
ABSTRACT

Accreditation and autonomous status is utmost important and so much in demand, in this paper we plan to present an importance of accreditation and autonomous statuses in higher educational Institution's and also present a study report of autonomous colleges, with special orientation to Karnataka state. The paper discusses about importance and need of accreditation and autonomous, special society of accreditation and what the accreditation organization expects from the higher educational institutions.

KEYWORDS: Accreditation, UGC, HEI, IQAC, AICTE, NAAC, NBA, Engineering Institutions, SAR, SSR, Engineering Education, Technical Education.

INTRODUCTION

Quality Assurance is utmost important and so much in demand, especially in the field of Education. Government of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development has established NAAC under UGC and NBA under AICTE to look into the quality aspects of HEI and undertake accreditation of the HEI. As of year 2016, 4000 and more engineering colleges are available in India, which comprise Central Universities departments, State Universities departments, constituent colleges, affiliated institutions, Government Aided Institutions, IITs, NITs, Institutes under Private Universities, Institutes under State Universities, and Autonomous Institutions.

UGC

The UGC was a statutory body of the Government of India through an Act of Parliament for the coordination, determination and maintenance of standards of university education in India. The UGC has the unique distinction of being the only grant-giving agency in the country which has been vested with two responsibilities: that of providing funds and that of coordination, determination and maintenance of standards in institutions of higher education. The UGC's authorization includes: Promoting and coordinating university education, Determining and maintaining standards of teaching, examination and research in universities, Framing regulations on minimum standards of education, Monitoring developments in the field of collegiate and university education; disbursing grants to the universities and colleges, Serving as a vital link between the Union and state governments and institutions of higher learning, Advising the Central and State governments on the measures necessary for improvement of university education.

AICTE

All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) was a national level Apex Advisory Body to conduct survey on the facilities on technical education and to promote development in the country in a coordinated and integrated manner.

NAAC

The NATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND ACCREDITATION COUNCIL (NAAC) is an autonomous body established by the University Grants Commission (UGC) of India to assess and accredit institutions of higher education in the country. To address the issues of quality, the National Policy on Education (1986) and the Plan of Action (POA-1992) advocated the establishment of an independent national accreditation body. Consequently, the NAAC was established.

NBA

National Board of Accreditation (NBA) which was set up in 1994 under Section 10(u) of the AICTE Act awards accreditation status to programmes as Accredited for five years, accredited for two years and Not Accredited (NA). Accreditation is now based on a 1000 point scale and is an outcome based accreditation system.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

Quality assurance in the field of education is utmost important, in higher educational institutions the measurement can be by NAAC and NBA Accreditations, the below presented table expresses the association of the both.

Association of NAAC and NBA(Tier II) accreditation: [7], [14], [16], [17], [18], [19], [20]

Category	NBA	NAAC
Accreditation	Programme Level	Institute Level
Eligibility Criteria for HEI – apply for Accreditation	Minimum 2 batches of students should be graduated	Minimum of 2 batches of students should be graduated
Accreditation Officials	official Chairman plus 2 evaluators per programme	Chairperson plus 2 or 3 members and a official from NAAC
Self Assessment	Yes Self Assessment Report	Yes Self Study Report
Criteria for evaluation	Main: Ten Sub Criteria: Eighty One	Main: Seven Sub Criteria: Thirty Two
Evaluation Points Institute Level	Total Points : 1000 220 points: Institute level 780 points: Programme level	Total Points: 1000 1000 points Criteria GPA Institutional Cumulative GPA
Vision Mission and PEO	Evaluated for 60 points	No Marks
Records Essential	Records: Three Years i.e. CAY, CAYm1 and CAY m2 & files generated : Reasonably more and Supporting Records are must	Records: Focuses on Current Year records (at least one year) & files generated : Relatively Less and Supporting Records are must

Qualifying Marks	No Grading system. Accreditation is Only for 2 Years or 5 Years	3.01- 4.00 Very Good A Grade 2.01 -3.00 Good B Grade , 1.51 -2.00 Satisfactory C Grade
Validity of accreditation	5 years if programme secures 750 points or else 2 years if points greater than 600 but less than 750	5 years fixed
Evaluation	Under all criteria the institution should qualify with 60% marks Evaluation Scale: Points awarded based on calculations as per SAR	The sum total of marks in all the criteria's are considered finally Evaluation Scale: Out of 4, i.e. 1,2,3,4 per sub criteria then calculated for each Criteria
Fees	Registration : Rs 1 lakh + Service Tax Evaluation Fees: Rs 5 lakh + ST for first programme and Rs 2 lakh per additional programme	Registration : Rs 25,000 + Service Tax Evaluation Fees: Based on number of departments Rs 3 Lakhs + ST for 1 to 10 depts. Rs 6 Lakhs + ST for 11 or more
Internal Quality Assurance Cell	Optional	IQAC is Must

