

Impact of NAAC Accreditation on Quality Improvement of Higher Education Institutions in India: A Case Study in the State of Karnataka

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Abstract

The term "Quality" is a measurable attribute that is universal and most essential for each and everything in our life. Quality in higher education is a conceptual term, which is very difficult to comprehend. This can only be measured through valid and reliable benchmarks. The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) is a premier agency in India to assess and accredit the quality levels in the Higher Education Institutions (HEI). It works under the Ministry of Education, Government of India and evaluate the quality performance of HEIs using well-defined benchmarks. There are many types of HEIs in the country like Universities, Colleges, Medical Colleges, Engineering Colleges, etc., which are producing graduates every year. But the most important for any HEI is to mould a good human resource for the country with high ethical values to compete in the global challenging environment and they should be accountable for the social, economic, and technical development of the nation. Hence, the HEIs play an important role in the overall development of any country.

This case study is an attempt to understand the relation or the inter-dependence between the NAAC and the HEIs. It is also an effort to understand the mindset of the HEIs towards NAAC assessment and its importance. To achieve this objective an exclusive tool containing questions to know about the socio-economic and geographical status of the HEI and its experience towards NAAC assessment and accreditation process was framed and sent to the 50 randomly selected accredited institutions in the state of Karnataka. The response was good and analysis of the data reveals, there is a close relation between the quality initiatives of HEI and the NAAC evaluation. The study also provides a way for further analysis to conclude about the importance of NAAC accreditation for HEIs in maintaining, sustaining, and improving their quality. If study is extended with big sample size, the outcome will be more reliable and helpful to the stakeholders of the society. This paper highlights on the impact of NAAC accreditation on different dimensions of HEIs.

Keywords: Quality, Assessment & Accreditation, Higher Education Institutions, Impact of NAAC.

Introduction

According to Ralph Linton a great American anthropologist, the word 'achieved status' is a concept which reflects on individual skills, abilities and efforts. In the higher education sector, the quality status of an institution is obtained through its performance in academic activities and the best practices followed in terms of teaching and learning methodologies. In India, the performance of the HEIs is assessed through an agency called National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), a recognized External Quality Assurance (EQA) agency of Govt. of India. NAAC is an

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How to cite this article: K., Ravikumar, Samanta, S. & Rath A.K., (2021). Impact of NAAC Accreditation on Quality Improvement of Higher Education Institutions in India: A Case Study in the State of Karnataka. *Purushartha*, 14(1), 34-49

Source of support: Nil

Conflict of interest: None

autonomous Inter-University Centre of the University Grants Commission (UGC), New Delhi which was established in the year 1994 and headquartered at Bangalore.

From the past twenty-five years, NAAC is acting like a catalyst that is triggering quality awareness in the institutions of higher education. The main objectives of this organization include an arrangement for periodic assessment of HEIs and awarding of accreditation status which supports the institution in maintaining and sustaining good quality standards.

NAAC Assessment and Accreditation Process and its benefits

NAAC is undertaking institutional accreditation and follows input-process-output method to evaluate the performance of the HEIs. The institution has to submit its academic inputs through a self-study-report to NAAC. Once it is accepted by the Data Validation and Verification partners, NAAC arranges an onsite visit by a delegation consisting of Vice-Chancellor, Professor and Principal called as peer team members. The peer team will inspect the institution physically and validates the information provided by the institution and submits its report to NAAC. After scrutinizing the same and verification by the Executive Committee, NAAC announces assessment outcome. NAAC follows Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) system using seven criteria to assess the quality performance of HEIs namely a) Curricular Aspects, b) Teaching, Learning & Evaluation, c) Research, Innovations & Extension, d) Infrastructure & Learning Resources, e) Student Support & Progression, f) Governance Leadership & Management and lastly g) Institutional Values & Best Practices. For different types of HEIs, NAAC uses different weightages to calculate the CGPA of the institution and grades the institutions under four categories A denotes very good performance, B denotes good performance, C is satisfactory performance & D denotes unsatisfactory performance. The accreditation period is five years and after that the institution has to approach NAAC for fresh accreditation. When the HEI undergoes accreditation for the first time it is called cycle-1 and after consecutive five years, it is called cycle-2 and so on.

NAAC accreditation is very important for the HEIs, as it benefits them in getting financial assistance from various Governmental bodies. It also helps them to introspect themselves about their quality status compared to other institutions in the society. Not only the HEIs will get benefit from NAAC but the other stakeholders of the society like students, teachers and parents will also equally benefitted.

Review of the Literature

Mariamamma Varghese et al. (2019) in their book 'Dynamics of Indian Higher Education' have given more emphasis on the Indian Higher Education system with regard to the changing perspectives and emerging challenges, strategic planning and development and innovations in higher education and a holistic picture of the contemporary higher education system. The factors affecting the major transformation by HEIs due to rapid changes occurring in the environment due to socio-economic and technical advancement and the globalization of education across the countries were identified. The authors have also highlighted on the dynamics of higher education in India covering various aspects in which the policy makers and contemporary educationists may consider while evolving the Higher Education system for the country.

Research Methodology

The present study is an attempt to understand the impact of NAAC accreditation on HEIs. It aims at understanding the mindset of the HEIs towards NAAC assessment and its importance with respect to the seven criteria and its key aspects. To achieve this objective a comprehensive tool was prepared in consultation with the guide and other academic experts which contains questions to know about the socio-economic and geographical status of the HEI and its benefits from NAAC assessment and accreditation process, was framed and sent to 50 randomly selected accredited institutions in the state of Karnataka as a pilot study.

Objectives of the Study

- To identify about the sociological attributes of the HEI like geographical location, type of the institution, category and religion of the management.
- To find out the association of NAAC with the accredited HEIs
- To comprehend NAAC's seven criteria and its 32 Key Indicators from HEIs point of view
- To find out the impact of NAAC accreditation on quality improvement in HEIs
- To find out the Government Institutions response towards NAAC assessment.

Data Collection

A five-point scale questionnaire consisting of two parts namely Part-A and Part-B. Part-A was framed to collect basic information about the institution like name, address, contact details, location, type of institution, category etc.. Part-B is designed to collect facts about the institutional experience due to NAAC accreditation process and also about post accreditation implications on the institution. To know about the impact created, statements were

made related to the seven criteria with an open statement and also the key indicators which comes under each criteria. There are five alternatives namely; SA-Strongly Agree (5), A-Agree (4), UD-Undecided (3), DA-Disagree (2), SDA- Strongly Disagree (1) was provided against each statement.

