

Thematic Session: V

Role of Ranking and Accreditation in Enhancing Quality

Time: 03.15 PM to 04.45 PM

Venue: Exhibition Hall (Upper), Manekshaw Centre, New Delhi

Name of the panelists

- (i) Prof. Anil Sahasrabudde, Chairman, National Educational Technology Forum (Moderator)
- (ii) Prof. Rajnish Kumar, IIT Madras (Panellist & Key Note Speaker)
- (iii) Dr. S. Vaidhyasubramaniam, Vice-Chancellor, SASTRA University, Thanjavur (Panellist)
- (iv) Prof. Ujwala Chakradeo, Vice Chancellor, SNTD Women's University, Mumbai (Panellist)
- (v) Prof. Manoj Kumari Tiwari, Director, IIM Mumbai (Panellist)

Key discussion points and actionable recommendations for the way forward are presented below in detail.

(a) Key discussion points

- (i) NEP 2020 is bringing transformative reforms in the education sector which is rooted in Indian values, promises benefits for the larger society and humanity.
- (ii) National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), National Board of Accreditation (NBA) & National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) have significantly contributed in the course of bringing reforms in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).
- (iii) In 2014, India became a signatory to the Washington Accord, thereby ensuring that Indian degrees within the scope of the Accord are recognized as equivalent globally.
- (iv) NAAC embodies the process of Documentation, Verification and Validation (DVV) by a third party in its accreditation system, including a vast scheme of quantitative parameters and peer visits. NAAC provides accreditation to Universities & HEIs, NBA accredits academic programmes.
- (v) Educational institutions have not yet come forward in large numbers to get accredited, majorly due to fear of receiving lower grades. Among universities, only about 400 out of 1200 have undergone the accreditation process. There are about 50,000 colleges, out of which only 10% have accredited themselves.
- (vi) Accreditation system has undergone an evolutionary process and now after the Radhakrishnan Committee recommendations, the system of Binary Accreditation & Maturity Based Graded Levels is a welcomed reform which will address one of the major reasons for withdrawing from accreditation by allaying educational institutions' fear of poor grades.
- (vii) Dr. Radhakrishnan committee established in January 2016 has been a major milestone in the journey to improve quality of Higher Education in the country. In contrast to the linear progress of grades, the Committee recommended the system of binary accreditation with 11

attributes including parameters such as sustainability, sensitivity towards society, ethics and values, international laws, graduate attributes and professional competencies 4.0.

- (viii)** National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) has evolved 13 categories and has now expanded to include open universities, State Universities and Skill Universities.
- (ix)** Rank of the educational institutions does not construe power or privileges rather a responsibility to ensure delivering quality education as per exacting standards. NIRF ranks institutions on 5 different parameters including Teaching Learning and Resources (30% weightage), Research and Professional Practice (30% weightage), Graduate Outcomes (20% weightage), Outreach and Inclusivity (10% weightage) and Perception (10% weightage).
- (x)** NIRF ranking are useful for educational institutions in assessing and identifying areas of improvement in order to enhance performance; help students to choose institutions that are aligned to their career aspirations having high academic value.
- (xi)** Ranking is useful for government and regulatory bodies to formulate policies and allocate resources effectively; high NIRF rankings enhance global reputation of Indian institutions, attract international students, and facilitate international collaborations.
- (xii)** NIRF is a comprehensive system, in its contrast, QS scores primarily focus on publications. One of the parameters of QS World University Ranking (WUR) i.e., ‘Employer Reputation’ largely rely on recall value of the educational institution; to have a high score on this, it requires long-term reputation. Similarly, ‘Employment Outcome’ parameter is based on alumni impact index adjusted.
- (xiii)** Indian universities can also improve their score in ranking through publications, sustainability measures, Faculty Student Ratio etc. Publications in QS WUR are counted for up to 6 years back and their citations in the same time period.
- (xiv)** The QS rankings call for “collaborative work with a consistent research collaborator” calculated by the International Research Network (IRN) Index.
- (xv)** Dimensions to catalyse process of accreditation involves sensitization through UGC, AICTE, NCTE, Bar Councils etc., enhancing participation, transition from traditional accreditation mechanism to new Binary Accreditation and Maturity Based Graded Levels, conforming with highest global standards, healthy competition between institutions etc.
- (xvi)** Focussed initiatives are imperative to address challenges associated with women’s participation in education which involves fostering leadership qualities, enhancing decision-making capacities, providing safe learning environment, specialized professional programmes, multidisciplinary education etc. for women’s holistic development. At times, challenges pertaining to female enrolment emanate from absence of women-exclusive educational institutions.
- (xvii)** Educational institutions in remote locations of the country face many challenges regarding recruiting qualified staff. Generation of funds is also one of the prominent concerns of such educational institutions. Hence, participation of such institutions in ranking and accreditation process becomes restricted.

(b) Suggested way Forward

- (i)** To keep progressing in line with recommendations of NEP 2020, there is need to continually monitor the progress with regard to reforms in higher education, make relevant modifications to attain the benchmarks of quality in education.
- (ii)** Non-participation in accreditation process is concerning issue, as eventually, unaccredited educational institutions will lose credibility and have an adverse impact on their goodwill.
- (iii)** Already accredited educational institutions can go for Maturity Based Graded Levels; on the contrary, Binary Accreditation is good for educational institutions that have never been accredited. It will facilitate developing institutional plan that will help them analyse where their institution currently stands and where they need to be in next five years.
- (iv)** For educational institutions to improve their rankings, they must work towards improving on different parameters of ranking and their sub-parameters during the entire academic year than turn to these in last moment.
- (v)** Employer reputation and employment outcome also depends on a university's overall high rank. To score on 'Employer Reputation' and 'Employment Outcome' parameter of QS WUR, it requires a university to consistently have high rank over a period of time.
- (vi)** For QS ranking, educational institutions must focus on high quality publications and citations of research papers for the time period of 5-6 years preceding the Ranking period.
- (vii)** Educational institutions must engage consistently with the same collaborator and publish papers with them in the period of last three years preceding the Ranking period to strengthen its standing on International Research Network (IRN) Index.
- (viii)** Through rigorous faculty training involving national level organizations, instituting incentives for research, consultancy & paper publication, promoting research in regional languages, linking institutions with industries, adequate financial support, waiving off or subsidizing accreditation fees etc., enabling conditions can be created for greater participation of women in education sector, especially in educational institutions located in rural regions.

Rapporteur

1. Dr. Shiva Kr. Kandekar, Assistant Professor, NIEPA
2. Dr. Charu Smitha Malik, Assistant Professor, NIEPA