
Quality Improvement in Teacher Education Institutions through Academic and Administrative Audit

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Abstract:

Education in the global world seeks to preserve, transmit and advance knowledge, and is committed to bring the change for the betterment of society. Teacher is considered to be the backbone of the society, a nation builder who plays an important role for the development of the nation. Today, the world needs better and more committed teachers to meet the challenges of LPG (Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization). To meet the challenges of 21st century teacher education needs a total change. The curriculum and contents are to be revised. The aims and objectives of Teacher Education are to be revised. Teaching methods and process of teaching and learning are to be innovative. To bring quality in all aspects of Teacher Education Institutions, Academic Audit plays an important role. Effective, Academic Audit tries to explore various institutional difficulties and determines various quality parameters for effective functioning; those are the needs of the day. Academic and Administrative Audit provide quality education with standard curriculum and globally acceptable system of education. This paper highlights the objective, methods, strategies and functions of Academic and Administrative Audit. Academic and Administrative Audit evaluate the performance of the institution and to identify the issues those are to be attended to in order to improve the quality of Teaching and Research.

KEY WORDS:

Academic, Administrative, Audit, Quality, Determinants, Teacher, Education, LPG.

INTRODUCTION

Twenty first century has witnessed rapid changes in all walks of life. Considering these changes Respective governments in the various countries have proposed various methods and measures to enhance the quality of education at higher (college / university) level. What so ever is the name, but these all are attempts of Academic and Administrative Audit. In India along with central government some states like Gujrat have not only volunteered but made Academic and Administrative Audit a mandatory measure for the institutions of Higher Education. Centre has assigned the responsibility to National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). Before discussing the academic and administrative audit, it is of utmost importance to know the meaning of quality & standard and the difference between two:

The concept of quality is not new, it has always been part of the academic tradition. It is the outside world that now emphasizes the need for attention to quality. It is the relationship between higher education and society which has changed. 'Quality' relates to process (e.g., the quality of the educational process experienced by students) 'Standards' intended or actual achievement or outcome.

'linking quality and standards'

- **contribution of educational process (quality) to attainment of a defined standard.**

What Is Academic Audit:

Academic Audit is a mechanism to examine and enhance the quality of academic aspects of institutes of Higher Education. Defining Academic Audit B. L. Gupta states that, "it is a systematic and scientific process of designing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing the quality of academic systems, i. e. inputs, processes and outputs. ... It emphasizes on reviewing the performance of the academic inputs with respect to quality assurance (P. 1)."

What is an Administrative Audit?

M. Rajendran defines Administrative Audit as "A method of assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of the operating system of the administrative procedures, policies, decision-making authorities and functionaries, strategies, process, feedback, control mechanism and so on. The AA would certainly make the functionaries to ascertain the strength and weakness of the operating system in general and pin out the areas in particular, and to ascertain where the function is stagnated and affected, and where special attention is required along with man and material resources" (P. 54).

Brief History :

Academic and Administrative Audit is a standard strategy for quality enhancement of Institutes of Higher education. Respective state governments have introduced external quality Audits in various countries as part of reforms in higher education. According to Shah and Nair, "in countries such as United Kingdom, various European countries, and in New Zealand, external quality audits have been in place since 1990s. In countries such as India, South Africa, Australia,

some Middle Eastern countries, Hong Kong, Malaysia they have been in place since early 2000s (P. 20)".

Aims and Objectives :

The aims and objectives of AAA can be stated as follows:

1. The setting and maintenance of academic standards
2. The quality of students' learning opportunities.
3. Developments in quality enhancement.
4. The need for greater integration between academic planning, research assessment and quality assurance.
5. The recognition and use of the outcomes from professional association activities.
6. The recognition of the importance of quality enhancement.

Necessity:

The Academic and Administrative Audit is needed for following:

1. To confirm that the arrangements for quality assurance are fit for purpose and conform to the institution's role and mission.
2. To provide assurance that the standards of higher education (at degree level and above) align with expectations.
3. To ensure that students have access to appropriate learning opportunities through taught provision, private study and supported learning.
4. To promote and enhance high quality teaching and learning.
5. To confirm that students are fully supported in their academic and personal development.
6. To advance the highest possible levels of student achievement.
7. To encourage strategic developments that enriches the curriculum and enhances students'

opportunities for employment and career development.

NAAC as a National Agency for AAA: As per the guidelines of University Grants Commission, the apex body on Higher Education in the country the task of AAA is assigned to an independent institution established by Ministry of HRD is called as National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). UGC has made NAAC evaluation as mandatory for HEs in India. Though NAAC is located at Bangalore its reach is nationwide since it is the only authority responsible for assessment and accreditation of Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) in India. It has developed its own system of assessing the quality of education provided by the HEIs. It evaluates the performance of the institute that opts for evaluation on the basis of past and present contribution of the HEIs with a fixed scale common for all the HEIs in India. This scale consists of seven criteria as given below:

1. Curricular Aspects
2. Teaching-Learning and Evaluation
3. Research, Consultancy and Extension
4. Infrastructure and Learning Resources
5. Student Support and Progression
6. Governance and Leadership
7. Innovative Practices

AAA and Benchmarking:

Academic standards set by particular institution are called as the benchmarks of the institution about the quality it provides. In academic institutes they are always defined by student achievements. The main aspects of it are - the acquisition of knowledge, the development of capability and the exercise of intellectual skills by students. It is applicable to all disciplines and reflects the expectations established by institutions as well as the academic requirements and competencies associated with individual courses and programmes.

Conclusion:

Academic and Administrative Audit gives a standard system based on parameters for Quality education. Quality enhancement is defined in terms of institutional policies, procedures and activities that are designed to promote the learning experience and learning outcomes of students and also contribute to the enrichment of the curriculum. The approach to enhancement will involve an institutional assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of current academic practice and the identification of potential areas for improvement. It may also reflect the particular mission and strategic priorities of institutions, where enhancement is seen in terms of a strategy for driving change and promoting student achievement and capabilities. Hence it is concluded that there is a strong need to pay proper attention to institutional strategies and policies for global engagements, extending the experience and aspirations of students to participate in an increasingly global community.

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