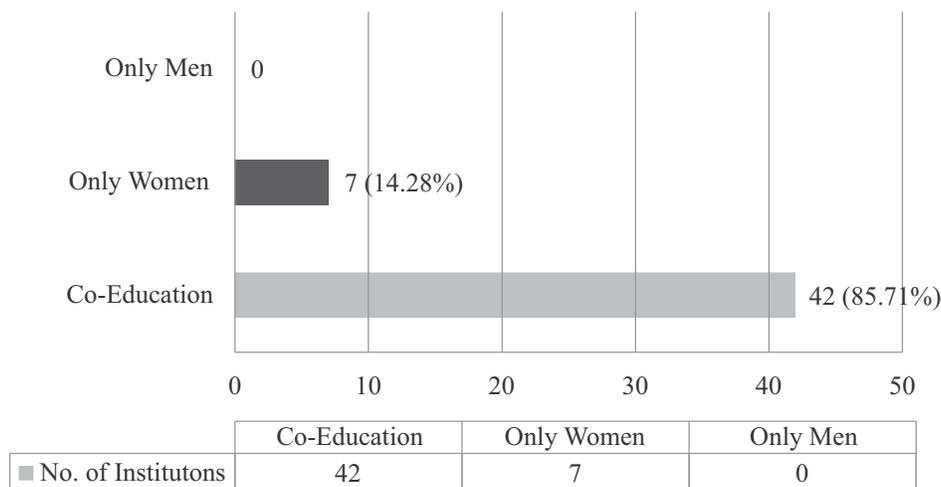
Since, this study was conducted during the pandemic time, in order to collect the data; the researcher has used online platforms using Google forms. As the sample size was very small (55) almost all the institutions have sent their responses. After cleaning the data, it is found that out of 55, responses from only 49 institutions were considered.

For interpretation purpose, the response received under SA-Strongly agree and A-Agree was considered as positive responses about NAAC accreditation and DA-Disagree and SDA-Strongly Disagree was considered as a negative impact.

Data Analysis

Fig-1 represents the graphical analysis of the type of the institution offering education to Men, Women and Coeducation.

Fig-1: Institution is offering Education to:

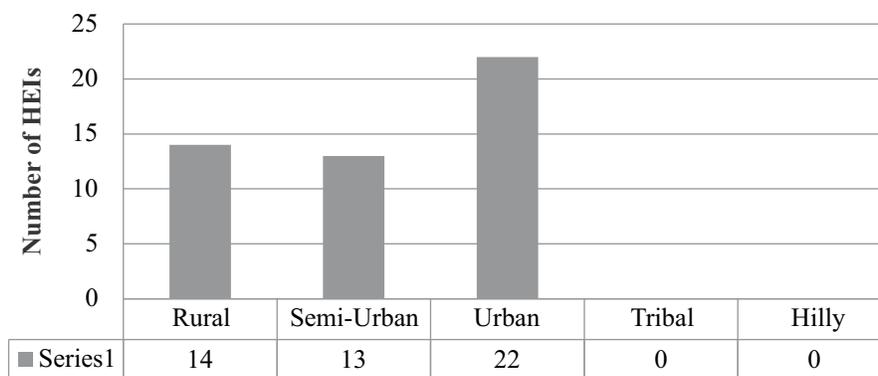


Out of 49 responses received, it is found that 07 were exclusively for women and 42 are co-education colleges (Fig-1). Two institutions have got special status such as College with Potential for Excellence (CPE) and three of them have got College with Excellence (CE) status. It is interesting to note that 40 institutions are having

UGC 2f and 12B status, 7 are having only 12B status and two institutions are opted “Not Applicable” option.

The Fig-2 provides the statistical data of the institutions scattered around different locality.

Fig2 : Geographical Location



With respect to the location of the HEIs, it is found that 42.85% belongs to the urban locality, 26.53%

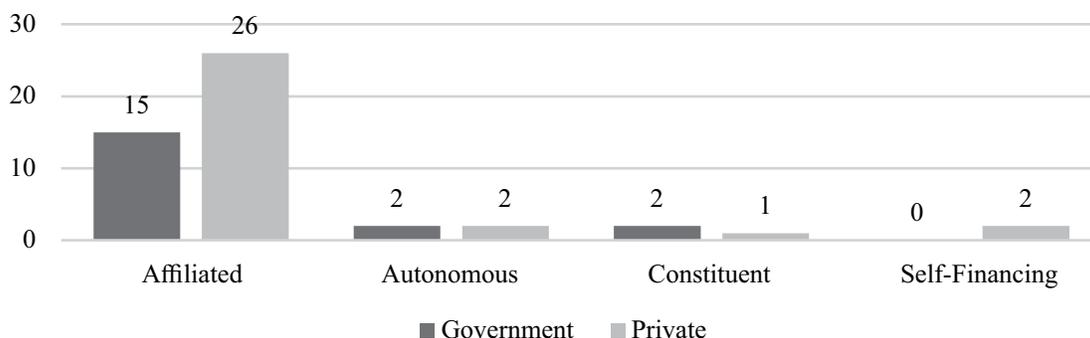
belongs to semi-urban, 30% belongs to rural area and none of them belongs to tribal and hilly area.

Funding Pattern of the HEIs

Table 1: Type of the College

Type of HEI	Affiliated	Autonomous	Constituent	Self-Financing
Government	15	02	02	0
Private	26	02	1	2

Fig3: Type of the College



From Table-1 it is found that, out of 49 HEIs 15 are Government affiliated and 26 are private affiliated institutions. There are 02 Government and private autonomous colleges and 02 Government

constituent and 01 Private Constituent Colleges. It is also found that there are 02 private self-financing private colleges and there was no representation of Government self-financing institution.

The Table-2 & 3 depicts about the most interesting funding pattern of the Government and private colleges.

Table 2: Funding pattern of Government Institutions

Completely by the Government	Government and partly self financing	From Concerned University
17	14	3

Table 3: Funding pattern of Private Institution

Self-Financing	Grant-in-Aid	Self-financing and Grant in-Aid	Concerned University
8	21	7	1

Out of 34 government colleges, 17 of them are completely funded by the government, 14 are funded by government and partly self financing and 3 of them are getting funds directly from the concerned university. Similarly, with respect to the funding pattern of private colleges, there were 8 self financing colleges, 21 grant in aid, seven are getting funds by self financing and grant-in-aid and 1 college is getting funds from the concerned university.