Note: For the tier I institutions, there is a small changes in evaluation criteria - marks and processing fees. NBA accreditation process for the each programmes UG, PG, MCA, MBA, Diploma programmes(Tier-I & Tier II institutions) are clearly specified in the NBA process Manual for reference.

AUTONOMOUS INSTITUTIONS:

Highlighting the importance of autonomous colleges, the UGC document on the XII Plan profile of higher education in India clearly states that: "The only safe and better way to improve the quality of undergraduate education is to the link most of the colleges from the affiliating structure. Colleges with academic and operative freedom are doing better and have more credibility. The parent university will confer the status of autonomy upon a college that is permanently affiliated, with the concurrence of the state government and the University Grants Commission. Once the autonomy is granted, the University shall accept the students of autonomous college for award of such degrees as are recommended by the autonomous college. The Act and Statutes of the universities ought to be amended to provide for the grant of autonomy to affiliated colleges. Before granting autonomy, the university will ensure that the

management structure of the applicant college is adequately participatory and provides ample opportunities for academicians to make a creative contribution.

NEED FOR AUTONOMY:

- The affiliating system of colleges was designed when their number in a university was small. The university could then effectively oversee the working of the colleges, act as an examining body and award degrees on their behalf. The system has now become unwieldy and it is becoming increasingly difficult for a university to attend to the varied needs of individual colleges.
- Colleges that have the potential for offering programmes of a higher standard do not have the freedom to offer them. The colleges do not have the freedom to modernize their curricula or make them locally relevant. The regulations of the University and its common system, governing all colleges alike, irrespective of their characteristic strengths, weaknesses and locations, have affected the academic development of individual colleges.
- The 1964-66 Education commission pointed out that the exercise of academic freedom by teachers is a crucial requirement for development of the intellectual climate of our country. It is difficult to achieve excellence in our higher education system simply it must to involve students, teachers and management being co-partners in raising the quality of higher education. Hence, the education Commission (1964-66) recommended college autonomy, which, in essence, is the instrument for promoting academic excellence.

CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFICATION OF INSTITUTIONS FOR GRANT OF AUTONOMOUS:

- Academic reputation and previous performance in university examinations and its academic/ co-curricular/ extension activities in the past.
- Academic / extension activities of the faculty.
- Quality and merit in the selection of students and teachers, subject to statutory requirements in this regard.
- Adequacy of infrastructure, for example, library, equipment, accommodation for academic activities, etc.
- Quality and institutional management.
- Financial resources provided by the management/state, etc.

SPECIAL FEATURES OF AN AUTONOMOUS COLLEGE:

- An autonomous college is free to start diploma or certificate courses without the prior approval of the University. Diplomas and certificates shall be issued under the seal of the college.
- An autonomous college is free to start a new degree or postgraduate course with the approval of the academic council of the college. Such courses shall fulfill the minimum standards prescribed by the University /UGC in terms of number of hours, curricula content and standard, and the university shall be duly informed such courses.
- An autonomous college may rename the existing course after restructuring/ redesigning it with the approval of the college academic council as per UGC norms. The new nomenclature should be as specified by UGC under section 22 of UGC Act. The University should be duly informed of such proceedings so that it may award new degrees in place of the Old.
- The university should have the right to review all new courses of an autonomous college. Where there is evidence of decline in standards or quality, the university may after careful scrutiny, and in consultation with the UGC, either help modify them, wherever possible, or cancel such courses.
- Highlighting the importance of autonomous colleges, the UGC document on the XII plan profile of higher education in India clearly states that: "The only safe and better way to improve the quality of undergraduate education is to the link most of the colleges from the affiliating structure. Colleges with academic and operative freedom are doing better and have more credibility. The financial support to such colleges boosts the concept of autonomy". It is proposed to increase the number of autonomous colleges to spread the culture of autonomy, and the target is to make 10 percent of eligible colleges autonomous by the end of the XII plan period.

