

State-wise Analysis of Accreditation Reports - *Kerala*



राष्ट्रीय मूल्यांकन एवं प्रत्यायन परिषद्

विश्वविद्यालय अनुदान आयोग का स्वायत्त संस्थान

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND ACCREDITATION COUNCIL

An Autonomous Institution of the University Grants Commission

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Abbreviations

A & A	:	Assessment and Accreditation
AVRC	:	Audio Visual Research Center
BoS	:	Board of Studies
CCC	:	College Consultancy Cell
CRC	:	College Research Committee
CSC	:	Curriculum Study Cell
CSS	:	Credit and Semester System
CU	:	Calicut University
CUGS	:	Center for UG Studies
CUSAT	:	Cochin University of Science and Technology
DAE	:	Department of Atomic Energy
DCDC	:	Director of College Development Council
DCE	:	Director of Collegiate Education
DST	:	Department of Science and Technology
HRD	:	Human Resource Development
JRF	:	Junior Research Fellow
KU	:	Kerala University
LMC	:	Local Management Committee
MGU	:	Mahatma Gandhi University
MoU	:	Memorandum of Understanding
NAAC	:	National Assessment and Accreditation Council
NOC	:	No Objection Certificate
PDC	:	Pre Degree Course
PT	:	Peer Team
PTR	:	Peer Team Report
QAC	:	Quality Assurance Cell
R & D	:	Research and Development
SA	:	Self-Appraisal
SF	:	Self-Financing
SSR	:	Self Study Report
UGC	:	University Grants Commission
USIC	:	University Science Instrumentation Center
VC	:	Vice-Chancellor



Preface

Enabling an understanding of the current state of affairs, the Assessment and Accreditation of institutions by the NAAC is but the first step in the process of enhancing the quality of education in colleges and universities in the country. To achieve real, overall quality enhancement, action has to be taken for quality sustenance as well as quality improvement even after the process of Assessment and Accreditation is completed. For such post-accreditation efforts, a state-wise approach seems more desirable since a study of the Peer Team Reports of the colleges and universities of a particular state reveals that institutions within that state have many common features both in their strengths and weaknesses. This developmental pattern is obviously the result of the policies and practices followed by a state government (state universities generally fall in line with the state policies).

The Peer Team Reports represent the ground realities and the micro-level scrutinies of the actual state of affairs in institutions. An analysis of the various Peer Team Reports of a state should help to identify a set of common problems faced by the colleges on the one hand and the universities on the other. It would then be possible to suggest solutions through midterm corrective actions and policy interventions by higher authorities and other stakeholders. The implementation by the various stakeholders of the recommendations and suggestions provided after the analysis of the Peer Team Reports could be critical for a qualitative improvement in the higher education scenario of a state as a whole. Some of the recommendations and suggestions require the colleges to take action. However, the colleges alone will not be fully execute many of the recommendations and suggestions unless they are facilitated and supported by higher agencies and other stakeholders. There are issues that can be tackled only if the affiliating university also initiates action. There are other issues where the policies and strategies of the state government are involved. Still larger national level





questions might require decisions by apex agencies like the UGC and the NAAC.

The higher education sector in the country is probably the fastest growing sector of national life. The rapid growth has naturally created a state of flux in the sector. After wide circulation of this analysis among the various stakeholders in a state, interactions among various authorities and stakeholders would be necessary to ensure action on the recommendations and suggestions for ensuring quality improvement and quality sustenance in the higher education system of the state.

This exercise of the state-wise analysis of accreditation reports would then have achieved its objective of ensuring that efforts are made in the state for quality sustenance as well as quality improvement even after the process of Assessment and Accreditation is completed.

Prof. V.S. Prasad





State-wise Analysis of Accreditation Reports – Kerala

Introduction

The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), Bangalore, is an autonomous organization launched by the University Grants Commission (UGC), with the key mandate of enhancing the quality of higher education institutions in the country. Assessment and Accreditation (A & A) of institutions, the preliminary step in the process, is necessary to understand their current status. However, after working with several institutions, it has become clear that after assessing and accrediting them efforts would have to be mobilized for quality sustenance as well as quality improvement in the institutions. When the Peer Team Reports (PTRs) of a particular state are analysed, it is seen that institutions within that state have common strengths and weaknesses. Undoubtedly the commonality is a consequence of the state's education policies with the universities in a state generally following the state government's guidelines and policies. A state-wise approach of analyzing deficiencies and suggesting remedies could help in effective follow-up action after A & A.

The government of Kerala has adopted a proactive stand towards the initiatives taken by the NAAC. In fact a few meetings and seminars were conducted in Kerala in association with the NAAC to deliberate and plan as to how effectively





and quickly colleges and universities in the state could take up the process of A & A. Subsequently the state government constituted a Quality Assurance Cell (QAC) in the Higher Education Department directly under the Principal Secretary for monitoring the progress of the accreditation process in the affiliated colleges in Kerala. However, no directive was given regarding the time-frame for completing the process. The matter is under the active consideration of the government and hopefully some firm action plan would emerge soon.

Material and Methods

In Kerala, 61 colleges and 4 universities have been assessed and accredited by the NAAC until September 2003. The present analysis relates to the PTRs of these institutions. Of the colleges, 10 belong to the Kerala University (KU), 7 to the Calicut University (CU) and 44 to the Mahatma Gandhi University (MGU). The University of Science and Technology (CUSAT), Kochi; Calicut University (CU), Calicut; Mahatma Gandhi University (MGU), Kottayam and Kerala University (KU), Trivandrum were the universities assessed and accredited in the state. Though there are only a few colleges from the KU and the CU, educationists familiar with the Kerala educational scenario would realize that the major issues faced by most of the colleges in the state are identical in many respects since both the CU and the MGU branched off from the KU only about 35 and 15 years ago respectively. Kannur University, the fourth affiliating university in the state is yet to get UGC recognition and no college under this university has come forward for A & A so far. Sri Sankara Sanskrit University, Kalady, which is a unitary institution but with many centres all over the State has also not undergone the A & A process. As per the data available, there were 198 Arts, Science and Commerce colleges in the state in April 2002. Therefore, about 20 percent of the colleges and almost 80 percent of the Universities have undergone the process of A & A by the NAAC.

The main purpose of this study of the various PTRs is to identify the common problems faced by the affiliated colleges and the universities and recommend



possible solutions involving action by various stakeholding groups. Only such positive actions and policy changes can bring about any visible qualitative improvement in the higher education scenario of the state as a whole. The PTRs delineate in detail the realities of the institutional situation. As far as possible, these hard realities have to be extracted and codified from the PTRs to identify the overall deficiencies in the system. The outcome of such an exercise is certain to be useful to managers of higher education institutions, policy makers and other stakeholders.

