

## QUALITY ASSURANCE AND HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

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### Abstract

*To promote the idea of accountability among the academies. Since its establishment, the Council has made significant headway in evolving the procedures and criteria for assessment and accreditation of universities and colleges. It is mandatory for such institutions to undergo the process of accreditation. NAAC has identified the following seven criteria to serve as the basis of its assessment procedures: Curricular aspect, Teaching-learning and evaluation, Research consultancy and extension, Infrastructure and learning resources, Student support and progression, Governance, leadership and management, Innovations and best practices. The IQAC is a significant administrative body in any educational institution. It contributes to maintaining quality standards in teaching, learning and evaluation. It promotes co-curricular and extra-curricular activities in the college. It is a capable body to administer various academic/educational activities. There is coordination among the stakeholders of the institution, but this still needed more attention and concern to increase such coordination. The IQAC and its coordinator require more autonomy (e.g., academic, financial, and administrative) for better performance. The IQAC has a greater role and responsibility in maintaining quality standards in the whole process of teaching, learning and evaluation.*

**Keywords:** Skills and attitude, NAAC, NBA, IQAC



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**Introduction:** India's burning issue is not that of lack of talent pool, but the lack of talent pool which is on par with quality of world class and employable. Industry leaders presume that only 15% of the people coming out of Indian colleges are employable. The rest are branded 'not employable' not for the lack of theoretical knowledge but for the lack of skills and attitude necessary for doing the job successfully. This is truly a challenge as well as a social responsibility. The Industry leaders are caught in a pincer between rising employment costs on one hand and a 30% rate of attrition on the other. While the need of the hour is to produce employable and quality manpower, the quality of teaching-learning process in higher education institutions is very vital. Quality of teaching depends on the quality of faculty and the quality of students is the fruit of the quality of learning. It may not be fair to fully transfer this responsibility to the Academic Leaders alone; there must be some share of this responsibility owned by the all stakeholders as well. Only the academia are playing the vital roles in quality assessment and quality enhancement through quality assessment bodies like

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National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) and National Board of Accreditation (NBA). The perceptions of academia on criteria for quality of students, faculty and higher education institutions are prevailing in the process of quality assessment in higher education. However, the role of other stakeholders such as industries, students, faculty and alumni are very much limited in the quality assessment process and their perceptions on the criteria for the quality of students and faculty for better teaching-learning process are not considered. Hence, the study of perceptions of all stakeholders on the criteria for quality of faculty and students of higher education is the need of the hour for effective quality assessment of higher education in India.

### **Objectives:**

#### **Primary Objectives**

1. Need for a unique quality measurement tool to measure the perceptions on the quality of students and faculty of higher education in India.
2. To determine the effect of demographic variables on the perceptions of faculty and students.

#### **Secondary Objectives**

1. To determine the parameters for quality assurance in higher education.
2. To determine the Perception Gap between the students and faculty.

#### **Limitations of the study**

The samples are taken from Human Resource Department (ASC) Aligarh Muslim University Aligarh. Extending the samples to Arts and Science faculties, Leading Research Institutions, Colleges and other professional colleges from different parts of the Country.

#### **Significance of the Study**

This Study makes a vital contribution in the form of a research tool, further additions to the existing literature and valuable suggestions to the administrators of higher education in India.

**A standardized measurement tool:** The contribution of this research will be a unique questionnaire to measure the perceptions of various stakeholders on the quality of students and faculty of higher education in India. There is no published work citing the availability of such

contextual instrument. Such instrument will give a direction for other contextual academic researchers (India based) to further work on the instrument and make it valid by testing it in different parts of India.

**Addition to quality literature:** This research attempts to study the perceptions gap between various stakeholders of higher education on the quality of students and faculty. Until now the literature addresses the perceptions of academic leaders on quality of higher education. This research will give further additions to the literature on the perceptions of students, alumni, faculty and industries on quality.

**Benefits to college administrators:** The management of higher education institutions can think in a new perspective and can face the challenge of deterioration of quality beyond the perceptions of academic leaders. The management of higher education institutions will be given with the choice of looking at the perceptions of teaching faculty, students and alumni to understand the methods to enhance the quality of higher education institutions.

**Benefits for teaching faculty:** The teaching faculty shall understand the perception gap between them, the students, alumni and industries and improve their competence in delivery and content.

There is a significant difference between the perceptions of industries and faculty on the quality of higher education.

**Hypothesis:**

H1. There is a significant difference between the perceptions of faculty and students on the quality of higher education.

H2. IQAC parameters are significant for Quality assurance in Higher Education.

**Research Design**

The design of this study is explained with the detailed instrumentation process where the operationalization of variables is described. The various validities required for research work and the reliability of the study are explained. The validities include the external validity which stresses the generalizability of samples, construct validity which validates the measurement model that it measures what it intends to measure, face and content validity to ensure that the instrument covers all the variables which could exhaustively measure the intended concept.

Reliability of the study explains the dependability of the measuring instrument. Beyond these, the design defines the nature of the research, the sampling frame, the population base from which samples are derived, the sampling procedure, method of selecting the samples, the data collection

protocol which mentions about the method of collecting the filled up questionnaires and finally defines the independent, dependent and control variables used in the study. This part of the research gets the crucial focus, as it gives the skeletal structure to the whole research work.