Social Status of the HEIs

In order to ascertain the sociological status of the vulnerable category of HEI, a sensitive question was asked about the religion and category of the management. All the 49 HEIs have responded to this question. Fig-4 shows that there are 01 Christian, 02 Muslim, 18 Hindu, and 28 belongs to other religions.

Fig-4: Colleges comes under the following management

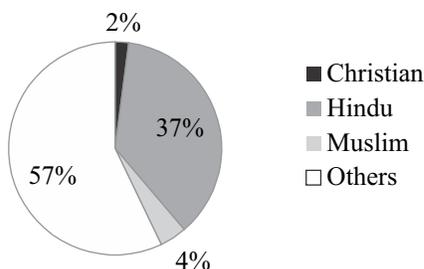
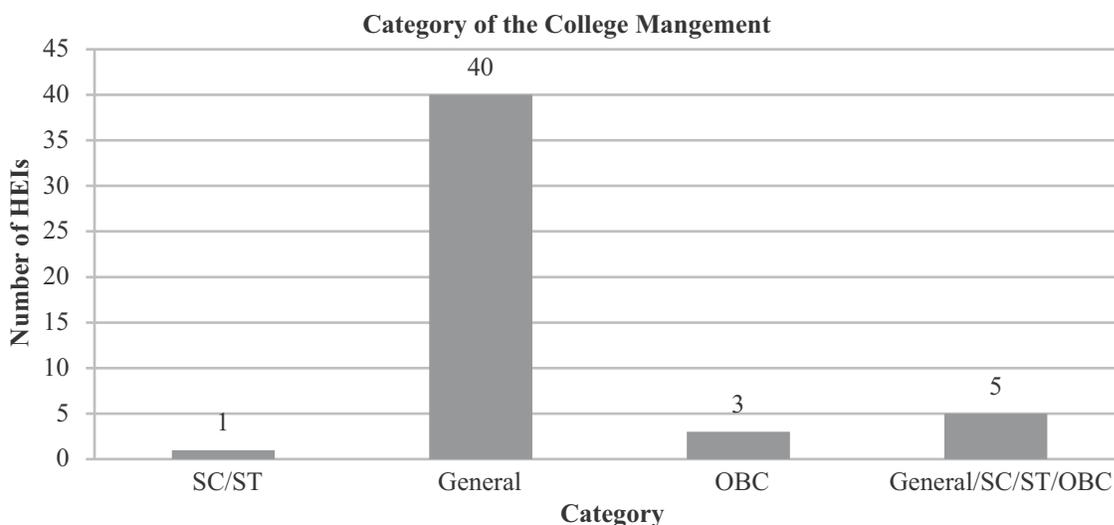


Fig-5 represents the graphical view of the category of various colleges.



From the above Fig-5, It is clear that, number of colleges which are exclusively managed by SC/ST (01), General (40), OBC(3) and under mixed category of General/SC/ST/OBC (05).

Impact created on HEI due to NAAC Accreditation

In order to obtain the details about the impact created on the HEIs due to NAAC accreditation in terms of improving their quality levels, a five-point scale tool was developed based on the seven criteria and its relevant key indicators. Five alternatives namely strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree were provided to the HEIs to choose their response about their opinions. The responses received

from the HEIs are shown.

Criteria I: Curricular Aspects

Curricular aspects involves the practices of the HEIs towards the overall curriculum related issues like planning and design, enrichment and implementation of the curriculum. In order to get the information about the impact created on the Curricular Aspect, the questions on all the key indicators under this criterion were imposed to HEIs. The various responses received under this criterion are tabulated in the following table. The Table-5 depicts about the impact created on the HEI about NAAC criteria-1: Curricular Aspects and its five key indicators.

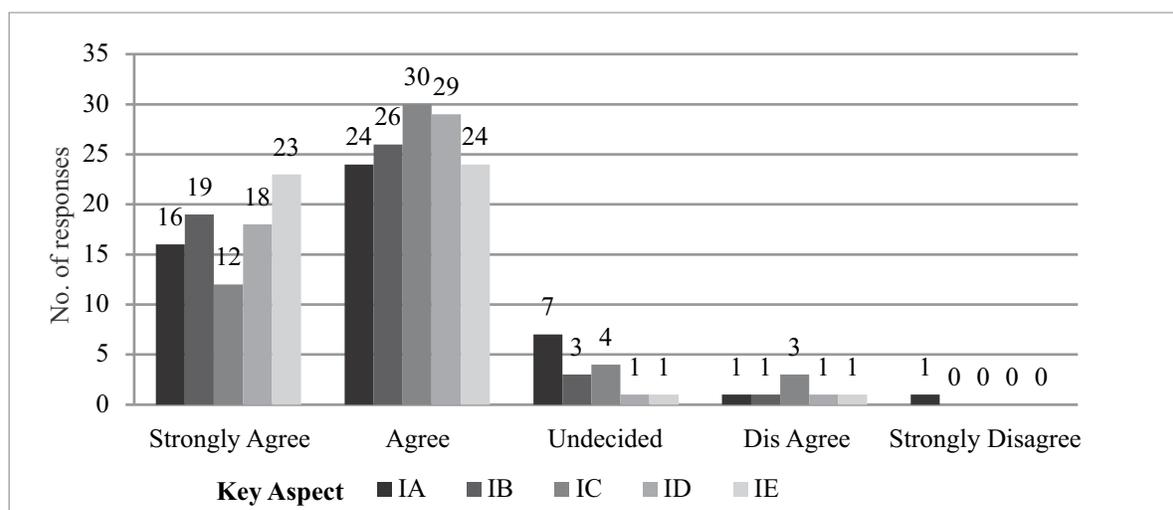
Table-5: Responses received for Curricular Aspects

Key Indicators	5 Strongly Agree- SA	4 Agree-A	Positive Response (SA+A)	3 Undecided -UD	2 Disagree -DA	1 Strongly Disagree- SDA
IA. Curriculum Design & Development	16	24	40 (81.63%)	7	1	1
IB. Curriculum Planning & Implementation	19	26	45 (91.83%)	3	1	0
IC. Academic Flexibility	12	30	42 (85.71%)	4	3	0
ID. Curriculum Enrichment	18	29	47 (95.91%)	1	1	0
IE. Feedback System	23	24	47 (95.91%)	1	1	0
Total Responses (245)	88 (35.91%)	133 (54.28%)	221 (90.19%)	16 (6.53%)	7 (2.85%)	1 (0.40%)

n=49

It is clear from the above table that, overall 90.19% of them are agreeing to the fact that NAAC assessment has helped them to improve quality in their respective institutions with regard to curricular aspect. It is also clear that overall 3.25% are disagreeing about the impact due to NAAC accreditation. It is clear that 6.53% of them had chosen “Un decided” option which seems they are

in confusion. The positive responses recorded for curriculum design and development is 81.63%, curriculum planning and implementation is 91.83%, academic flexibility is 85.71% and for curriculum enrichment and feedback system it is 95.91% which is highest among the other key indicators. The Fig-6 represents the graphical view of the responses received for this criterion.