The overall analysis part of the PTRs, including the recommendations and suggestions, furnished the core material for the present analysis. However, when this component was brief, the criterion-wise texts were fully utilized. In analyzing and extracting the salient features of the PTRs, the six points of the terms of reference were constantly kept in view. However, interactions with various authorities and stakeholders, as mandated in one of the points, will be carried out at a later stage after wide circulation of this analysis among the various stakeholders.

Section I : Criterion-wise Analysis

The seven criteria evolved by the NAAC, for the first time in the country, for measuring the quality of higher education offer a good framework for multidimensional growth of colleges as well as universities. As is now well known, the seven measuring points are: *Curricular Aspects; Teaching-learning and Evaluation; Research, Consultancy and Evaluation; Infrastructure and Learning Resources; Student Support and Progression; Organization and Management; and Healthy Practices*. The new, multidimensional approach makes it clear that colleges should be concerned not only with the day-to-day teaching (rather coaching) but also with the all-round development of students and the institutions over a period of time.



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In order to make the present analysis really objective, the 7-criteria framework evolved by the NAAC is followed here also. When formulating the assessment framework, the NAAC also defined the relative weightages of the various criteria for different types of educational institutions like the university, the autonomous college and the affiliated college. For ready reference the weightages are given below:

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>University</i>	<i>Autonomous college</i>	<i>Affiliated college</i>
<i>Curricular Aspects</i>	15	15	10
<i>Teaching-learning and Evaluation</i>	25	30	40
<i>Research, Consultancy and Extension</i>	15	10	5
<i>Infrastructure and Learning Resources</i>	15	15	15
<i>Student Support and Progression</i>	10	10	10
<i>Organization and Management</i>	10	10	10
<i>Healthy Practices</i>	10	10	10

It can be seen that differential weightages have been allotted to universities, autonomous colleges and affiliated colleges in respect of the first three criteria that form the main functional aspects of an educational institution. The differential weightages reflect the variations between the three types of institutions in the performance of these basic functions.

Curricular Aspects: The greater weightage given to universities and autonomous colleges reflects the fact that they have much more to do with the designing and restructuring of the curricula of various courses while the affiliated colleges have little freedom in this respect. The latter normally follow the syllabus and curricula prescribed by the affiliating university.



*Teaching-learning and Evaluation:*As in other parts of the country, in Kerala too, universities have not paid adequate attention to diversifying or restructuring degree level education with the result that most of the colleges continue to impart education only in traditional subjects and in very conventional ways. However, the affiliated colleges perform a crucial function both in respect of the teaching-learning process and in respect of the direct and continuous evaluation of students. Therefore, maximal weightage is allotted to this criterion for affiliated colleges.

Research, consultancy and extension: Universities and autonomous colleges can make greater contributions as they have the academic ambience for it while most of the affiliated colleges feel that they are constrained. Therefore, the weightage given to this criterion for universities and autonomous colleges is more than that given to affiliated colleges.

Generally speaking, the grades earned by colleges are found to depend mainly on their achievements and performance in the first three criteria. For example, the PTRs have reported that the 5-star graded colleges in Kerala were strong in the above three criteria.

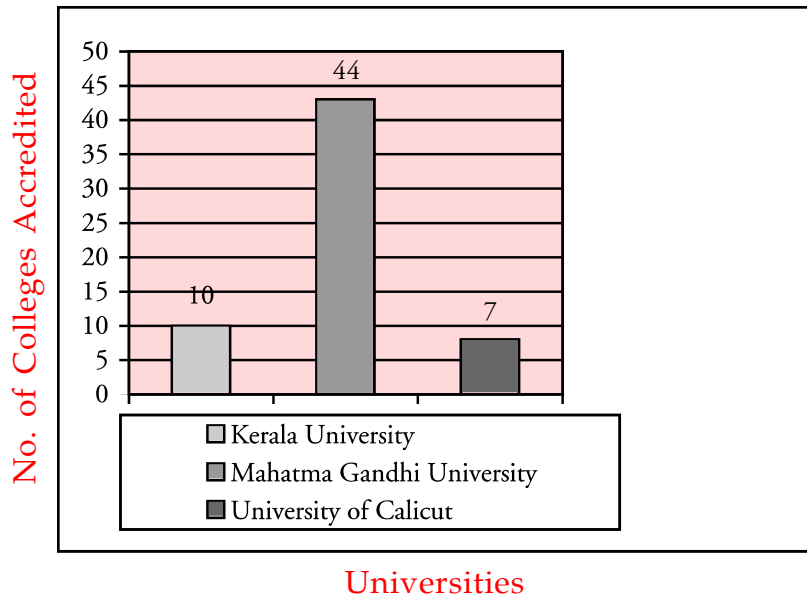
With the separation of Pre Degree Courses from colleges, when the student strength was more than halved, the academic opportunities available to colleges were many, such as starting of new, diversified courses at degree level, modernization of laboratories to facilitate introduction of such courses and retraining of teachers to fulfill the new teaching demands. The opportunity has been made use of by only a few colleges.

In the present analysis, the affiliated colleges and the universities are dealt with in two separate sections. Section II presents the Recommendations.



a) Accredited Colleges

University-wise distribution of accredited colleges



The PTRs readily yield a few macro-level observations about the affiliated colleges in Kerala:

- (i) There are no autonomous colleges at all in the state. The government is yet to grant the necessary permission.
- (ii) There are also no totally self-financing colleges (*among the colleges included in the present analysis*).
- (iii) Since the government has not given any firm directive to its directly controlled colleges to go for A & A, only three government colleges have volunteered for the process. The remaining colleges are aided institutions, mostly working under different corporate managements. The great majority of the aided colleges covered in this analysis are recognized minority institutions.
- (iv) Since the separation of higher secondary (called Pre Degree Course - PDC - in the state) from the affiliated colleges has been completed recently, a number of colleges have started diversification of courses and introducing



new supplementary evening programmes to make use of the extra space and manpower available.

- (v) Out of the 61 colleges, two were accredited under the old system of assessment while 41 were given grades under the 1-5 star-system. Nine colleges have earned 5-star status, fourteen 4-star status and eighteen 3-star status. Twenty colleges are graded as per the latest 9-grade system. The split up of this category is as follows :

A = 1, B⁺⁺ = 6, B⁺ = 9, B = 4.

This reveals that more than half the number of colleges covered in the present analysis are highly rated.

- (vi) The admission policy is uniform throughout the state, admission being offered as per the norms laid out by the government except in the case of Self-Financing (SF) courses where admission tests are often conducted by the institution.
- (vii) The fee structure is also uniform with little variation between aided and government colleges and is generally very low compared to the actual cost involved. However, for SF courses a higher fee structure is permitted and it differs for different courses. In fact, the state government prescribes the fee structure and the university has hardly any role in deciding it.

