

## *Profile of the Study*

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## CHAPTER III

### PROFILE OF THE STUDY

*At the heart of any successful activity lies a competence or a skill. – Seema Sanghi*

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Education in ancient India was initially restricted, with members of the upper caste reserving the right to the interpretation of the sacred Vedas. Knowledge was disseminated orally in Sanskrit and committed to memory through the ‘Gurukul’ system of education where the students lived with the teacher ‘Guru’ performing domestic duties in his quest for knowledge.

Other informal educational systems grew out of the need for trade and commerce among traders and the wealthy elite; which was imparted in temples by the Brahmin priest. Pathshalas or Tol in Bengal and other informal schools focused on grammar, along with the requirements of commerce and trade.

The Buddhist period led to recording and consolidation of knowledge which resulted in formal educational systems culminating in Viharas (Universities) resulting in greater universalization of education and establishment of the ancient universities like Takshashila, Nalanda, Somapura, Pushpagiri, to name a few, which attracted scholars from abroad.

The Hindu dynasties patronised education with scholars helming affairs of state, maintaining records, codifying law, and practicing medicine. Various texts in astronomy, mathematics, literature, medicine, politics, and warfare helped regulate affairs of state and establish systems of governance. The growth of Muslim educational systems enriched the traditional educational systems with greater emphasis on mathematics, astronomy, logic and law. British East India Company led to greater multi-cultural dialogue with lesser emphasis on education systems and their development.

This apathy was corrected from the 1800’s with greater emphasis on dissemination of European systems of knowledge based on sciences with English as the medium of learning, patterned along the British systems of education. Missionary led

schools were established and the English Education Act of 1835 gave a boost to the educational structure in the country. Many prominent Indians acquired education in Western countries in liberal arts participating mainly in public administration and law. Universities, colleges and schools were started at provincial levels, funded by private parties or States. In 1901 there were five Universities and 145 colleges increasing to 21 Universities and 491 colleges at the time of independence.

Post-independence, higher education in India came under the University Grants Commission (UGC). The UGC was established consequent to the study into the educational framework presented by the 1944 Sergeant Report. This, post-independence; resulted in the establishment of the UGC for providing '*Grant-in-Aid*' for higher educational institutes under the University Education Commission, chaired by Dr. S Radhakrishnan in 1948.

Formal recognition as the 'University Grants Committee' was accorded during the tenure of Sri Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad on 28 Jan 1953 which was further ratified by an Act of Parliament in Nov 1956. The agency has its headquarterd in New Delhi with de-centralised regional offices. The mandate of the UGC is to promote and coordinate higher education, determine standards and frame regulations for teaching, examination and research, coordinate between the Union and the State Govt. in matters of policy, distribute grants and act in an advisory capacity.

Various councils like All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE), Medical Council of India (MCI), Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR), National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), Dental Council of India (DCI), Pharmacy Council of India (PCI), Indian Nursing Council (INC), Bar Council of India (BCI) etc facilitate the UGC in promoting educational and technical activities, assist in matters of framing regulations, norms, standards for courses, curriculum with facilities and infrastructure and performance appraisal of colleges, in their respective areas of specialization.

## **NAAC**

It is a periodic accreditation process that validates and grades teaching institutions and institutions of higher education in an attempt to stimulate the teaching-learning,

research and consultancy process. The approval process is initiated on submission of the Annual Quality Assurance Report (AQAR) by the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC). On approval, based on the score, the institution is accredited for a period of 5 years.

Seven criterion have been fixed by the committee for institute evaluation among which Criterion II for “*Teaching Learning and Evaluation*” and Criterion III for “*Research Innovations and Extensions*” form a major part of the total weightage ranging from 0.45-0.47 based on the institution type, whether research or teaching type. Greater emphasis has been placed on ‘*Teaching, Learning and Evaluation*’ for teaching oriented institutions. An examination of the AQAR criteria, which among others details, collects details of Ph.D. qualified teachers engaged by the institution, their qualification and research contributions, guideship being undertaken, quantum of research grants, fellowships and recognition, publications, books authored, skill and development programmes attended etc, indicates the emphasis placed on faculty competency. For institutes, a transparent methodology of evaluation of faculty competence, incorporating their contributions to teaching, student and programme outcomes, publications and research, standing among peers and superiors; would be an enabling tool to facilitate faculty development.

