

Academic and administrative audits for improvement of performance of educational institution: Case study of B. N. Bandodkar College of Science, Thane, Maharashtra.

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Academic and Administrative Audit (AAA) has significant role in the process of performance improvement in any organization/ institution. In view of this IQAC of B.N.Bandodkar College initiated internal audit by the method of SWOC (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges) in various aspects such as attendance, result, teaching, curricular and extracurricular activities, functioning of various departments /office /committees. Due to this the shortcomings in the academic and administrative performances became apparent. Accordingly corrective measures such as improved teaching techniques, additional coaching and courses for students and staff, better record maintenance strategies, informative workshops etc. were implemented and also planned for future implementation. Though promising and positive changes were observed, there is much scope for improvement. It is proposed to introduce external audit system so as to get unbiased and better suggestions for improvement.

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**Introduction:**

In the 21st century, our country is becoming global hub for educational activities and international provider of skilled manpower. There is a growing demand for quality education; During last decade Universities and colleges in India have taken serious note of emerging trends and are trying to modify the curriculum, design new programs according to the demand in the global market. Also institutes are developing infrastructure according to the need of the new programmes. The main goal of every Institute is to ensure and sustain quality. The NAAC (National Assessment and Accreditation Council) of India plays very important role in assuring the quality of educational Institutes. As per the suggestion given by NAAC, Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) is established in all the institutes to check and maintain quality.

For assuring quality and excellence in higher education, each institute has to monitor its progress and evaluate the system for checking performances by establishing not only the Internal Quality Assurance Cells and but also through Academic and Administrative Audit (AAA) conducted by Internal and external agencies. Audit is an important tool in determining the actions to be taken to go one step ahead in improving quality. Every year IQAC can carry out SWOC (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges) analysis on academic and administrative activities of the institution to find out the progression towards achieving academic and administrative excellence in providing quality education. Quality enhancement is ongoing process and AAA helps as a road map in determining the actions to be taken for the same.

**Process:**

IQAC of B.N. Bandodkar College initiated internal audit of all the activities informally since 2007. As a result few new compliance were initiated in the form of -

1. Teacher's academic diary where in teachers are required to record their daily activities along with the record of duties allotted by College/ University, participation in the workshop/seminars/conferences, research work and publications, leave record etc.
2. Online Students' feedback form in which the students are allowed to express freely regarding the teacher and the teaching; the services rendered by the departmental non teaching staff, college office, Library, Gymkhana etc.
3. Self appraisal form (API) for teachers.
4. The departmental report / Committee report formats for submitting the reports to the Principal/ IQAC.
5. Computerization and proper documentation of attendance and follow up of the defaulters.
6. Regular analysis of the subject wise result.

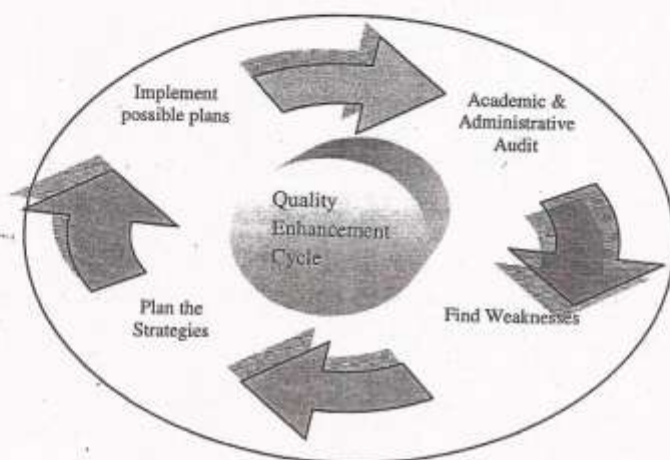
**Benefits:**

- The teacher's diary facilitated proper maintenance of personal data. It, along with self appraisal initiated a sense of introspection among the teachers leading to self improvement efforts.

## Quality Education: Revised (2012) Methodology in assessment and Accreditation\*

- The report formats highlighted the requirements and it became possible to record the data systematically. Forwarding the data to higher authorities also became easier.
- The online Students' feedback form helped in judging the performances in different aspects of student's interest.
- Improved attendance recording system and regular follow up improved the student's attendance.

After re-accreditation in January 2010, IQAC decided to go in a systematic way and carry out the audit by using SWOC (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges) analysis. For the purpose, IQAC modified the formats of the departmental/ committee reports and started collecting the reports along with documentary proof. The SWOC analysis revealed the shortcomings/ weaknesses, which were discussed with the Principal to decide the corrective measures.



### Benefits of the Audit by SWOC analysis:

The audit process has provided guidelines to frame the activities of each department/ committee overcoming the shortfalls.

- The departments /committees and the institution as well realize the strengths and can try to exploit them or improve them further.

For example: Research work & research facilities, Digital Repository and excellent infrastructure / campus were recognized as the strong points.

- The realization of the weaknesses helps to remove them by channelizing the efforts.

For example: Need for orientation of newly recruited staff, organizing value added and skill development short term courses for staff and students were noted as requirements / weaknesses.

- The thought processes to analyze the opportunities and challenges open new paths of development and improvement.

For example: Need to strengthen Alumni Association, improve job opportunities for the students are noted as the challenges. According to these IQAC has given the guidelines discussed below. In general, the institution was benefitted by SWOC analysis in following ways.

#### 1. Building data base /Record keeping:

- There was an overall improvement in the maintenance of the records such as departmental data, data from the committees, students' strength distribution (sex - wise, caste- wise)etc.

- Improvement in student attendance record was observed.

**2. Quality audit tool served as need assessment tool for the departments/committees and the college.** Accordingly various suggestions by IQAC were implemented such as-

- Orientation lectures for newly recruited staff.
- Workshop for teachers to guide them to apply for research projects grants, consultancy projects.
- Workshops for teachers/ nonteaching staff to upgrade with emerging skills.
- Students' horizontal and vertical progression.
- Remedial lectures for weaker students to improve results.
- Extension of the book bank facility to merit holders along with low income group students.
- Addition in value added /skill development courses.
- Addition of the material/notes to the digital repository which has been made available to the students.
- Participation of students in extracurricular activities.

We realized that an internally organized self assessment in the form of Internal Quality Audit (IQA) is not sufficient. Sometimes IQAC members may assume certain things for granted. The IQAC may be biased as well. Hence it is felt that an External Quality Audit (EQA) is also essential and should be done at least once in two years. It is expected that outsiders' view will help to overcome some blind spots while looking at the quality aspects.

**Suggestions:**

Specific format for academic and administrative audit has to be prepared by considering all parameters on which quality education depends. The proper training/workshops for IQAC members can be arranged by NAAC, so that the audit will be unbiased and not subjective.