1. Curricular Aspects

Many colleges do not have a clear well-defined vision and goals. Often some simple one-line motto is adopted; the definition of further ideals and practices depends upon the authorities that control the institution from time to time. The absence or lack of clarity of the mission of the institution and its policies and objectives is an impediment in translating ideals into clear academic programmes. Similarly, there is no perspective plan in most of the colleges. In highly rated institutions, a 5- or 10-year plan has been recently prepared.



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The traditional command-type of relationship continues to exist in Kerala between the university and its affiliates. The PTRs reveal that almost all colleges simply follow the syllabus provided by the university without any serious attempt to suggest revision or restructuring. Moreover, though some teachers of the accredited colleges had served as members of various Boards of Studies (BoS), hardly a few had made any impact in bringing about substantial changes in the syllabi. There is very little variation among the colleges in their approach to curricula. However, the MGU recently introduced what is described as Model I and Model II syllabi. The former represents the traditional type of syllabi and the latter a restructured one with some vocational elements. The affiliated colleges are free to choose one of the two as per their preparedness. The university itself took the initiative in the matter and directed the various BoS to prepare Model II. The preparation of alternate syllabi by the BoS and the option available to the colleges to choose one of them as per their capability is a distinct improvement in the affiliating system. This arrangement has given limited flexibility to the curricular aspects in the colleges affiliated to the MGU. The undue delay in bringing about modifications or revisions in the syllabi and curricula has also been adversely commented upon in the PTRs.

The centralized annual examination pattern continues in all the universities. In the KU and the CU, the colleges assessed and accredited follow only this centralized pattern. Though several highly rated colleges conduct regular midterm examinations, they carry no marks in the final examination. According to the PTRs, this is clearly one of the reasons for poor results in the university exams in many of the colleges that did not get a good rating. However, in colleges affiliated to the MGU, 20 percent marks in some papers are earmarked for internal evaluation and the marks obtained are carried to the final university examinations.

The absence of semester system except in a few vocational degree programmes introduced as per UGC directives is uniformly reprovved in almost all the PTRs. Even for PG courses the annual plan is predominant. The PTRs recommend early transition to the semester system from the annual plan which has been proved to be futile in improving quality in education. All the PTRs have reported that



really innovative curricula could be found only in the UGC-sponsored vocational degree programmes.

2. Teaching-learning and Evaluation

The traditional chalk-and-talk method is predominant in the colleges accredited. Even in highly-rated institutions, the classroom lecture is the chief way of transmission of knowledge. Discussions, student seminars, project preparation and other student-participative methods are exceptions rather than the rule. The use of modern teaching technology –overhead projector, slide projection, computer, etc. – is limited, if at all available. In fact, many PTRs have conspicuously highlighted the inadequacy or even total absence of innovative teaching methods and modern teaching aids.

Most of the faculty members hold a basic qualification and are recruited as per government norms. There are very few Ph. D. degree holders in most colleges, though quite a few teachers have taken the M. Phil. degree. The PTRs have pointed out that very few teachers continue their research after taking a higher research degree. Consequently, there is hardly any research atmosphere and research publications are rare. However, quite a few teachers have shown interest in writing textual type of books. The participation of teachers in seminars/workshops,, etc. is satisfactory only in highly-rated institutions. More importantly, only a few colleges have displayed interest in organizing conferences/seminars/workshops, etc. in their own premises. Faculty development schemes or regular training for non-teaching staff are, again, effectively conducted only in a few institutions. A comparison of the PTRs of 3-star, 4-star and 5-star institutions clearly indicates that the grading accorded to them essentially reflects the performance of the faculty. The differences in the performance can be seen more clearly between 3-star and 5-star colleges than between those with 4-stars and 5-stars. Some colleges are conducting remedial teaching for the benefit of students who are weak in certain subjects, particularly English. Periodical tests are conducted in highly-rated colleges and women's colleges. The tutorial system functions in a few colleges.



In most cases, teachers prepare self-appraisal reports, but they are forwarded to the government for further action. Student appraisal of teachers is generally absent, but has been introduced recently in some colleges, probably in response to the NAAC query. In the majority of the accredited colleges, the courses are of the aided nature. Unaided regular degree programmes are very few. However, unaided evening programmes including diploma and/or certificate courses have been introduced recently to supplement the regular programmes.

Several PTRs have expressed concern at the lack of proper liaison between the parent university and the affiliated colleges, though there is a post of full college Dean of College Development Council (DCDC) functioning in the former. The relationship between the university and the affiliated colleges is often merely procedural, not creative or helpful for the all-round development of the latter. The PTRs have also lamented the lack of any give-and-take relationships worth mentioning between the faculty members of the affiliated colleges and those of the university.

3. Research, Consultancy and Extension

The PTRs reveal that research, as an additional input to the teaching-learning process, has not yet taken root in most of the accredited Kerala colleges. Of the 61 colleges, very few have even claimed to be doing some meaningful research. Others present a picture of varying degrees of research efforts on the part of some individual faculty members. In a few highly-rated colleges, about one-third of the teachers are reportedly engaged in research, but this is not corroborated by publications. On an average, about one-fifth of the teachers have research degrees. However, they do not pursue research vigorously after completion of the degree. While a few teachers are pursuing their higher studies leading to research degrees under the Faculty Improvement Programme (FIP), a few others have registered for research degrees elsewhere on their own. Also, a few departments of highly-rated colleges have been recognized as research centres by the parent university and several senior teachers are approved guides. Many teachers and departments have attracted minor funding from various sources.



Some colleges have also major funding from national agencies like the UGC, the DST, etc. Despite these, almost all the PTRs have expressed the opinion that research is marginal in most accredited colleges. There is no research culture of any weight anywhere, or any full-time Research Fellows. Research Endowment and a separate corpus fund to support research activities are practically non-existent. The consultancy culture also is yet to take any root in the colleges that came forward for accreditation, though informally several teachers render help to those who have sought it.

Many PTRs have suggested the formation of College Research Committees (CRCs) to encourage and coordinate research efforts by the teachers. The CRCs could guide in the preparation of projects for research funding, liaison with the funding agencies, try to institute endowments for research, get sponsors for specific projects and coordinate the research work of various departments. The CRCs should establish a good working relationship with the UGC regional office and other funding/sponsoring agencies. The PTRs have further stressed the need for better and more frequent liaison with the university through the DCDC for a take-off in research initiatives.