Fig-6: Graphical view of responses received for Curricular Aspects


Criteria II: Teaching, Learning & Evaluation

Teaching, Learning & Evaluation relates to the institutional efforts towards effective teaching-learning experiences through various instructional techniques whose efficiency will be used to evaluate the performance of student as well as

teacher.

In order to get the information about the impact created on this criterion various questions were imposed to HEIs regarding, teaching, learning techniques.

Table-6: Responses received for Teaching, Learning & Evaluation

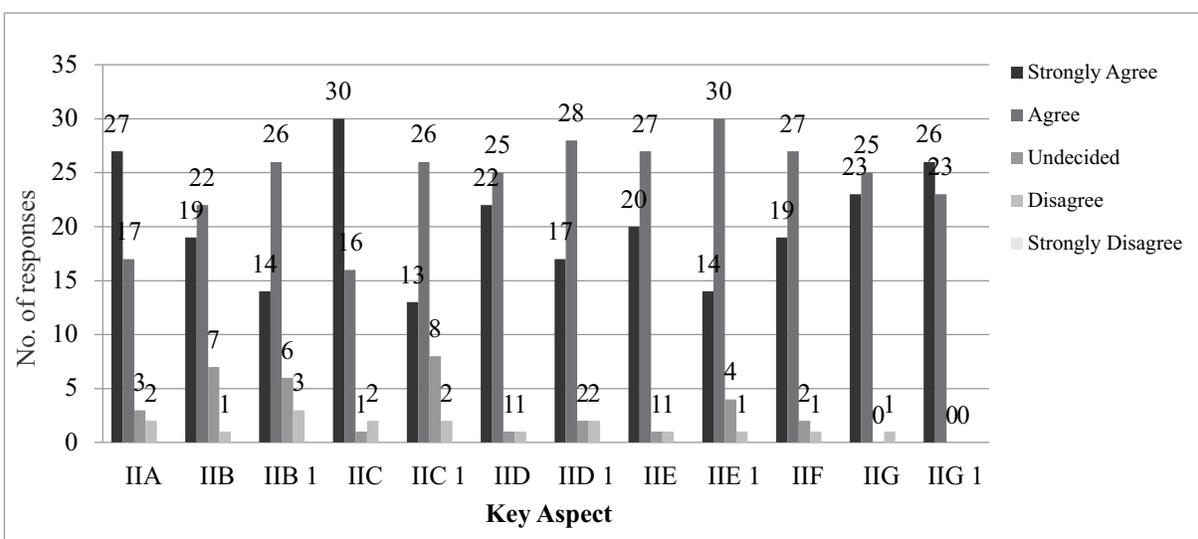
Key Indicators	5 Strongly Agree-SA	4 Agree-A	Positive Response (SA+A)	3 Un decided-UD	2 Disagree-DA	1 Strongly Disagree-SDA
IIA. Student Enrolment and Profile	27	17	44 (89.79%)	3	2	0
IIB. Catering to Student Diversity	19	22	41 (83.67%)	7	1	0
IIB.1 Improvement in student teacher ratio	14	26	40 (81.63%)	6	3	0
IIC. Teaching-Learning Process	30	16	46 (93.87%)	1	2	0
IIC.1 Appointment of full time teachers against sanctioned post	13	26	39 (79.59%)	8	2	0
IID. Teacher Profile and Quality	22	25	47 (95.91%)	1	1	0
IID.1 Increase of PhD qualified teachers	17	28	45 (91.83%)	2	2	0
IIE. Evaluation Process and Refoms	20	27	47 (95.91%)	1	1	0
IIE.1 Improvement in IT Integration in examination	14	30	44 (89.79%)	4	1	0
IIF. Student Performance and Learning Outcomes	19	27	46 (93.87%)	2	1	0
IIG. Student Satisfaction Survey	23	25	48 (97.95%)	0	1	0
IIG.1. Collecting feedback from students	26	23	49 (100%)	0	0	0
Total Responses (588)	244 (41.49%)	292 (49.65%)	536 (91.14%)	35 (5.95%)	17 (2.89%)	0 (0%)

The Table-6 indicates the impact created based on NAAC criteria Teaching, Learning & Evaluation. It is evident from the data that overall 91% of responses were positive about the impact of NAAC assessment which helped the institution to improve their quality level in terms of teacher-student ratio, enrolment of students, the process of teaching and learning, qualification of the teachers, learning performance of the students, diversity of students, student satisfaction and feedback system etc.,. It is found that 2.89% of negative responses received

about the NAAC accreditation. Overall 6% of responses recorded as undecided because, they might be in confusion.

With respect to the responses received for various key indicators under the second criteria, it is found that Student feedback system and satisfaction survey has received highest positive response of 100%. The Fig-7 represents the graphical representation of the responses received for various key indicators under this criterion.

Fig 7: Graphical view of the response received for Teaching, Learning & Evaluation



The overall responses received about positive opinion about the impact of NAAC accreditation for each key indicators under this criterion are for student enrolment and profile-89.79%, catering to student diversity-83.67%, student teacher ratio improvement-81.63%, teaching, learning process- 93.87%, filling up of sanctioned posts-79.59%, quality of teachers-95.91%, qualification of teachers-91.83%, evaluation process-95.91%, IT integration in examination reforms-89.79%, student performance and outcome of learning-93.87% and lastly for feedback system the highest of 100% is recorded which is very important and noticeable.

Criteria III: Research Innovation and Extension

This criteria deal with the facilities provided in the institution to promote the research culture and collects information about the institutional policies about the research, innovations and extension activities. In order to get the information about the impact created on this criterion various questions were imposed to HEIs related to research and innovation. The various responses received for this criterion are tabulated below in Table-7.