PREPARATION TO GET AUTONOMY:

Especially, there is a heavy need of preparation to get autonomy status, there are several areas preparation to be made, they are institutional preparation, department preparation, faculty preparation, students preparation and the local community.

INSTITUTIONAL PREPARATION:

An autonomous college is called for to perform many of the functions that the university has hitherto performed; it must study the academic, administrative/management and financial implications of such a changeover and prepare itself to discharge its new functions efficiently.

DEPARTMENTAL PREPARATION:

An important responsibility of the department is that of designing suitable courses in the major and related subjects, introducing new courses of study, renaming obsolete courses by changing their content, updating existing courses to match the current state-of-the-art in each discipline, and preparing course materials and human resources. These will be done in the light of the general objective of autonomy and the specific objectives of the education institution.

COMMON PROGRAMMES TO BE ADOPTED ARE:

- Semester pattern of study
- Continuous internal assessment
- Credit/Grading system
- Student feedback
- Self-appraisal by teachers

FACULTY PREPARATION:

It is essential to get the staff of the college involved in the thinking and planning processes from the very beginning. Seminars, workshops and consultations may be organized to make the staff familiar with the concept, objectives and rationale of autonomy. This could form part of the academic calendar of the college.

CASE STUDY:

As per the UGC guidelines during the XII plan period, following few conclusions made.

- i. Unaided/aided colleges should have minimum of 10 years of existence and accreditation by NAAC/NBA. Henceforth non-accredited colleges would not be eligible for autonomy and the existing colleges are asked to undertake accreditation within one year.
- ii. The NAAC accredited colleges should have minimum of B grade accreditation. The commission further decided that in respect of engineering/technology/Management colleges, NBA accreditation must be insisted for at least three courses while considering them for fresh extension of autonomy tenure. However, for single faculty institutions accreditation for only one course should be insisted upon while considering them for fresh extension of autonomy tenure.
- iii. While NAAC/NBA is compulsory, those institutions which have evaluated by NBA should apply for NAAC accreditation within two years.

Statistics of UGC approved autonomous Institutes within Karnataka State as on 01.05.2015.

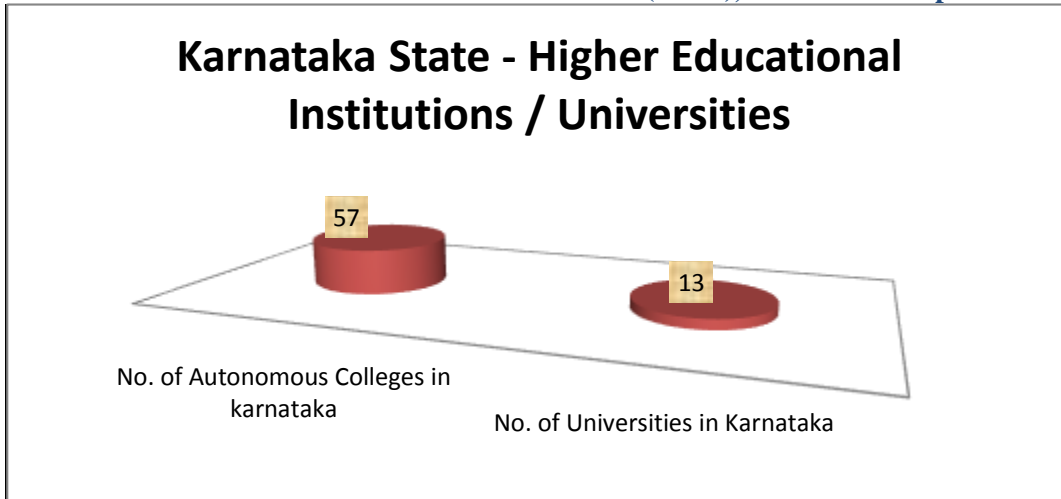


Figure 1: Total Number of UGC Approved Universities and Autonomous Colleges in Karnataka as on 01.05.2015

From figure 1, we observe that, 57 autonomous colleges are approved by UGC as on 01.05.2015, which are affiliated to various universities within Karnataka.