4. Infrastructure and Learning Resources

Most of the colleges accredited have good infrastructure, some having excellent facilities. Because of the recent shifting of PDC to Higher Secondary Schools, abundant additional space has become available to colleges. Adequate land, playgrounds, etc. are also on hand. In many cases, there is a separate building for the library which has a reasonable collection too. However, the PTRs have expressed dissatisfaction at the working hours which normally are synchronized with the college working hours. The lack of computerization of the library has also been adversely commented upon. The computer centre is another modern facility not yet properly developed in the majority of the colleges though it is nominally present in some. However, in a few highly-rated institutions it is fairly well organized. In such places, the internet and other computer-aided facilities are open to both students and teachers. A media centre is yet to take proper shape



in almost all the colleges under analysis. There are reasonable sports facilities in the majority of the colleges, but sophisticated tracks, gym, special coaching arrangements, etc. are found only in a few colleges. However, there is little sharing of the available space and facilities with outside agencies or after the normal working hours from 9 am to 4 pm. The PTRs have pointed out that there exists a strong feeling of exclusiveness on the part of the colleges about the large infrastructure and other assets built up over a period of time.

5. Student Support and Progression

Most of the PTRs have remarked that traditionally these two items did not attract the attention of authorities, but have become concerns only recently in colleges, except in a few developed ones where some attention has been paid to the issues even earlier in a modest way. Quite a few colleges have set up counseling centres recently, but they are yet to focus their activities and to yield desired results. Career and course guidance centres function in some highly-rated colleges. Placement efforts do not mean much in Arts, Science and Commerce colleges since there are already surplus hands at graduate levels. However, in some colleges where new job-related courses are introduced, efforts are also made to find placements for the graduates. Parents'-Teachers' Associations have been functioning in a modest way in many accredited colleges, and are strongly developed in some others, but hardly a few colleges have kept any record of their alumni.

6. Organization and Management

Except three government colleges all other accredited institutions under analysis are controlled and managed by corporate managements. Again, except two, they are all recognized minority institutions and, therefore, have well-knit management bodies. In all aided colleges, local managing arrangements have been set up under the corporate managements. The pattern and structure of such bodies are more or less identical. However, in the case of government colleges, the Director of Collegiate Education (DCE) or his Deputy is the authority that controls and



regulates the affairs of the college. The PTRs have expressed dissatisfaction over the arrangement existing in government colleges, for in effect there is no immediate help available to the Principal in the day-to-day running of the college. Innumerable academic, administrative and financial problems arise in every college. Unless there is some consistent and dynamic local managerial body to look into such complex problems, the efficient running of these institutions would be difficult. The constitution of a Local Management Committee (LMC) for every government college is a remedy that could be considered.. Such a system exists in states like Karnataka and Maharashtra. The LMC could have a Chairman and a few members who should all have sufficient academic background and experience. The members could represent different stakeholding groups. The LMC could have a fixed term with clear, well-defined powers and responsibilities.

7. Healthy Practices

Healthy practices include all activities conceived and started by a college on its own without any external mandate. Several highly-rated colleges have put together such meritorious traditions and practices. One college under the CU, for example, succeeded in getting a substantial financial package, the Campus Diversity Initiative, from the Ford Foundation. The amount has been spent for many academic programmes and for national integration programmes. Setting up of competitive exam centres, signing of regular MoUs with neighbouring industries and research institutions, arranging guest lectures, formation of committees with experts in it for regularly monitoring academic progress, setting up of a special women's cell or literary research centres, institution of endowments, imparting value education, award of prizes to students and teachers, formation of various clubs, community services, etc. are found in several colleges. Wherever, quite a few of these activities are actively pursued and implemented, the college has a better social reputation and academic rating.



(b) Cochin University of Science and Technology (CUSAT)

1. Curricular Aspects

The CUSAT is a unitary type of higher learning centre devoted to the pursuit of excellence in science and technology. However, the departments of Law and Hindi, which are the remnants of the earlier “University of Cochin” identity, are still functioning in the CUSAT. Also, a couple of engineering colleges and a Centre for UG Studies (CUGS) have been added.

The PTR compliments the university for doing justice to its goals and objectives after getting redesignated as the Cochin University of Science and Technology. Twenty five departments and the CUGS have designed and developed a number of career-oriented courses, incorporating growing frontier areas of technology. Most of the courses have been originally developed by the university or adapted from existing programmes with necessary modifications. In either case, the curricular needs of various PG and UG courses are well taken care of. Every programme includes a good deal of practical training in the laboratory, R & D institutions and industries. The PTR has expressed satisfaction that such practical exposure is interspersed with theory classes, project work, etc. The spending of one full semester with industries is also appreciated. In designing curricula, feedback from user agencies, peer groups, potential employers, etc. are made use of. However, students’ evaluation of teaching programmes is missing. Further, there is very little horizontal mobility for students. The credit system is absent. The PTR advocates an early switching over to a credit/modular system to facilitate horizontal mobility of students. The ‘Sandwich Degree’ offered in collaboration with foreign universities is a unique arrangement. The PTR has also stressed the need for greater cooperation and coordination of the work with various departments within the university. Such close cooperation both in teaching and research would yield better results and would yield maximum benefits from the many collaborative tie-ups the university has already established with outside R& D institutions and foreign academic bodies. However, the PTR opines that the goals of conducting high quality research have not yet been realized in most areas.



2. Teaching-learning and Evaluation

In matters of teaching-learning and evaluation, the university is entirely autonomous. Students are admitted to the courses through a national entrance test/interview, etc. This practice has been commented upon. Apart from classroom lectures, seminars, symposia, workshops, e-learning, projects, field works, training programmes and special lectures are resorted to and 40–50 percent marks are allotted for continuous internal assessment in theory papers and upto 100 percent in practicals. Despite this advantage, exam results are unduly delayed, causing hardships to students. The PTR appreciate that 95 percent of the faculty have a qualification at least one step higher than mandatory. The CUSAT has many useful linkages with many foreign universities and academic bodies, but the e-learning process is slow.

3. Research, Consultancy and Extension

Many faculty members do active research. The number of scholars registered for Ph. D is good – 648. Of these, many have fellowships – UGC 36; CSIR 61; University JRF –70. There are also two post-doctoral fellows. The PT has appreciated the constitution of regular departmental research committees, but laments that they do not meet regularly or take stock of the research performance frequently. The research activities have to improve qualitatively. About 25 % of the faculty members in some of the departments have raised external funding. Others lag far behind in external funding and research output. Few papers and books are published, though research is a continuous activity undertaken by several teachers. Also quality papers in leading national and international journals are rare. The absence of seminars by Ph. D. students and the undue delay in the submission of theses by part-time scholars are discouraging factors. Though good facilities are available in the campus for undertaking major research, they are not shared by the different departments, inhibiting maximal realization of the potential. Interaction with and consultancy to the industry are still at a nascent stage.