Sample Size Estimator Formula (Based on Normal Distribution)

$$x = Z^2 (c/100) \times r(100-r)$$

$$n = Nx / (N-1) E^2 + x$$

$$E = [(N-n) x / n (N-1)]^{1/2}$$

n = Sample Size E= Margin of Error N= Population Size

r = Fraction of responses the researcher is interested in

$Z_2 (c/100)$  = Critical value for a confidence interval 'c'

### Data Analysis And Discussion:

**Table 1:**

Sr. no.	Problem/issue	Yes	No	Don't know
1	Do you think that Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) is a significant body monitoring the process of teaching, learning and evaluation?	42	08	–
2	Does IQAC contribute to maintaining quality standards in teaching, learning and evaluation?	46	04	–
3	Does IQAC encourage/promote co-curricular, extra-curricular and other types of activities as part of asserting quality in teaching, learning and evaluation? If yes, provide example(s).	43	07	–
4	Is IQAC a capable body to administer various academic/educational activities in the college/institution?	45	05	–
5	Is there proper coordination between IQAC and management, IQAC and teaching & non-teaching/support staff, IQAC and students, or coordination among all the stakeholders of the institution through IQAC?	40	10	–
6	Does IQAC need more autonomy, especially financial, for better performance?	46	04	–
7	Do IQAC and its coordinator work under pressure of principal and management, or both?	26	24	–
8	Does IQAC promote, stimulate and monitor the internal evaluation of the students, e.g., tests, tutorials, assignments,	41	09	–

Sr. no.	Problem/issue	Yes	No	Don't know
	practicums, and projects?			
9	Are you satisfied with working with IQAC as its coordinator?	49	03	–
10	Do you need more autonomy (e.g., academic, financial, and administrative) for the smooth and better functioning of IQAC?	42	08	–
11	Should IQAC be replaced by any other committee/body/agency or the like?	25	25	–

**Table 2:**

Sr. no.	Problem/issue	Yes	No	Don't know
1	Do you think that Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) is a significant body monitoring the process of teaching, learning and evaluation?	35	11	04
2	Does IQAC contribute to maintaining quality standards in teaching, learning and evaluation?	43	05	02
3	Does IQAC encourage/promote co-curricular, extra-curricular and other types of activities as a part of asserting quality in teaching, learning and evaluation? If yes, provide example(s).	40	10	–
4	Is IQAC a capable body to administer various academic/educational activities in the college/institution?	38	07	05
5	Is there proper coordination between IQAC and management, IQAC and teaching & non-teaching/support staff, IQAC and students, or coordination among all the stakeholders of the institution through IQAC?	32	14	04
6	Does IQAC need more autonomy, especially financial, for better performance?	33	06	11
7	Do IQAC and its coordinator work under pressure of principal and management, or both?	21	08	–
8	Does IQAC promote, stimulate and monitor the internal evaluation of the students, e.g., tests, tutorials, assignments, practicums, and projects?	35	15	–
9	Are you satisfied with working with IQAC and its coordinator?	35	10	05
10	Does the IQAC coordinator need more autonomy (e.g., academic, financial, and administrative) for the smooth and better functioning of IQAC?	27	23	–

Sr. no.	Problem/issue	Yes	No	Don't know
11	Should IQAC be replaced by any other committee/body/agency, or the like?	09	39	02

The above tables show the quantity of reply to each question/point. Among 85 randomly selected institutions/colleges, replies from 50 colleges only were received, and the same data are taken for granted for analysis. This might be an indication of the attitude/lack of information/prejudice of many colleges against research in higher education in Uttar Pradesh. The research received very interesting responses through the questionnaires. With this analysis, some of the solid results as follows:

1. Both assumptions considered prove positive.
2. The IQAC is a significant administrative body in any educational institution.
3. It contributes to maintaining quality standards in teaching, learning and evaluation.
4. It promotes co-curricular and extra-curricular activities in the college.
5. It is a capable body to administer various academic/educational activities.
6. The IQAC and its coordinator require more autonomy (e.g., academic, financial, and administrative) for better performance.
7. In some institutions/colleges, the IQAC and its coordinator work under pressure of principal and management.
8. The IQAC should not be replaced by any other body/committee/agency, or the like.

**Summary of Findings:**

The overall findings are summarized in this section. **There is a significant difference between the Perceptions of Students and Faculty on the Quality of Students and Faculty.**

The perception gap between the Industries and Faculty is found to be very high on factors such as Generic Skills and Academic Preparedness pertaining to quality of students. There is a vast

difference between the perceptions of both the stakeholders on the factor named Presentation skills and interpersonal skills relevant to the quality of faculty. There is a significant perception gap between the Industry and faculty on the quality of students and faculty.

The management of Higher Education Institutions can think in a new perspective and can face the challenge of deterioration of quality beyond the perceptions of academic leaders. The

management of Higher Education Institutions will be given the choice of looking at the perceptions of teaching faculty, students, alumni and industries to understand the methods to enhance the Quality of Higher Education Institutions.

**Conclusion:**

Thus, from this research it can be concluded that there is a significant perception gap between the Faculty members of higher education and Students on the quality of students and faculty. The results of this study suggest several avenues for further research. Differences in the perceptions of stakeholders signify a need for further exploration as faculty and students are the input and output for higher education. In-depth investigations may be carried out to bridge the perception gap so as to attain synergized effort to improve the quality of higher education.

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