

**BRIEF REPORT ON NAAC-SPONSORED AWARENESS WORKSHOP FOR
NON-ACCREDITED COLLEGES IN NAGALAND
ON
QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION
(26 - 27 MARCH, 2015)**

A two day workshop on “Quality Assurance in Higher Education” sponsored by National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), Bangalore under National Quality Renaissance Initiative (NQRI) was organized by Nagaland University at the School of Agricultural Sciences and Rural Development (SASRD), Nagaland University, Medziphema Campus. The Workshop began at 10:00 am on 26th March 2015 in the Campus auditorium. Prof. N. S. Jamir, Pro-Vice Chancellor, Medziphema Campus and Chairperson of the Inaugural Function, while welcoming the Vice Chancellor, Nagaland University, Prof. B.K. Konwar and other dignitaries, guests and participants, presented an overview of the scenario of higher education in Nagaland. He said the quality of higher education is critical and a culture of excellence is the need of the hour. He ended his welcome address with a note of optimism that the workshop would provide a forum for interaction, which will in turn accelerate the process of assessment and accreditation of the colleges of Nagaland.

In his Keynote Address Mr. B.S. Ponnudiraj, Assistant Advisor, NAAC, Bangalore highlighted the vision and mission of NAAC and dwelt on the process of assessment and accreditation. On institutional development NAAC emphasizes quality initiative, sustenance and enhancement. An institution that really understands its strengths, weaknesses, potentials and limitations is likely to be more effective in carrying out its educational mission. Continuous improvement, self evaluation and an external peer evaluation are inevitable for quality assurance. He felt that there is an urgent need for coordination among different agencies for promotion, advancement, evaluation, assessment and accreditation of quality in higher education. He further stated that the NAAC and Universities play a vital role as mediators and facilitators for professional guidance to the colleges so that they can impart better learning process among students. He appealed all stake holders and segments of higher education to work collectively and harmoniously to achieve the common goal of quality higher education. He hoped that the Principals, IQAC Coordinators and other participants would understand the conceptual framework of quality assurance in higher education during the course of the workshop, which would in turn help them analyze the strengths and weaknesses of their colleges.

Inaugurating the workshop Prof. B.K. Konwar highlighted the opportunities and challenges in imparting quality education in Nagaland. He felt that there is a need to foster a feeling of ownership in the organization and pride in acquiring high grades. There is also a need to understand teaching, research and innovation, which represent an opportunity to reorient the existing and required systems by which teaching and research are undertaken and supported. The value of college and university education shall be measured on how well they impart critical abilities to students to survive and work in the years to come. These critical abilities will allow both the Under- and Post-Graduate students to use their potential and make a difference in the world. He stressed on the responsibility of higher educational institutions to produce critical thinkers with the capacity to

acquire new skills and adapt to the fast changing world. Students should be able to put their learning to work in the present world, and 50 years down the line. Critical abilities need to be acquired by students to thrive in the future, structuring the educational approach to develop these abilities as well as evaluation and continuous improvement of the value system. He also stressed the fact that in academic institutions, library is the Centre of life for teachers, scholars and students. A good college or university must be able to support the learning process with ongoing research findings. He stated that higher educational institutions should empower students and youth in development of skills and competency so that they can fit in the globalized market. In fact, we have to ignite the entrepreneurial skills of our youth to help them unlock economic treasures for productivity, reducing social conflicts and tensions and thereby making them self-reliant. He also observed that if quality education is imparted, it will produce quality men and women, which will enhance the quality of life. Mrs. Megono Liegise, Joint Director, Higher Education, Govt. of Nagaland briefly talked on the efforts of the Department of Higher Education towards quality assessment. The inaugural function ended with a vote of thanks by Prof. M.S. Rawat, Coordinator of the workshop and Director, IQAC, Nagaland University.