4. Infrastructure and Learning Resources

The infrastructure is well developed. The main campus is at Thrikkakara and the additional campus at the Lakeside. Major facilities are developed at the main campus, including a good library and a computer centre. The former works from 10 am to 6 pm and the latter from 8 am to 8 pm. The PT has recommended that the library could be kept open for a few hours more and the computer centre be open for 24 hours. The free access to the internet during working hours to students and staff is appreciated.

5. Student Support and Progression

The PT has commented favourably on the placement cell. The officer in charge offers counseling also. There is no special facility for counseling girls. The CUSAT admits foreign students, but they are very few in number. There is no alumni association for the university as a whole, though separate alumni associations exist for some departments. For a young university, an alumni association is a must.

6. Organization and Management

The CUSAT has 25 departments headed by rotating HODs with adequate financial powers. The VC visits every department at least once a year to have detailed discussions with the faculty and staff. The self-appraisal by all faculties and its review by higher authorities are appreciated. But performance appraisal for non-teaching staff is lacking. Since the CUSAT is basically oriented towards science and technology, the PT has urged the introduction of online communication processes for the entire administration of the university. The PT has appreciated the mobilization of resources to the tune of 20 % of the CUSAT funds through international contacts, consultancy and training programmes. While centres of excellence like the IITs can frame their own rules, the Syndicate of the CUSAT, like other state universities, has no such power. This hurdle should be removed through a balanced system that allows free fund raising while maintaining adequate accountability for and transparency in its proper utilization. The State Planning Board had earlier proposed initiation of such a managerial system. But it is yet to be decided upon.



7. Healthy Practices

The PT lauds the designing of new life-related M. Tech programmes. The entrance exam on a national level at several places in the country is also appreciated. The PT has praised the CUSAT for bagging substantial financial assistance from the Dutch Government against stiff competition. The amount greatly helped the university in modernizing its many facilities.

(c) Affiliating Universities

1. Curricular Aspects

In the CU, a total of 58 PG courses are offered in the departments, in addition to some Diplomas and Certificates and also M. Phil and Ph. D. programmes in various departments. A total of six UG programmes are offered in the 110-plus affiliated colleges. Innovative, life-related Self-Financing (SF) courses (17 PG and 15 Degree, 3 Diploma and 8 Certificate) were started in the university on the occasion of its Silver Jubilee in 1993, and recently in a few colleges. There are a total of 1124 regular students in the various departments while the number of students enrolled in the different SF schemes is 2653. In the MGU there are 16 departments/schools and 5 SF departments/schools with a total student strength of 17,857. It is not clear as to how many of them are regular and how many are under the SF schemes. Since the number of regular teachers in the 16 statutory departments is below one hundred, the number of students in the SF programmes seems to be much higher than those in the regular stream. The MGU offers 299 programmes in all (UG 123; PG 104; a few Diploma and Certificate courses besides M. Phil and Ph. D. programmes.) Again, it is not clear as to how many of these are regular and how many are under the SF scheme. The latter seems to be much higher than the former. In the KU, 118 programmes are available in 41 teaching departments, mostly at PG, M. Phil and Ph. D. levels. Quite a number of these subjects are taught in the affiliating colleges at UG and PG levels in both regular and SF streams. There are 2200 students and about 200 teachers (including contractual ones) for the regular courses while the number of students for the SF courses are above 3000. Recently the KU has introduced the Credit and Semester System (CSS) at PG level for some courses. The PT has expressed concern as to how the new concept has given rise to new evaluation and how the efforts have been monitored. How the teaching-learning process has improved



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with the CSS is also not clear. The KU will have to pay attention to the issues raised and find appropriate answers.

The PTRs have made the following significant observations about the curricular aspects of affiliating universities:

- (a) There is no horizontal mobility at all either in the PG or UG courses. The traditional watertight departmental structure and vertical divisions continue to exist in almost all subjects.

The PTRs have suggested that the universities gradually switch over to a choice-based credit system to ensure adequate horizontal mobility for students.

- (b) The inordinate delay in redesigning or restructuring and monitoring of the curricula is a great drawback.

The PTRs point out that at least at PG level, the process might be made more frequent.

- (c) Lack of appropriate feedback from external peer groups, user agencies and other relevant groups do not permit or encourage suitable modifications or restructuring of existing curricula. National level curricular sources are also not adequately explored or utilized. Remedial measures to correct these deficiencies are urgently needed.

- (d) There can be more external experts in the various Boards of Studies (BoS) to get the right kind of inputs on course contents and relevance. The MGU invites such experts to the meetings of BoS regularly.

Other universities could follow such practices too.

- (e) The absence of the semester system generates indifference among the students. They tend to turn to regular studies only towards the end of the year.

Therefore, the semesterisation of courses at all levels should be given top priority.



2. Teaching-learning and Evaluation

The admission to all regular courses is on the basis of marks obtained at the last eligibility exam except in the case of MBA, MCA, etc. where it is regulated on the basis of an entrance test. Discussions, field training, projects, internships, etc. supplement classroom teaching. However, traditional teaching methods are followed even in university departments. Only a few departments utilize modern methods and aids. No bridge course is conducted for the benefit of students coming from different backgrounds. More than three-fourths of the teachers have participated in refresher courses as faculty requirement. Many have attended various conferences/seminars/workshops and some have served as resource persons. A number of teachers have established contacts and linkages with several institutions both in India and abroad. Many MoUs have also been signed with external agencies. However, it is not clear as to how far they are made use of for better teaching-learning process and for research advancement. A record of evaluation of the linkages established through the MoUs should be kept for frequent review and midterm corrective measures.

The delay in declaring results by the universities (often upto 10 months after the completion of the last paper in an exam) is lamentable and creates hurdles in the progression of students. The PTRs suggest that the issue needed to be addressed at once and remedial steps adopted so that exam results are published within a reasonable time.

3. Research, Consultancy and Extension

The PTRs have appreciated the research capability built up by the KU and the CU over a period of time, however, adding that there is not much departmental research at present. The PTRs also point out that in recent years a much larger proportion of Ph. D.s have been produced in the Faculty of Language and Literature rather than in the Faculties of Arts, Science or Commerce. The reasons for this imbalance might be looked into and necessary corrective measures taken. Uneven production of Ph. Ds from different departments has also been noticed by the PTRs. While some departments consistently turned out Ph. Ds from year



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to year, a few departments performed either very unsatisfactorily or showed no evidence at all of their research capability. The PTRs suggest that this uneven performance also should be looked into and corrective steps taken for developing a balanced research capability for all departments. What is said of research is also true for publications. In the MGU, a total number of 452 research papers have been published during the last two years. Though the number is impressive in the MGU and in the other two universities, the PTR expresses concern about the quality of many of the papers. They feel that the university would have to ensure that the research papers brought credit to the institution, because the number of papers published in refereed national or international journals is very few.

