

The Proceedings of the
One Day National Seminar on
**Academic Audit in Higher Education Institute:
Importance and Implementation**
Organized by
IQAC, Rabindra Bharati University
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The National Seminar was inaugurated by Prof. Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhuri, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata. Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor impressed on the audience, consisting of College and University teachers, to undertake the self evaluation of the research contributions of the teachers. A constant introspection is needed to ensure the quality of both teaching and research.

The key-note Address was delivered by Prof. Bhushan Patwardhan, Hon'ble Vice-Chairman, U.G.C. In his speech, Hon'ble Vice-Chairman stressed the need to introduce the student-centric education system where the students will have options to take courses across the disciplinary boundaries. Hon'ble Vice-Chairman explained the reason behind introducing the UGC CARE List of journals. This, he argues, will help ensuring the quality of research publication.

Prof. Sharad Deshpande explained the parameters to assess the quality of research output in the framework of STRIDE i.e. Scheme for Trans-Disciplinary Research for India's Developing Economy which aims to promote quality research by faculty and students in the university system. This document spells out the philosophy behind quality research, introduces three components which addresses three different concerns of quality research namely, (a) Capacity Building, (b) Research for sustainable development at local/regional level, and (c) High Impact Trans-disciplinary Research in Humanities and Human Sciences.

Swami Bhudevananda argues that Academic Audit is a continuous process of self-analysis and self-introspection towards the better functioning of the educational institution. The NAAC expects the institutions to undertake continuous Academic & Administrative Audit to continuously strive for excellence. He proposes to focus mainly on significance of AAA with regard to the Qualitative Metrics of the seven criteria as mandated by the NAAC.

Prof. Sabyasachi Sarkhel stresses that the evaluation of any institution by NAAC is based on several criteria. Curricular aspects, teaching-learning evaluation, research, innovations, extension, infrastructure, learning resources etc. are assessed by this process. Every institution has to upload the data based on these criteria for the assessment by using quantitative and qualitative matrixes. The institution gets its grade by the NAAC after the evaluation process. His discussion was based on Performing Arts and Fine Arts.

Prof. Kumkum Bhattacharya, in her speech, argues that Academic audit, quality assurance of higher education and accountability are interwoven with each other in complex ways and it is difficult to isolate one from the others. Quality Assurance measures use appraisal techniques through which a figure is computed on a 5-point scale that indicates all three of the above.

This presentation seeks to raise issues that probably are not so highlighted. Classroom teaching, the role of engaged discussion, linking each unit of the syllabus taught with the overall knowledge that the discipline brings in, setting innovative and interesting question papers so that elimination is not the goal of examination and above all, pulling everyone together in an inclusive way - these dimensions are not easy to assess numerically.

Prof J.B.J.Tilak, in his speech, stresses that in terms of quality of higher education, the performance of the system as a whole has been a matter of serious concern. Several initiatives have been taken focusing on improvement of quality and standards in higher education in India. Accreditation and quality assurance mechanisms have been set up, which seem to have only a limited coverage. In the very recent years, internal quality assurance cells were created in almost all higher education institutions. As yet another measure of quality assurance, academic audit has been taken up as a very important measure in this direction, which has become an integral part of higher education systems in many countries of the world. Academic audit is characterised by certain inherent positive features, and also is associated with a few apprehensions and weaknesses. But as its strengths outweigh the negative aspects, there is much scope for its proper use towards improving quality and standards in higher education in India.



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