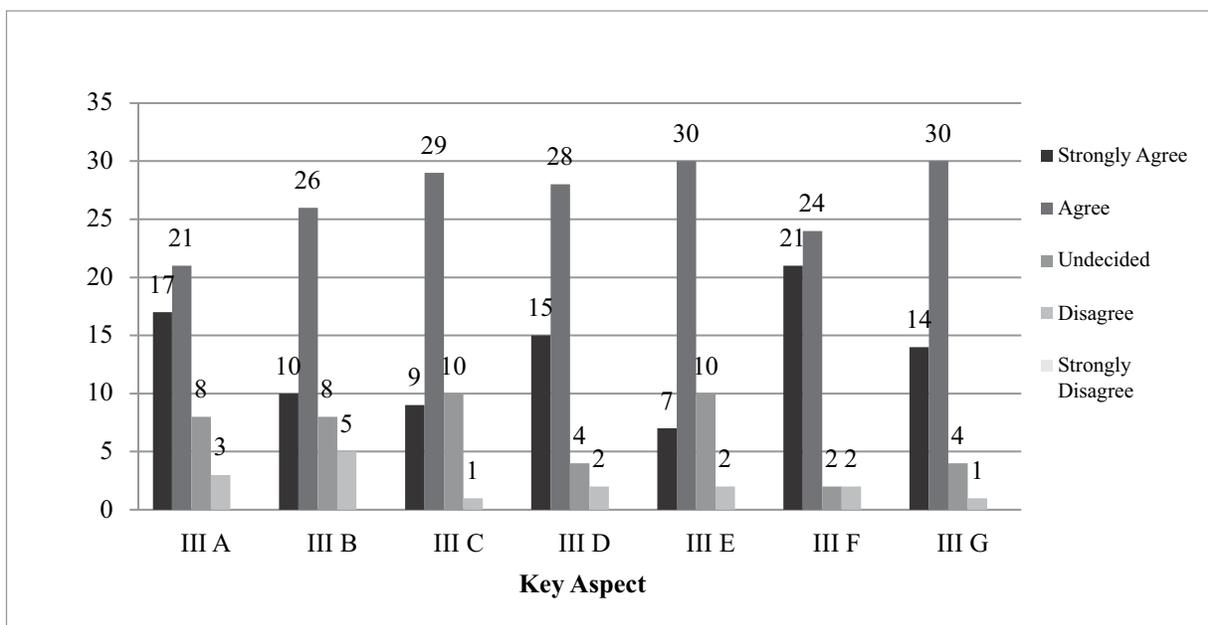
Table-7: Responses received for Research Innovation and Extension

Key Indicators	5 Strongly Agree-SA	4 Agree-A	Positive Response (SA+A)	3 Undecided-UD	2 Disagree-DA	1 Strongly Disagree-DA
III A. Promotion of Research & Facilities	17	21	38 (77.55%)	8	3	0
III B. Resource Mobilization for Research	10	26	36 (73.46%)	8	5	0
III C. Innovation Ecosystem	9	29	38 (77.55%)	10	1	0
III D. Research Publications & Awards	15	28	43 (87.75%)	4	2	0
III E. Consultancy	7	30	37 (75.51%)	10	2	0
III F. Extension Activities	21	24	45 (91.83%)	2	2	0
III G. Collaboration	14	30	44 (81.79%)	4	1	0
Total Responses (343)	93 (27.11%)	188 (54.81%)	281 (81.92%)	46 (13.41%)	16 (4.66%)	0 (0%)

It is evident from the statistics that, highest positive response of 91.83% is recorded for extension activities. The other positive responses received for key indicators promotion of research-77.55%, resource mobilization-73.46%, innovation

ecosystem-77.55%, research publication-87.75%, consultancy-75.51%, extension-91.83% and for collaboration is 81.79%. The Fig-8 represents the graphical view of the responses received.

Fig 8: Graphical view of responses received for Research, Innovation and Extension



Criteria IV: Infrastructure and Learning Resources

This criterion deals with the various facilities available for the students, staff and faculty in the campus and its usage to ensure quality of academic programmes. In order to get the information about

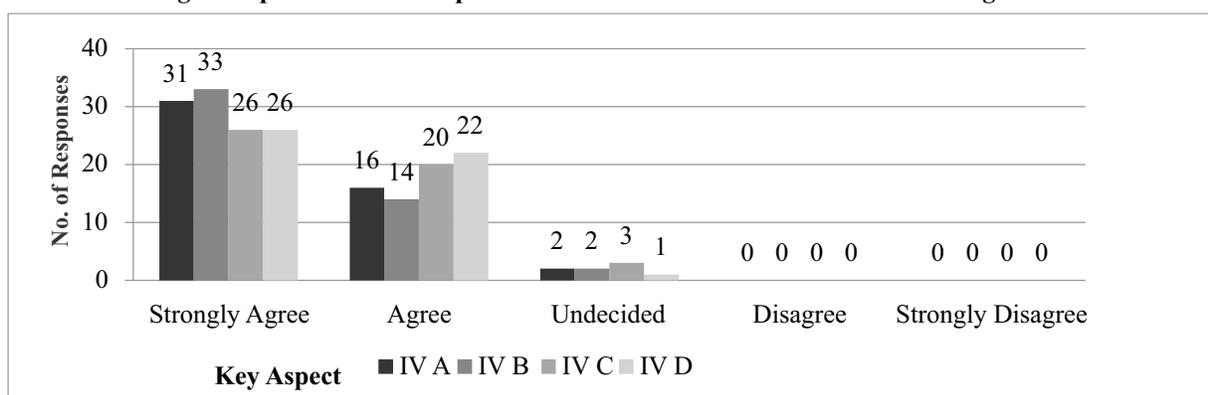
the impact created on this criterion various questions were imposed to HEIs related to infrastructure and learning resources. The responses received for this criterion are tabulated below in Table-8.

