny of our nation is now being shaped in her classroom.’ (Indian Education Commission, (1964-1966)).

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