The first Technical Session started with a brief address by Prof. M.S. Rawat, Chairperson of the session, who explained the criteria for assessment and accreditation while providing insights on preparation of Self Study Reports. Prof. G.T. Thong, Dean, Research, Development and Consultancy, Nagaland University talked on Research and Development in Higher Education, giving importance to teaching, learning and research for a strong foundation in academic institutions. He focused on the need for promotion of research in the colleges. Highlighting the importance of resource mobilization for research in the state, he informed that there are numerous funding agencies in the country to support research and development projects. He advocated that research is vital in the highly competitive international arena. Maintaining relationships between teaching, research and economic growth are major challenges today. Output of quality research will benefit society. He also informed the participants of Ph.D. Co-Supervision for faculty of affiliated colleges with appropriate expertise and infrastructure. In the open-house discussion participants shared their observations and experiences.

The Second Technical Session started at 2:00 pm with the Chairperson of the session, Prof. G.T. Thong, Member, IQAC, Nagaland University welcoming all participants. In his keynote address Mr. B.S. Ponmudiraj highlighted the objectives of the organization that provides accessibility and democratization of education coupled with quality and affordability. The assessment process that aims at providing an opportunity for higher education institutions to measure their effectiveness and efficiency, identify their strengths and weaknesses and initiate necessary steps for improvement was discussed. He presented the contents of SSR criteria including key aspect-wise weightages for affiliated colleges. During the open-house discussion participants raised many issues and shared their views and observations.

The Third Technical Session was chaired by Prof. V. Sharan, Member, IQAC, Nagaland University. Welcoming the participants and resource persons he remarked that quality education requires a sense of justice, team spirit, involvement, good teaching and good judgment following value-based norms. Delivering the technical address Mr. Ponmudiraj remarked that quality assurance

is the path to enhance sustainable growth in higher education. He stressed on the importance of infrastructure, learning resources, governance and innovations as requirements. In the open-house discussion some principals referred to the pathetic infrastructural conditions of colleges. After the session, students of the campus presented cultural items, which were followed by dinner.

The second day of the workshop (27th August) began at 9:00 am with Technical Session IV, which was chaired by Prof. G.T. Thong. In his welcome address he stressed the importance of curriculum development. Prof. M.S. Rawat delivered the technical address on the mechanism of assessment and accreditation. He explained the seven criteria for assessment and accreditation while focusing on the preparation of Self Study Report (SSR) of the institution, taking an example from the SSR of Nagaland University. He was optimistic that the workshop would set a benchmark for all the participating colleges, which would be beneficial towards quality enhancement. He observed that it is time to retrospect and see the good and grey areas in the education system which need improvement and moulding. Further, he encouraged all the affiliated colleges under Nagaland University to get assessed and accredited by NAAC, which is the prime objective of the workshop. During the interactive session a number of queries were raised with suitable clarifications provided by the Coordinator of the workshop.

The Fifth Technical Session started with Prof. V. Sharan as Chairman. The Resource Person, Prof. B.C. Goswami, Director, Academic Staff College, Gauhati University, explained the role of IQAC in quality enhancement. IQAC has a major role to play in elevating the academic atmosphere of educational institutions. He focused on the composition and strategies of IQAC, and pointed out that ensuring timely, efficient and progressive performance of academic, administrative and financial tasks, quality of academic and research programmes, credibility of evaluation procedures and ensuring adequate maintenance and function of support to students and services are vital. Highlighting the benefits he said that IQAC acts as a changing agent in the institution, heightens the level of clarity and institutional function for quality enhancement and is a sound basis for decision making for improvement of functioning. During interaction he clarified doubts of the delegates. The next keynote address delivered by Prof. G.T. Thong was directed to the importance of Teaching and Research. He said that the economy today is controlled by knowledge and expertise. Research is therefore, vital in the highly competitive international arena. He stressed on the need to establish modern infrastructure for teaching and research in the colleges of Nagaland. The Technical Session was followed by an interaction of the resource persons with delegates.

