

Quality enhancement through Internal Quality Assurance System

Dr. Kavita Patil

*Vice-Prin. & Head, Asso.Professor, Textile Science and Apparel Design Department,
SMRK-BK-AK Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Nashik-5*

Abstract: *Quality reflects the level of proximity between expected and actual behaviour of an object, service or system. Quality of the educational service offered by an organization has direct impact on the students getting enrolled, industries' interest to hire resources from the institute and thus the branding of an institute at a higher level. Internal Quality Assurance Cell is playing very crucial role in Quality Assurance, Quality sustenance and Quality enhancement of institution. Quality Assurance is about deploying the defined quality processes, continuously monitoring the effectiveness of the deployed process, identifying the gaps and reporting to the Management, working with management to address the gaps across functions. This paper is based on effective mechanism of Internal Quality Assurance System and its impact on continuous improvement in the processes have been discussed.*

Keywords: *Quality, Quality Assurance, Quality sustenance,*

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I. INTRODUCTION:

India has one of the largest and diverse educational systems in the world. Privatization, widespread expansion, increased autonomy and introduction of programs areas has improved access to higher education. At the same time, it also leads to widespread concern to the quality and relevance of higher education. In present scenario, educational institutions are expected to be trend setters in adopting several standards related to the quality of education. Quality management systems and Quality Measures have become significant in Higher Education. National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) in India is playing important role in Quality Sustenance and Enhancement in Higher Education. The role of NAAC is to assess and accredit institutions of higher education in India and to promote Quality Assurance in Higher Education.

Quality Higher Education has now been found to be important to National Development. The Process of doing this will involve Quality Assurance. Quality Assurance is systematic review of educational programs to ensure that acceptable standards of education and infrastructure are being maintained. Quality assurance process concentrated on enforcing the rules and regulations to be followed to assess the quality of education.

There is need for quality assurance in Higher education system, which involves the assessment of Quality in Higher education in which the role of IQAC is very important. Such quality systems will help in the process of attaining exceptional high standards in education, solving problems in maintaining quality and drawbacks in the educational system and suggesting the improvement in the educational system.

Objectives:

- To study the processes of continuous quality improvement
- To take review of enhancement in quality culture through IQAC
- To assess the functioning of institution towards quality enhancement.

A Case Study: S.M.R.K.-B.K. -A.K.- Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Nashik

Gokhale Education Society's: S.M.R.K.-B.K.-A.K.-Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Nashik, permanently affiliated to S.N.D.T. women's University, Mumbai. Pioneering women's college in North Maharashtra, has an inter disciplinary approach towards Quality Education. College has 34 years of its meaningful existence and standing in the field of Quality education for women and running 33 educational programs successfully, under one roof. Along with Arts, Commerce, Management and Science faculty, Institute also offers unique courses such as Drawing and Painting, Music, Home Science, Minimum Competency Vocational Courses, Extension Programs under Distance Education, Post-Graduation Courses and skill based Certificate and Diploma Courses in Fashion Designing, Interior Designing.

With a mission to empower women through quality education, the college has been developing multifaceted women citizens. Skill-based innovative programmes are designed which help in developing creativity among the students. Recently the Institute has undergone 3rd cycle of reaccreditation of NAAC and

has been awarded B++ grade with CGPA 2.89. The IQAC of institute plays very important role in Quality enhancement and sustenance and is instrumental to adopt best practices to provide quality education, knowledge of latest Technology, modern communication skills to meet the society's needs and to face global challenges in the entrepreneurial world.

Contribution of Institution's Quality Assurance Processes:

- Institution offers a wide range of skill-based courses to address current needs and choices of the society.
- The curricula focus on financial, physical, mental and social growth of the students.
- The staff is well qualified and experienced and strives hard to give quality education through academic, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.
- Four Student-centric Associations play significant role in developing multifaceted personalities.
- Student's Council and NSS wing develop creativity, interpersonal competencies and social awareness.
- Positive and strong bonding between staff and students and complete involvement of the employees ensure quality assurance.
- Institute focuses on creating conducive environment to promote innovative practices in teaching-learning and research.

Role of Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC):

As per the guidelines of National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), composition of IQAC is mandatory as a post accreditation quality sustenance measures. Since quality enhancement is a continuous process, the IQAC becomes a part of the institution's system and work towards realisation of the goals of quality enhancement and sustenance.

Quality is never an accident; it is always the result of intelligent effort- John Ruskin

Quality Assurance as "a process of continuous quality improvement"

Assessment is "a Process of evaluation of performance of an institution of Higher Learning and/or its units, based on certain established criteria"

IQAC is to generate good practices, ideas, planning, implementing and measuring the Outcome of Academic and Administrative performance of the institution. Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) of S.M.R.K.-B.K.-A.K.-Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Nashik was established in 2005. The IQAC, constituted as per NAAC guidelines.

Its contribution in institutionalizing the "Quality Assurance":

- Focuses on vision and Mission of the college.
- Strives to create world class citizens by giving updated knowledge, global skills and value based knowledge through scholastic and non-scholastic activities.
- Endeavors to create appropriate ICT based and other physical infrastructure.
- Thrives on the culture of excellence and imbibes the pursuit of distinction and merit in students.
- Conducts remedial teaching for slow learners initiated by IQAC.
- Organizes programs for teacher lectures, Demos and presentation to maintain good academic performance of the learners.
- IQAC focuses on creating conducive environment to promote innovative practices in teaching-learning and research.
- Quality control Cell formulates report formats on the basis of Quality parameters decided by IQAC.