Another notable point made by the PTRs is regarding the unreasonable number of researchers registered under various guides at a particular point of time. In some departments, the number of research scholars far exceeds the number of PG students in those departments. While the UGC has recommended six as the ideal number of research candidates under one guide, about ten under one guide is common in many university departments in the state. The undue delay in completing the theses by research scholars, particularly by part-timers, is also adversely commented upon by the PTRs. It will be in the interest of quality research if a strict time frame is maintained for submitting these, failing which stringent disciplinary action could be initiated.

Research funding also is not impressive. There is not much major from many agencies, though there is minor funding from quite a number of agencies including those from national-level agencies like UGC, DST, DAE,, etc. Generally, the Research Committee of the Syndicate looks after the research activities of the institution. In such cases, the committee has to be activated and research progress reviewed and monitored every quarter or so. A full-fledged University Research Committee directly working under the VC could also be considered.

Regarding consultancy, the PTRs remark that it is not commensurate with the regional expectations or societal needs and that the universities might explore the scope of generating more income through organized consultancy services. According to the PTRs, an administrative and financial structure to encourage,



coordinate and promote consultancy has to be put in place urgently. A Consultancy Cell could also be formed in the university under the supervision of the VC.

4. Infrastructure and Learning Resources

The PT has commented on the total computerization of the library and the internet facilities, though the MGU is still retaining the manual cataloguing system. The University Science Instrumentation Centres (USIC) functioning in the KU and the CU are doing well. If freed from other work, the USIC could do more and also conduct useful training programmes. The spacious Seminar Complex of the CU, built during the Silver Jubilee Year is good. The central computer facility in the 3 Universities is reasonable. Separate computer facilities are also available in many departments. The PTRs suggest that they might be made use of fully by both teachers and students. The Audio Visual Research Centre (AVRC) of the CU, again, obtained from the UGC during the Silver Jubilee Year of the institution is also utilized well. The central media facilities in the other universities are inadequate. However, with the current level of infrastructure, the universities in Kerala can achieve much more if there is more internal cooperation and coordination between the different departments and functional units.

5. Student Support and Progression

The CU has on its roll 1124 regular students studying for various courses from Ph. D. and M.Sc. to degree, diploma and certificate courses. It also has 2653 students in various SF courses. The MGU has 17,857 students on its roll. However, the actual number of regular and SF students is not given. Apparently there are more SF students than the regular students, since the number of regular teachers in various departments/schools is below one hundred. In the KU also the number of SF students is above 3,000 while that in the regular stream is only 2200. The SF courses, which generate considerable revenue to the institutions, have clearly overtaken the regular courses in the number of students enrolled. However, the PTRs express concern about the amenities and academic support



given to the SF students compared with the regular stream of students. The placement services offered to them should also be better organized. Since the SF students in such large numbers is a new phenomenon their needs should be taken care of adequately.

6. Organization and Management

The undue delay in announcing the exam results (often upto ten months after the last exam) is adversely commented upon by the PTs. The PTRs also point out the excessive ratio of teaching and non-teaching staff, namely, 1:9 in the CU and the MGU and 1:7 in the KU compared to teachers and students in the ratio of 1:5. They have suggested immediate corrective measures. They also point out the mounting financial crisis and the utilization of more than three-fourths of the funds for salaries alone both in the KU and the CU and a little more than half of the funds for salaries in the MGU. The imbalance in the financial affairs also requires immediate correction. They have also recommended immediate administrative reforms including decentralization of powers to improve the efficiency of the universities. The PTRs further suggest total revamping of the Accounts and Finance sections and also disbursement of salaries through bank cheques to all the staff, both in the regular and SF streams.

7. Healthy Practices

All the universities in Kerala have introduced SF courses both at UG and PG levels during the last decade. This is in tune with the times. However, there is an apparent imbalance between the regular and the SF streams in the administration, financial management and even in the conduct of academic programmes. It should be remembered that in the years to come, the SF courses are likely to increase much more in number and diversity than at present. In the long-term financial interest and academic health, the universities, in consultation with the state government, may evolve suitable common policies on the many grave issues raised in connection with the conduct of SF courses.



The universities in Kerala have a tradition of publishing journals of various kinds. For example, the CU publishes the *Calicut University Journal* and a few departmental journals. The MGU brings out *Haritham* and *Pedagogics*. But the PTRs opine that their quality has to be ascertained. The journals published by the universities should conform to national and international standards and the papers should be subjected to rigorous scrutiny and refereeing before they are accepted for publication. The AVRC of CU is engaged in many useful schemes, including production of AV materials for the UGC. The central media facilities in other universities need to be organized better.

Section II : Recommendations

As per the terms of reference for the state-wise analysis of the PT reports, a set of recommendations were to be prepared to be submitted to the agencies concerned for their consideration and implementation. In the present analysis, the affiliated colleges and the universities are treated separately in codifying the main recommendations. The affiliated colleges have been clubbed together as one institutional category. In general, the recommendations made are relevant to one or more of the affiliated type of colleges in Kerala. Therefore, they have the primary responsibility to look into the suggestions made in the present analysis and take the initiative to implement them. However, the colleges alone will not be able to execute many of the recommendations fully without the support of higher agencies and other stakeholders. Some issues require the affiliating university to initiate action. A few issues involve the policies and strategies of the state government. National agencies like the UGC and the NAAC may have to decide on some larger national level issues. Therefore, the attention of the latter agencies will have to be drawn to such points for their respective consideration and appropriate decisions. Points requiring reflection at higher levels are, therefore, indicated in bracket after each recommendations as an action note.

A similar approach is followed for the universities. It can be safely stated that many of the issues raised and solutions suggested are applicable to all affiliating



universities in the state. However, the CUSAT is essentially a non-affiliating, unitary university though a couple of engineering colleges are currently affiliated to it. Since the focus of the institution is entirely on science and technology, the problems faced by it are totally different. Therefore, the recommendations made in respect of the CUSAT are specifically pertinent to it, though some are applicable to other universities too.