#### **NATIONAL INSTITUTIONAL RANKING FRAMEWORK (nirf)**

The Govt of India, MHRD ministry facilitated the establishment of ‘National Institutional Ranking Framework’ (nirf), a methodology adopted for ranking of academic institutions in India. The ranking indicates, the ranking system to be adopted and a major component of the total weightage is contributed by the heads “Teaching, Learning and Resources” and “Research and Professional Practice” with weightages of 0.40 and 0.15 respectively, (total weightage of 1) requiring the development of faculty competency.

In the parameter “Teaching, Learning and Resources” carrying a weightage of 0.4 is a “*Combined metric for Faculty with PhD*” contributing to 20% of the total metric. Similarly for the parameter “Research and Professional Practice” with a weightage of 0.15 is exclusively focused at publications with 30% of this metric oriented towards the quality of publication. Thus, it is evident that improvement of metrics related to faculty

teaching methods and research would account for a combined weightage of 0.23 in the said two parameters. Additionally 0.1 weightage has been allocated to 'Peer perception of Employers and Academic Peers', the contributions to be determined through a survey.

Faculty competency thus plays a key role in Institutional ranking and its perception, thus a detailed analysis of faculty competency and feedback thereof would go a long way in development of institutional excellence.

Various assessment methodologies for colleges lay down standards for faculty competency and their development to promote the quality of higher education and connected research. This has resulted in an emphasis on outcome based courses, pedagogy, faculty development programmes, publications in peer reviewed journals, certifications etc. Thus evaluation of teaching proficiency and faculty competency inclusive of the additional parameters indicated above has become mandatory. This evaluation has to now to account for parameters such as teaching ability, contribution to industry/ relevant research, publications, patents and contribution to society etc. Thus a 360 degree evaluation of competency would present a fair and unbiased measure of these parameters.

### **3.2 CHANGING ROLE OF FACULTY**

Over the years the job description of faculty in higher education institutions has evolved and is still evolving. The primary job still remains i.e. to impart knowledge but in the past few decades a lot more is expected from faculty members. Students look towards their faculty as a guide, counselor, and a friend who can help them achieve their aspiration and career goals. Senior faculty and management also expect the faculty members to participate in institutional activities and work towards achieving the institution's goals. The faculty's competency and interpersonal relation with students, colleagues, and management have helped institutions achieve greater heights.

There is no dearth of information on any subject for students of this generation. So, students expect interactive learning with high level of student engagement in the classrooms. This has led to a change in the culture and environment of educational institutions (Umbach, and Wawrzynski, 2005). Students want transparency and detailed feedback in assignment evaluation. Students expect interactive classroom session from

the teachers and TA (Wake, Dysthe and Mjelstad. 2007). Faculty are expected to have a close link with industry to help the students secure internships and to help in formulating curriculum that are in-line with the industrial requirement. There is also a gap created by the change in role of faculty over the years. Senior faculty are more of the chalk and board method with lesser emphasis on research and publication, while, the younger faculty have joined the teaching profession understanding the new job description of faculty and engage in digital methods of teaching along with focus on research and publications. Teaching, research, and faculty's contribution to society have become an integral part of the teaching profession and contribute to the assessment of the faculty's promotion.

### **3.3 FACULTY ASSESSMENT**

Earlier, faculty assessments were done by the dean or the head of the department. Here the assessment was only by one person and only the teaching ability was taken into consideration. Then, came the era where the faculties were assessed by student's feedbacks. Some studies show that students lack maturity and their feedback should not be the only means to assess the faculty. Faculties who gave high grades to students were rated higher by the students in the student feedback of the faculty (Lin, Tin-Chun. 2007). Special attention should be paid to the feedback given by students, to check for bias and former students of the institution may be considered as they may be more mature and skilful. For the success of the faculty assessment, the method should be approved by both management and faculty (Mills and Hyle, 1999). The assessment methodology must be appropriate for the institution keeping in mind the culture and environment of the institution. Infrastructure provided by the institution and remuneration paid to faculty are contributing factors that affect the teaching competency of the faculty (Nair, 2016). Institutions are encouraging faculty to undertake research activities, participate in conferences and seminars, as this increases the visibility of the institution and improves the rating of the institution. An increase in the research activities had been observed in institution that provided internet connectivity and a conducive environment to faculty members (Carol Hughes, 1999).