Table-8: Responses received for Infrastructure and Learning Resources

Key Indicators	5 Strongly Agree-SA	4 Agree-A	Positive Response (SA+A)	3 Un decided -UD	2 Disagree -DA	1 Strongly Disagree-DA
IV A. Physical Facilities	31	16	47 (95.91%)	2	0	0
IV B. Library as a Learning Resource	33	14	47 (95.91%)	2	0	0
IV C. IT Infrastructure	26	20	46 (93.87%)	3	0	0
IV D. Maintenance of Campus Infrastructure	26	22	48 (97.95%)	1	0	0
Total Responses (196)	116 (59.18%)	72 (36.73%)	188 (95.91%)	8 (4.08%)	0	0

From the above table, it is clear that overall 95.91% of positive responses were received for the criteria infrastructure and learning resources and its four key indicators. It is clear from the statistics that, both physical facilities and library as learning resources have got 95.91% responses. IT infrastructure has got 93.87% and highest percentage of responses received for campus infrastructure 97.95%. This clearly indicates the

importance of this criterion for the HEIs. It is very interesting to note that zero responses for negative impact is recorded, which indicates that this criteria has caused high impact on the quality improvement of the HEIs. Further, 4.08% of the total responses were recorded as undecided or confusion status. The Fig-9 represents the graphical view of the responses received.

Fig 9: Graphical view of responses received for Infrastructure and Learning Resources*Criteria V: Student Support and Progression*

This criterion deals with the institutional efforts for providing assistance to students and supporting

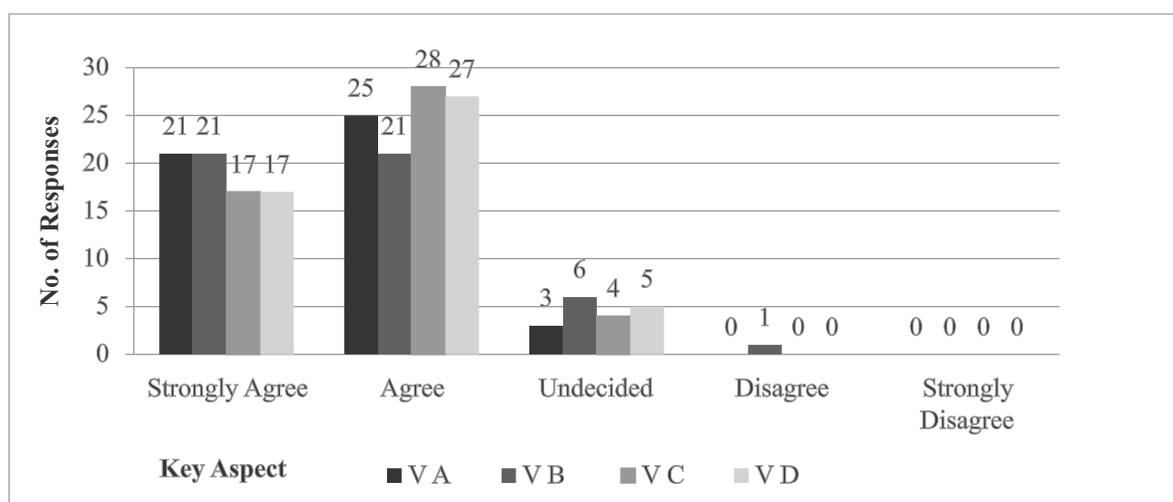
them with facilities for boosting their overall development and progression. The responses received for various questions asked about this criterion are tabulated in table-9.

Table-9: Responses received for Student Support and Progression

Key Indicators	5 Strongly Agree-SA	4 Agree-A	Positive Response (SA+A)	3 Un decided-UD	2 Disagree-DA	1 Strongly Disagree-DA
VA. Student Support	21	25	46 (93.87%)	3	0	0
VB. Student Progression	21	21	42 (85.71%)	6	1	0
VC. Student Participation and Activities	17	28	45 (91.83%)	4	0	0
VD. Alumni Engagement	17	27	44 (89.79%)	5	0	0
Total Responses (196)	76 (38.77%)	101 (51.53%)	177 (90.3%)	18 (9.18%)	1 (0.51%)	0

From the statistics, it is clear that out of 196 responses received 90.3%, 0.51% are negative and 9.18% are not able to decide. The highest percentage 93.87% is recorded for the key

indicator student support, 85.71% for student progression, 91.83% for student participation and 89.79% of responses recorded for alumni engagement. The Fig-10 represents the graphical view of the responses received under this criterion.

Fig 10: Graphical view of responses received for student support and progression

Criteria VI: Governance, Leadership and Management

This criterion deal with leadership and management activities with respect to the various strategies evolved for effective functioning of an

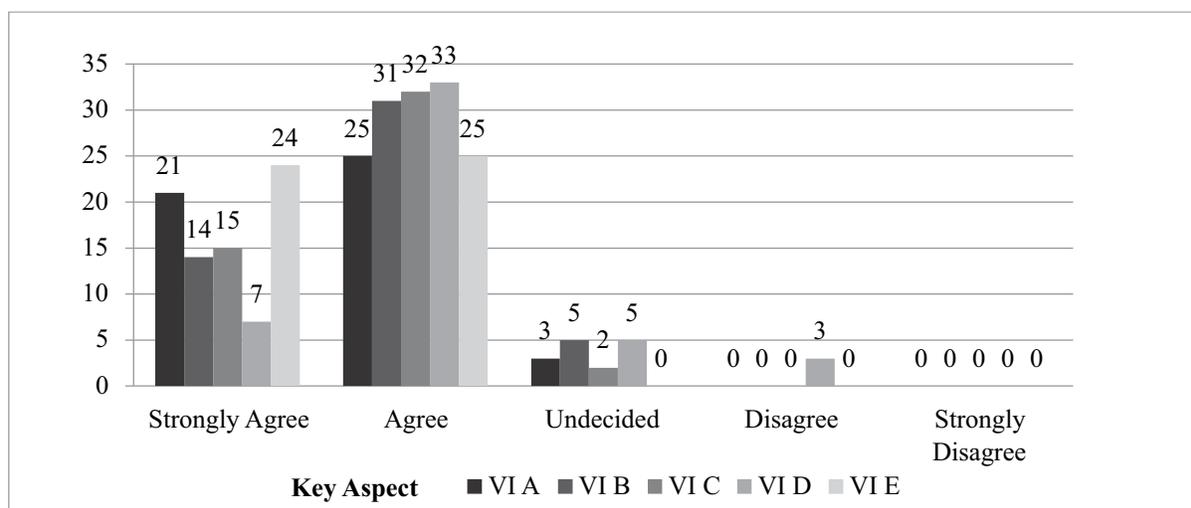
institution in terms of human resource, finance and other leadership activities. The responses received for various questions on key indicators of this criterion are tabulated in Table-10.