Ensuring optimization of quality assurance in following ways:

- Internal Quality Assurance Cell acts as a nodal unit of the Institution for augmenting quality-related activities.
- Sets quality benchmarks for Academic, Administrative, Extra-curricular and curricular activities which are planned by College and monitored by IQAC.
- Prepares Academic Calendar incorporating the Schedule of College activities, National festivals, Departmental activities, Examination schedule, vacation schedule etc.
- Various committees have been formed with defined objectives to carry out different scholastic and non-scholastic activities in the college.
- Instructs Head of the institution to oversee the work of all committees as well as monitors, sustain and enhances quality of functioning of academic and Administrative activities.
- Co-ordinates with each in-charge to encourage quality work and updated record keeping.
- Delegates the responsibility to Heads of the Department to organize State, National, International seminars/Conferences rotation wise.

- Organizes National and International Conferences, Seminars, workshops on Quality-related themes and promotion of quality circles and institutions-wide dissemination of the proceedings of such activities.
- Organizes Inter-Institutional workshop every year for advanced learners of G.E. Society's Colleges, Nashik zone on need-based themes.
- Motivates staff to undertake research Projects, Present papers at National and International conferences and Seminars and publish papers in Peer reviewed UGC approved Journals.
- It also plan the study tours/ Educational visits/ Industry visits.
- Develops linkages through MOU's with Industries, Educational Institutes, Associations, G. O's and NGO's.
- Instructs to prepare Department wise reports and committees report in structured formats of QCC which helps to get to the point information of various activities to ensure quality sustenance of processes and procedures.
- As college is certified under ISO 9001:2008 Certification, under IQAC, periodic internal and surveillance audits are conducted which help to do SWOC analysis of Departments and Committees to sustain quality parameters and quality management systems.
- Retrieves the information on various quality parameters of Higher Education and best practices followed by other Institutions.
- Motivates to develop and implement innovative practices in various programmes/ activities leading to quality enhancement.
- Participates in the creation of learner-centric environment conducive for quality education.
- Works for the development of Internationalization and Institutionalization of quality enhancement policies and practices.
- Prepares focused annual quality assurance report(AQARs).

Functioning of institution for Quality enhancement:

- Assisted Academic planning through Academic Calendar which helps to keep check on the Teaching – Learning process.
- Practiced to prepare Monthly Progressive Report by staff on daily basis which helps to keep track of completion of syllabus as per Annual Teaching plan.
- Enhanced ICT Teaching-Learning process by using Smart Classrooms.
- Conduct of timely Departmental and Faculty meetings ensured review, execution, and valuation of academic activities.
- Widen 'Feedback Mechanism' by developing new QCC formats.
- Ensured quality development and quality sustenance by having regular ISO Audits.
- Helped in improving Quality procedures and processes.
- Promoted extension activities through NSS wing and establishing linkages with NGO's to develop responsibility among students.
- Strengthened Alumni network by organizing programmes and by recognizing their achievements.
- Encouraged participation of students in college level, inter-collegiate, University, State and National level programmes to develop leadership qualities in students.
- Undertaken environment initiatives to create sustainable campus.
- Promoted creation of "Green and clean Campus".

II. RESULT AND DISCUSSION:

IQAC monitors continual improvement in Quality Management systems fulfilling stakeholder's satisfaction and achieving better results which have contributed to institutionalizing the quality assurance process resulted as below:

- The Institute has achieved great height of Excellence in Scholastic and Non-scholastic domains with 102 rank holders in University Merit list since inception.
- Institute has bagged 51 prizes at the University level in last 5 years.
- Our Institution has made its mark by winning " Principal T. A. Kulkarni Five Star Quality and Excellence Award" conferred by G. E. Society, Nashik, twice among 140 educational institutions flourishing under the umbrella of G. E. Society.
- Institute has 33 In-house publications in form of books and Proceedings having ISBN.
- Institute has organized two International Conferences, 5 UGC sponsored National Seminars and two State level Seminars.
- The Institute has 24 MOU's with National; State level Organizations, Industries, G.O.'s and N.G.O.'s.
- In the last 5 years, around 395 students have undertaken internship.

- 22 students have cleared Competitive Examination and the institution had conducted skill based 58 Workshops to foster Industry-Academia linkages.
- Out of 33 senior college teaching staff members, 18 faculty members have obtained Ph. D., 11 have obtained M. Phil. and 6 have been appointed as recognized Research Guides.
- Staff members have published 218 Research Papers in International, National and State level Conferences, Seminars and Workshops in last 5 years..
- Total no. of 60 Research Papers has been published in UGC Approved Journal in last 5 years.
- In the last 5 years, the Institution had arranged the lectures and interaction with 375 experts from different parts of the country and the world.
- Our Staff has been honored by 42 State, National and Regional Awards and Prizes and 20 awards and recognition for Extension activities.

Suggestions to enhance quality for effective Promotion and Management:

- Effective organizational arrangement in composition of Internal Quality Assurance cell is required.
- Departmental interactions with IQAC should be increased and assessment of its impact should be assessed.
- Expected Outcome oriented activities need to be planned.
- Establishment of effective Research and Development Cell, Incubation Center etc.
- Establishment of Training Centers in ICT, TQM, Automation process, soft skill etc.
- Frequent interaction with stakeholders and tapping innovative ideas.
- Development of MOU's with International Bodies.

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