Technical Session VI was chaired by Prof. G.T. Thong. The first Technical Address was delivered by Dr. Abemo, Controller of Examinations, Nagaland University who spoke on the evaluation process and reforms in higher education. He emphasized the need for improvement of the examination process by developing an innovative evaluation system. He also focused on the credibility of the evaluation process. It is obligatory that assessment of the performance of students should be fair, humane, valid, reliable and in accordance with the guidelines of examination and evaluation. The objective of the examination system is to expose students to continuous evaluation rather than focus only at term-end exams. This will kept the students develop the habit of studying regularly and the question of putting extra effort towards the end of the semester shall not arise. The examination section takes care of all matters related to conduct of examinations, evaluation,

processing and declaration of results. Prof. M.S. Rawat delivered the next keynote address where he dwelt on NAAC accreditation. He pointed out that only 10 out of 63 affiliated colleges were accredited so far. The other 53 colleges have to start preparations for accreditation by NAAC. He further stated that the work of IQAC is the first step towards the internalization and institutionalization of quality enhancement, and its success depends on the sense of belonging and participation. He hoped that the deliberations of the workshop would stimulate the academic environment for promotion of quality in teaching-learning and research in the colleges, and encourage self evaluation, accountability, autonomy and innovation. This session ended with observations of the participants and interaction with the resource persons.

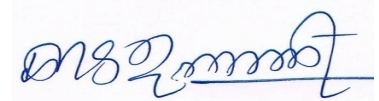
The Valedictory Function was chaired by Prof. M. Aleminla Ao, Dean SASRD, Nagaland University, Medziphema Campus and was graced by Mr. B.S. Ponnudiraj as Chief Guest. She welcomed the Chief Guest, Resource Persons and Participants. A brief report of the workshop was presented by Prof. M.S. Rawat and stressed on the need to constantly ascertain and assure quality in teaching-learning, research, extension and organization and management of the colleges. Mr. B.S. Ponnudiraj delivered the Valedictory Address wherein he exhorted the participants and stressed, “If we aim high, we shall reach high”. In order to redefine quality education, universities need to blend high-value deliverables with modern learning tools to ensure that each college has a safe, healthy, energizing, intellectually challenging and joyful learning environment, he added. To create a unique and distinct character of one’s institution, individuals have to surrender their identities to the collective identity of the institution. He also dwelt on the constitution of the Quality Assurance Committee and the basic purposes, procedures and operational features of the IQAC. Quality assurance is a critical factor in influencing the outcome of educational institutions. He opined that in the contemporary world, the interests of stakeholders need to be taken care of while developing a strategy leading to quality in higher education. Thereafter, observations and remarks were offered by the Resource Persons, Principals, IQAC Coordinators and other participants. On the basis of these observations a few recommendations were made. Prof. M.S. Rawat proposed the vote of thanks. He thanked all for their active participation due to which the objectives of the workshop were achieved. He also thanked the National Assessment and Accreditation Council, Bangalore for sponsoring the Workshop under its NQRI. On behalf of the Organizing Committee of the workshop, the Coordinator thanked to all the Resource Persons, participants and members of the local organizing committee for their valuable contribution to the grand success of the workshop.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. For quality assurance in Nagaland, higher education institutions have to systematically review the educational programmes to ensure acceptable standards of education, scholarship and infrastructure maintenance.
2. Higher education institutions have to maintain systematic management and assessment procedures, monitor performance against objectives, ensure achievement of quality output and improvement.
3. As quality of education is critical, a culture of excellence must be promoted in the academic institutions.

4. There is a need to fine tune the curriculum and adopt current methodologies to create relevant and effective approaches to teaching and learning.
5. Regular introspection of teaching/research methodologies and curriculum can go a long way in making the learning process more relevant and dynamic in the wake of changing times.
6. Colleges need to absorb the fundamental nature of the evolutionary character of higher education in the academic curriculum, while empowering students and scholars to create an updated learning process that is pragmatic, effective and methodically relevant.
7. Higher education should be considered a public service. While diversified sources of funding, private and public, are necessary, public support for higher education and research remains essential to ensure a balanced achievement of its socio-educational mission.
8. NAAC accreditation in the context of UGC regulations is mandatory for higher educational institutions. In view of this, and to achieve quality assurance in higher education of Nagaland, all non-accredited colleges must start working towards accreditation by NAAC at the earliest.

Place: Lumami
Date: 31-03-2015



(M. S. RAWAT)
Coordinator of the Workshop