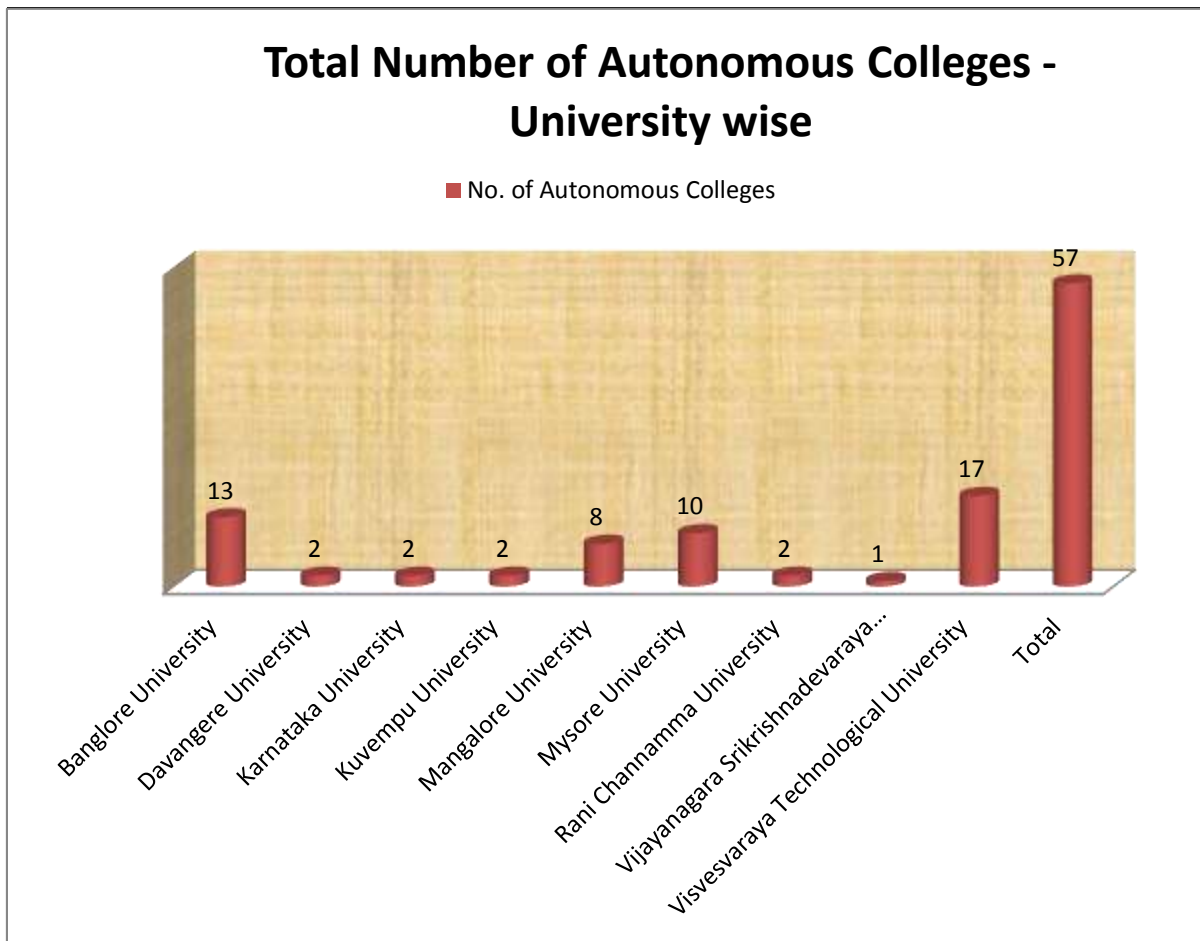


Figure 2: Number of Autonomous colleges across all UGC approved Universities in Karnataka as on 01.05.2015

From figure 2, we observed that Visvesvaraya Technological University has highest number of autonomous institutes among all 9 universities listed within Karnataka, which is around 29% of total no of autonomous institutes across all universities within Karnataka and it's expected that count will increase in 2016.