(a) Recommendations for the Affiliated Colleges

1. Curricular Aspects

- Affiliated colleges will have to offer constructive feedback to the affiliating university on possible changes or restructuring either of the course as a whole or of any paper. This practice is all the more necessary for SF courses that the colleges could take up specifically. In such cases the university will have to respond quickly and positively. (Action: *Colleges, University*)
- The MGU has recently prepared Model I and Model II of syllabi for every degree programme. Colleges can choose one of them as per their preparedness. Since this arrangement gives some flexibility to the curricular contents, other affiliating universities could adopt some similar pattern. (Action: *Colleges, University*)
- Revision, restructuring, etc. of the syllabi should be attempted more frequently (*University*)
- The semester pattern should be introduced for all UG and PG course at the earliest. (Action: *University, Government*)
- With semester system, internal continuous evaluation should be introduced at least for 30-40 percent weightage. (Action: *University, College*)
- More of vocational elements should be included in the existing degree level courses. Colleges can also take initiatives in the matter and submit proposals. Colleges can also propose new vocationally-oriented courses. (Action: *Colleges, University*)



- Many PTRs have stressed the need for continuous curricular revision for courses that are taught in affiliating colleges. Since the university has to take the lead in the matter, it is suggested that all the Boards of Studies may be directed to constitute Curriculum Study Cell (CSC) under them. Each CSC should meet frequently to design and evolve new life-related curricula and submit the same to the BoS for consideration and approval. The interested colleges can then adopt the new curricula for their institution. (Action: *University, Colleges*)

2. Teaching-learning and evaluation

- Teaching methods and teaching technology must be modernized. Since colleges are the primary functional units of teaching, they should report to the university every year as to what modern techniques and methods they have introduced in the preceding teaching year. (Action: *Colleges, University*)
- Even in many highly rated colleges in the state, a research culture is yet to take root. A system may be evolved whereby the colleges submit annual reports to the university on the acquisition of higher research degrees by the faculty members. The latter may accord some additional recognition or confer some awards on such meritorious teachers. (Action: *Colleges, University*)
- Similarly, the university may call for reports every year on the academic outputs by the teachers in the form of papers or books or other outstanding contributions to the advancement of their disciplines. (Action: *Colleges, University*)
- The university can call for explanations from colleges that produce unsatisfactory exam results and also ask for reports on the remedial measures taken by the college to rectify the situation, failing which action could be initiated against the erring colleges. The reports should include information on remedial and bridge courses, tutorials, etc. (Action: *University, Colleges*)



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- The managements and the government should take self-appraisal reports by the teachers seriously and non-performance will have to be accounted for. Improvement within a reasonable time could be insisted upon. (Action: *Government, Colleges*)
- Even when the Director, College Development Council (DCDC) or an equivalent post exists, liaison between the university and its affiliates is found to be fruitless; some monitoring mechanism could be evolved so that colleges get more effective and realistic leadership from the university in academic matters. (Action: *Colleges, University*)

3. Research, Consultancy and Extension

- Research as an independent input for a more effective teaching-learning process is yet to be accepted in colleges of the region. Even teachers with a research degree do not often pursue research further. The setting up of some corpus fund and the institution of endowments to encourage research should be considered. College Research Committees (CRC) can also be constituted to coordinate research schemes. (Action: *Government, University, Colleges*)
- The university may call for annual reports from colleges on the number of funded research projects completed and the names of the teachers who conducted them. If reasonable research schemes are not undertaken for many years, explanations can be called for. (Action: *University, Colleges*)
- Since consultancy is a society-oriented activity, a similar step is desirable in this respect also. Affiliated institutions may be advised to form College Consultancy Cells (CCC) (Action: *University, Colleges*).
- Affiliated colleges should be encouraged by the university to establish linkages with its own departments, other academic institutions and with local industries. As a follow-up action, the university could call for regular annual reports both from its own departments and from the affiliated colleges. (Action: *University, Colleges*)



4. Infrastructure and Learning Resources

- In the assessed colleges, library functioning is not often given the primacy it needs to be given, even when there is a good collection of books. At most places the library is not computerized, and no interlibrary borrowing services are available. Reprographic facilities are also not available. The deficiencies are attributed to lack of staff. Since the library provides the next best learning resource after the classroom, special attention need to be paid to the upgrading and modernization of the library services in all colleges. (Action: *Government, University, Colleges*)
- The Central Computer Centre is another facility upon which colleges should bestow their early attention. Though a minimal facility is available in colleges where computer-related courses are run, in a state like Kerala, colleges should be able to provide computer literacy to all students in a phased manner. This task could be included in the 'computer spread' programme of the state government (Action: *Government, University, Colleges*)

5. Student Support and Progression

- In most of the colleges, except in some of the highly rated ones, these two items of institutional activity have been only recently attempted. However, they should be followed up rigorously by higher authorities as they form vital components of HRD programmes. Regular annual reports on the progress of the schemes may be called for both by the government and the university and the colleges may be supported to sustain the schemes. (Action: *Government, University, Colleges*)
- Similarly, though many accredited colleges have mentioned the existence of the Old Students' Association, etc., only very few were apparently active. Since parents and old students are important stakeholders, their active participation will have to be ensured and monitored by higher authorities. (Action: *Government, University, Colleges*)



6. Organization and Management

- Local Management Committees (LMC) may be constituted in government colleges. As they are presently controlled remotely, often by belated correspondence, by the DCE or his Deputy, tackling of daily problems quickly and efficiently is difficult. The principal hardly gets any immediate support. The LMC with an experienced educationist as Chairman and a few members representing different stakeholding groups as members and with clear responsibilities and powers will be an innovative mechanism to improve the functioning of government colleges considerably. (Action: *Government, University, Government colleges*)

7. Healthy Practices

- Since this new agenda gives sufficient scope for colleges to initiate several innovative programmes and actions, the government and the university should keep track of such developments and also offer support by way of incentives and recognition. Annual reports could be called for from the colleges on the new healthy practices that they have initiated. (Action: *Government, University, Colleges*)
- Similarly, higher authorities could also take stock of the functioning and activities undertaken by the Parents' Association and Alumni Association every year through reports of the Principals. (Action: *Government, University, Colleges*)
- A Quality Assurance cell should be constituted in all accredited colleges immediately. The cell should have clear responsibilities and powers and should submit annual reports to higher authorities (Action: *NAAC, Government, University, Colleges*)



(b) Recommendations for the CUSAT

CUSAT is essentially a non-affiliating university devoted mainly to achieving excellence in science and technology. While appreciating the many attainments of the university, the PT has cautioned against complacency and lack of adequate coordination and cooperation between the various departments and functional units. Instead of fragmenting and sub fragmenting the departments, the PT has pointed to the advantages of amalgamation or closer union of departments/schools to achieve better coordination and productive results of teaching programmes and research activities. Finally, the PT has suggested that the quality of research should be continually assessed through some internal process.

(c) Recommendations for the Affiliating Universities

In recent years, the affiliating system has been undergoing many changes quietly and silently. Like a federal polity, the affiliating system has been metamorphosing into a more healthy entity, capable of meeting contingent problems arising out of its relations with the affiliated units. In fact, many such complex issues needing immediate attention of the affiliating system have been brought to light during the process of A & A of the several colleges. The state-wise analysis of PTRs further focuses on the matter. The time is, therefore, right on the part of the affiliating universities to seriously reconsider the leadership they are rendering to their affiliates and to articulate their responses more cogently and positively to the recommendations made by the PTRs. The quality of education at the college level is sure to be enhanced considerably if conscious efforts in that direction are initiated by the parent body.