Some institutions brought in peer review, as faculty work in a department and they are able to assess the strengths and limitation of their colleagues. With the right amount of transparency and timely communication this method could be effective (Thomas et al., 2014).

Each educational institute have their own individuality, so the assessment that is followed should be customised, keeping in mind the culture of the institution. Timely communication of the feedback is important and the institution has to undertake corrective measures to improve shortcomings. Quality institutions attract students, who are the pride and revenue providers for the institution.

### **3.4 COMPETENCE**

Competence maybe defined as an important skill that is needed to do a job. It is the underlining characteristic of a person which results in effective and superior performance of a task (Kemp, 1980). McClelland put forth the theory that, traditionally intelligent people may not become successful employees. This led to in-depth research into the competencies that made individuals superior performers.

Each organisation has a number of skill sets that are needed for the success of the organisation. The first step would be to identify the skills or the core competencies. This would lead to hiring suitable individuals and maximise output through training and development programs. Most organisation are undertaking competency mapping to understand the different competencies that are required by its employees at every level in the organisational structure. This has led to better hiring systems which in turn reduces attrition and helps in the training and development programmes of the organisation. Little has been done in the education sector.

Faculties in higher educational institutions have a number of duties besides imparting subject knowledge to the students. Research and publications along with administrative duties for the management have widened the job description of teaching faculty. Thus, the competencies required by successful faculty have increased. Research and job performance have a positive impact on the competency of the faculty (Xu and Ye, 2014).

### **3.5 360 DEGREE FEEDBACK**

This feedback process is commonly known as multi-rater feedback, multi-source feedback or full-circle appraisal. Increasing competition and focus on customer satisfaction in the 1990's led to customer feedback that initiated the multi-source feedback. Traditional hierarchical organizational structures were replaced with flatter organizational structures involving inter-departmental teamwork, thus making feedback from colleagues an important component. This led to the 360 degree feedback method. It is a time-consuming, labour intensive and expensive method of employee evaluation but more and more companies are adopting this method as the benefits are long lasting. In this method, feedback on an employee is collected from his superior, colleagues, maybe team members, subordinates reporting to him, and even from customers. Many companies are using this feedback system, as the individual gets a clearer perception on how he/she is perceived by others in the organisation (Lepsinger and Lucia, 1997). This system is time-consuming and most employees are not open to this system as it creates unpleasantness in the workplace. The organization should train its employees and clearly explain the purpose of this feedback to reap its benefits. Over the years, organisations have become comfortable with 360 degree feedback and are reaping the benefits while employees have become comfortable with the process.

### **3.6 IMPACT OF DIGITAL LEARNING/ ONLINE LEARNING ON FACULTY EVALUATION**

The current pandemic has accelerated the adoption of Learning Management Systems (LMS) in an attempt to replace physical class-room teaching with digital on line delivery. LMS's are now commonly adopted to accelerate content delivery, putting students and academicians online. Hence, simplifying the learning, assimilation and evaluation process, resulting in elimination of mindless rote learning and encouraging richer content generation.

Additionally, online learning modules offered by Universities in the form of MOOC's, SWAYAM, and skill development programmes enhance access, equity and equality leading to self-learning. Paid private platforms like 'Khan Academy' and 'Byjus offer curated learning modules in all areas of learning with rich content. The emphasis has now shifted from merely classroom presence to an all-encompassing 24x7 digital presence.



Faculty are now expected to develop and deliver content that is engaging, attractive, rich in both visual and textual content, assisted by sound and animation, which is a far cry from routine 'chalk and talk' method. This shift, while real, makes it even more important to arrive at a comprehensive estimate of faculty competency, removed from gimmicks and theatrics. 360- Degree competency evaluation of faculty which is dynamic, accounting for ability and original thinking, as well as changes in pedagogical methods would encourage better learning and programme outcomes. This would be better than the currently adopted Annual Confidential Report (ACR) system of evaluation by superiors and even additionally evaluation by peers.