Table-10: Responses received for Governance, Leadership and Management

Key Indicators	5 Strongly Agree-SA	4 Agree-A	Positive Response (SA+A)	3 Un decided-UD	2 Disagree-DA	1 Strongly Disagree-DA
VI A. Institutional Vision & Leadership	21	25	46 (93.87%)	3	0	0
VI B. Strategy Development & Deployment	14	31	45 (91.83%)	4	0	0
VI C. Faculty Empowerment Strategies	15	32	47 (95.91%)	2	0	0
VI D. Financial Management & Resource Mobilization	7	33	40 (81.63%)	6	3	0
VI E. Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS)	24	25	49 (100%)	0	0	0
Total Responses (245)	81 (33.06%)	146 (59.59%)	227 (92.65%)	15 (6.12%)	3 (1.22%)	0

It is clear from the above table that, out of 245 responses received 92.65% of positive responses 1.22% negative responses are received for this criterion and its five key indicators. It is very interesting to note that 6.12% are in confusion or undecided state. If we look at the key indicator wise responses, for institutional leadership-93.87%, strategy development and deployment-

91.83%, faculty empowerment strategies-95.91%, financial management-81.63% and highest percentage of 100% for internal quality assurance system-100% is recorded. It indicates that IQAS has helped the institution 100% in improving their quality level which is very important. The Fig-11 represents the graphical view of the responses.

Fig 11: Graphical view of the responses received for Governance, Leadership and Management

Criteria VII: Institutional Values and Best Practices

This criterion deals with institutional values with regard to changing scenario in national/global contexts in higher education to address the

challenges. I also deal with healthy practices followed in the institution for its smooth functioning. The responses received for the questions framed on the key indicators of this criterion are tabulated in Table-11.

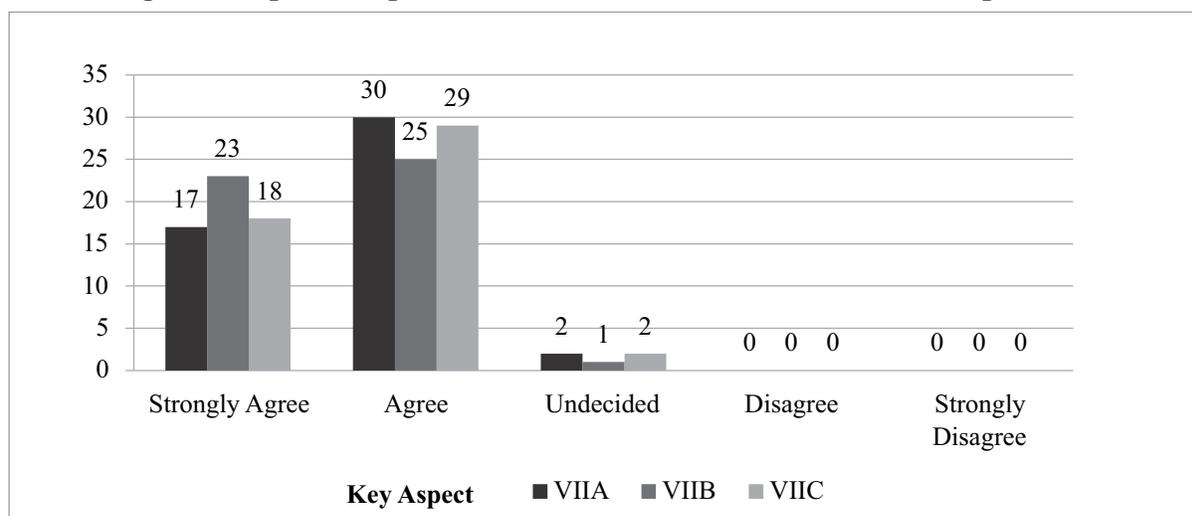
Table-11: Responses received for Institutional values and best practices

Key Indicators	5 Strongly Agree-SA	4 Agree-A	Positive Response (SA+A)	3 Undecided-UD	2 Disagree-DA	1 Strongly Disagree-DA
VIIA. Institutional Values and Social Responsibilities	17	30	47 (95.91%)	2	0	0
VIIIB. Best Practices	23	25	48 (97.95%)	1	0	0
VIIIC. Institutional Distinctiveness	18	29	47 (95.91%)	2	0	0
Total Responses (147)	58 (39.45%)	84 (57.14%)	142 (96.59%)	5 (3.40%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

It is clear that, out of 147 responses, there is no negative impact on this criterion and overall 96.59% of them are positive responses and 3.40% have opted “undecided”. If we look at the key aspect wise responses, it is clear that institutional values and social responsibility has got the positive

response of 95.91%, best practices-91.83% and for the last key indicator institutional distinctiveness it is 95.91%. When compare to other criteria's HEIs have given very good response for this criterion. The Fig-12 represents the graphical view of the responses received.

Fig 12: Graphical representation of Institutional Values and Bestpractices



Overall Analysis of the Seven Criteria of NAAC

criteria are tabulated in table-12 to perform criterion-wise analysis.