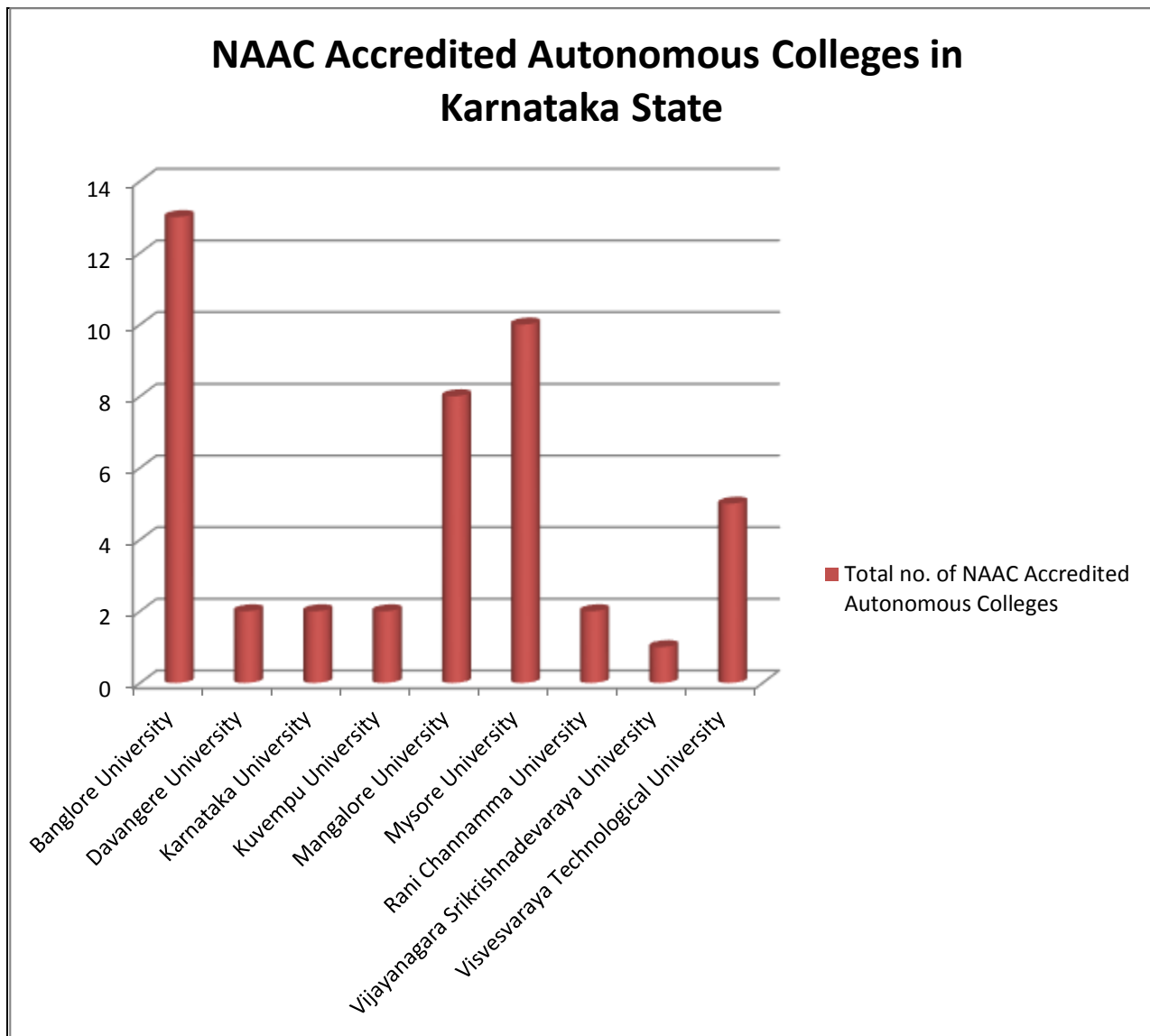


Figure 3: Number of Autonomous colleges accredited by NAAC across all UGC approved universities within Karnataka.

From figure 3, we observe that, Bangalore University has more NAAC accredited colleges within Karnataka as on in the year 2015. Few colleges have applied for renewal of accreditation.

NBA ACCREDITED INSTITUTIONS:

Four Engineering Institutions affiliated to Visvesvaraya Technological University (VTU), Belagavi are accredited by NBA for their few Graduate and Post Graduate Technical Programmes. Few engineering institutes which are granted autonomy in 2015-16 affiliated to VTU are in the process of applying for accreditation.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, we discussed the importance and need of autonomy in higher education. Highlighted the guidelines included in UGC XII plan period 2012-2017, presented briefly about two important accreditations NAAC and NBA by considering different categories of both. Discussed a study about NAAC and NBA - accredited autonomous institutions, within Karnataka State and affiliated to various universities. Every institute must go for accreditation for improving quality of education and enjoy the academic and operative freedom to do better. Every institution must form a Internal Quality Assurance Cell to maintain the Quality in all the tasks they perform.

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