In the above set of recommendations pertaining to the affiliated colleges, a proactive stand from the affiliating university is necessary. Either through the DCDC or through some other designated officer or professor, the university may evolve proper mechanisms to establish a continuing, dynamic, productive rapport with its affiliates. The parent university should call for regular annual reports, eliciting precise information on the major achievements attained and



initiatives taken by the affiliated colleges. It should be remembered that the bulk of the student population is enrolled in affiliated colleges, not in the university departments. Therefore, for an affiliating university, the proud moment comes when its affiliated units show excellence in all aspects of the process of higher education and human resource development.

The PTRs have made many specific recommendations for the three universities. Since the documents are already with the institutions, and also have been pointed out in the criterion-wise analysis above, the universities would do well if they follow up the recommendations and submit annual reports on the progress made to the NAAC, the office of the Chancellor and the office of the Pro Chancellor (the Education Minister of the state government) (Action: NAAC, Government, University, Office of the Chancellor)

(d) Concluding Remarks and Recommendations to the State Government

In India, higher education upto degree level is largely determined and controlled by the state government. Specific sanction (NOC) is required to start a degree college. To start an aided college, financial commitment on the part of the government also is needed. Normally, these steps should be taken within the overall framework of the manpower assessment and requirement of the state over a period of time. However, in the absence of such accurate manpower data, many states, including Kerala, are allowing SF colleges in a liberal way. With the new policy of liberalization, the higher education sector in the country is growing very quickly. Probably it has already become the fastest growing sector of national life. There is a state of flux in higher education due to the fast growth. This is but natural, for any growing sector first leads to a state of instability. A dynamic equilibrium can be restored in a large sphere of activity like higher education only through a careful formulation of new policy initiatives. This is the crucial point to be brought to the urgent notice of the state governments not only in Kerala but also in other states.



There are numerous angles to the problem. In the present analysis, issues more relevant to Kerala and hinted at in the various PTRs are listed. Many of them may be applicable to other states as well. Similarly, many issues listed in the state-wise analyses of other state are valid for Kerala too. The attention of all state governments may be invited to all such recommendations and suggestions. They will certainly be useful in the formulation of appropriate policy initiatives. No doubt, the maintenance of quality in higher education is primarily the responsibility of the university, but the policies and practices of the state government contribute equally or more towards that end, for it is the state policies that determine the general environment and right direction for the healthy growth of education and other such activities. It is in this perspective that some recommendations are made here:

- The Kerala Government has done well by constituting a Quality Assurance Cell (QAC) in the Department of Higher Education directly under the Principal Secretary. The QAC will have to be activated in an appropriate manner so as to study the numerous new ideas that emerge out of, and the various recommendations made in the PTR analyses, like the present one.
- It will be a creative step towards quality enhancement if the Kerala Government adopts a time-frame for the A & A of all the affiliated Arts, Science and Commerce colleges in the state, as some other states have already done and even implemented. The government can offer some financial assistance for the process, particularly for the government colleges. The QAC should ask for action-taken reports from all colleges in this respect since general guidance has reportedly been issued to them to start the preparation of Self-Study Report (SSR), etc. As a first step, the colleges may be instructed to constitute coordination committees for A & A and start working in that direction.
- The state has a long way to go in the matter since the present analysis covers only 15% of the total number of colleges. Unless a time-bound agenda is prepared and colleges given the necessary directives, the colleges in the state are likely to suffer badly in future financial assistance from various funding agencies that relate their assistance with accreditation.



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- The state government can also consider signing an MOU with the NAAC in the matter of quality enhancement as some other states have done. Such a step is likely to enliven the whole higher education scenario. As a long-term policy, the government can consider introducing some incentive scheme for quality improvement measures.
- The idea of sanctioning select autonomous colleges in the state requires urgent consideration by the government. Not only does it bring more funds to the state from funding agencies, but it also builds up a free-thinking educational culture. It should be remembered that autonomy is essentially academic and it does not affect the socio-economic policies of the government, which the autonomous colleges are also bound to follow. Highly rated colleges may be given some preference in sanctioning autonomy.
- The NAAC's 7-point criteria impart to higher education a multidimensional approach that helps development of the full potential of the individual and the institution. Obviously, this cannot be a one-time event, but is a continuous process. Therefore, the government may take whatever steps are possible to promote such an approach. One area where the government can contribute positively is to give directives to all state-owned industrial and commercial units to have regular tie-ups with neighbouring colleges so that students would have on-the-job experience with such units. Over a time, even new courses or special papers could be conceived and designed through their mutual cooperation. The college concerned can then introduce the course or paper and experts in the industry/commercial units can serve as guest faculty.
- The formation of a *State Council of Higher Education* may be given top priority since such a specialized high power agency alone will be able to plan and coordinate the fast-growing educational sector in the state.
- Parents and alumni constitute two important stake-holding groups deeply interested in an educational institution. These groups will be able to contribute greatly towards its future development. However, these groups



are not given the importance they deserve in many colleges. The government may, therefore, consider some measures to activate them in all colleges and issue general directives in the matter. Annual reports may then be called for from the colleges as to the activities of the Parents' Association and the Alumni Association.

- Self-Appraisal (SA) was conceived by the UGC as voluntary action on the part of teachers to facilitate self-improvement as professional teachers, and, thus, as a sure measure towards quality improvement. The SA prepared by teachers are now reportedly forwarded to the DCE for further action. The government may, therefore, take them seriously and use them as useful instruments for effecting quality improvement in various colleges. Appropriate mechanisms may be evolved for the purpose early.
- It is to be noted that in all the affiliating universities, the number of students enrolled for various SF course is already more than the number of regular students. Very soon a similar situation may prevail in some of the colleges too. Certainly this is a new phenomenon, to a certain extent destabilizing the situation we are familiar with. The SF programmes have an entirely new set of yardsticks for admission of students, recruitment of teachers, service conditions of the teaching and non-teaching staff, payment of larger amounts by way of fees and initial deposit, differential fee structure for different courses,, etc. They vary within the state. There is no uniformity in any of these components on an all-India basis either. For the stable growth of higher education in the state, it is, therefore, imperative that the state government bestows serious thought on these grave issues and comes out with some transparent policies and action plans. It has to be done soon before the new instability creates a severe crisis.
- Both the UGC and the NAAC will have to bestow equal attention on the problems raised above and give proper guidelines to all the agencies concerned, for national norms and standards are essential in every one of the issues that have newly come up.





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