The total responses received for all the seven

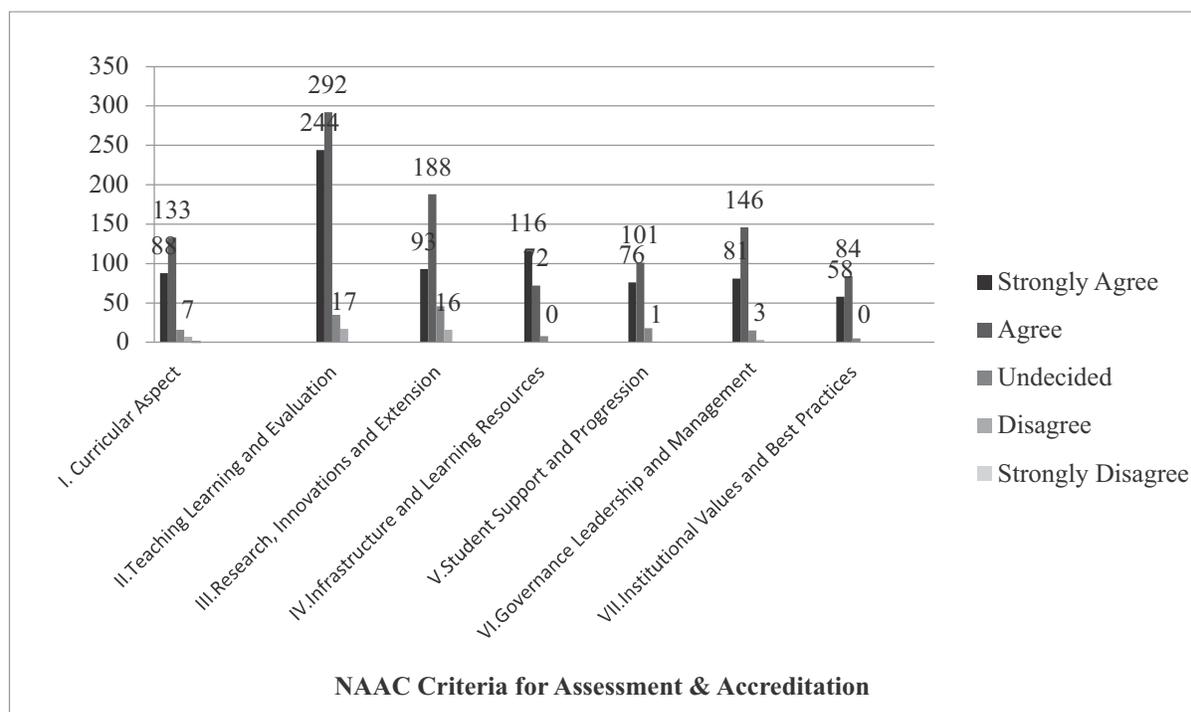
Table-12: Overall responses received for seven criteria of NAAC

Sl. No	Criterion Name/ Responses	5 Strongly Agree-SA	4 Agree-A	Positive Response (SA+A)	3 Un decided -UD	2 Disagree -DA	1 Strongly Disagree -DA
1.	Curricular Aspect (245)	88 (35.91%)	133 (54.28%)	221 (90.20%)	16 (6.53%)	7 (2.85%)	1 (0.40%)
2.	Teaching Learning and Evaluation (588)	244 (41.49%)	292 (49.65%)	536 (91.15%)	35 (5.95%)	17 (2.89%)	0
3.	Research, Innovations and Extension (343)	93 (27.11%)	188 (54.81%)	281 (81.92%)	46 (13.41%)	16 (4.66%)	0
4.	Infrastructure and Learning Resources (196)	116 (59.18%)	72 (36.73%)	188 (95.91%)	8 (4.08%)	0	0
5.	Student Support and Progression (196)	76 (38.77%)	101 (51.53%)	177 (90.30%)	18 (9.18%)	1 (0.51%)	0
6.	Governance Leadership and Management(245)	81 (33.06%)	146 (59.59%)	227 (92.65%)	15 (6.12%)	3 (1.22%)	0
7.	Institutional Values and Best Practices (147)	58 (39.45%)	84 (57.14%)	142 (96.59%)	5 (3.40%)	0	0
Overall Responses (1960)		756 (38.57%)	1016 (51.83%)	1772 (90.40%)	143 (7.29%)	44 (2.24%)	1 (0.05%)

If we take NAAC criterion-wise analysis, the highest percentage of positive response of 96.59% is received for Criteria-7: Institutional values and Best Practices. Second highest is 95.91% for Criteria-4: Infrastructure and Learning Resources and third highest is 92.65% for Criteria-6: Governance Leadership and Management followed by 91.15% for Criteria-2: Teaching,

Learning and Evaluation, 90.30% for Criteria-5: Student Support and Progression, 90.20% for Criteria-1: Curricular Aspect and 81.92% for Criteria-3: Research, Innovation and Extension.

The Fig-13 represents the graphical view of response received for NAAC seven criteria.

Fig 13: Graphical view of the responses received for NAAC Seven criteria

It is clear from the above graph that, highest of 588 responses are received for Criteria-2: Teaching Learning and Evaluation and out of which 536 are positive response and 17 are negative and 35 are undecided. The second highest response of 343 responses are recorded for Criteria-3 Research, Innovations and Extension, out of which 281 are positive, 16 are negative and 46 undecided responses. The third highest of 245 responses received for Criteria 1 & 6: Curricular Aspect and Governance Leadership and Management. Where for curricular Aspect, 221 are positive, 8 are negative and 16 are undecided responses. In case of Governance, Leadership & Management out of 245, 227 are positive responses, 3 are negative and 15 are undecided responses.

Conclusion

From the analysis, it is clear from the overall responses received that, out of 1960 responses received, 90.40% found to be positive responses. Which means NAAC accreditation is playing an important role in the quality improvement of HEIs.

It is very important to note that a lowest of 2.29% of negative responses was received. Similarly, if we take the five point scale average responses for each of the decision, the response received for “Strongly agree” is 38.57%, for “Agree” it is 51.83%, for “Undecided” alone it is 7.29%, for “Disagree” it is 2.24% and lastly for “strongly disagree” it is only 0.05% which is very less compare to the total response.

From this study, it is very clear that, HEIs in the country are highly benefitted by the NAAC accreditation in terms of improving their quality at their respective institutions. It is evident that the overall quality improvement of the HEIs is depending directly on NAAC seven criteria and its 34 key indicators. From this we can conclude that, in order to provide quality education, the institutions need to adopt quality initiatives in terms of curriculum design, infrastructure, strengthening of research activities, IT reforms, examination reforms, student satisfaction and feedback etc. In order to achieve this goal, external assessment by the agency like NAAC is very important. Hence,

there is a high impact of NAAC Accreditation on the higher education institutions of the country. Similarly, the respective governments should provide necessary fund allocations and other facilities to all the HEIs and should encourage them to undergo NAAC accreditation compulsorily.

The present statistics of NAAC accreditation as on 15 February 2021 is around 13,500. As per the Govt. of India, Ministry of Education statistics, the total number of HEIs in India is around 53,620 and increasing day by day. It is very important to note here that NAAC has completed its 25 years of its existence and so far it has completed the accreditation of around 25% of the total HEIs in the country including various cycles of accreditation. In order to complete 100% accreditation of all the HEIs, it may require more and more time. Hence, an urgent reform in assessment and accreditation process to cover all the HEIs of the country is the dire need of the hour and a big challenge. Similarly by keeping the present scenario, NAAC should evolve a mechanism to complete the assessment

and accreditation of all the HEIs in the country in a time bound manner.

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