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## **NAAC Assessment Team's Recommendations and their Compliance by the Libraries of NAAC- A Graded Colleges of Assam**

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The main purpose of this study is to see the compliance of the recommendations given by the NAAC Assessment Team to college libraries of Assam given 'A' grade by it. The NAAC Peer Team Report of the 'A' graded colleges available on the NAAC website was systematically studied and then the librarians of the respective colleges were contacted to have the opinion on compliance. Accordingly, the data were tabulated and results were drawn.

The common recommendations provided by the NAAC Assessment team to the college libraries are focused on the management of library and information services, collection and services provided. The recommendations given are fully implemented in 27.3% of the college libraries.

**Keywords:** *Higher Education, NAAC, College Library, A-Grade, Recommendation, Assam*

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

Library is one of the most integral parts of any educational institution. To build an educational institution without a library is not possible. Being a part of a higher education institution, the library plays a significant role in its learning activities, teaching, research, and extension activities. After every five years in the cycle, the institutions have to undergo NAAC assessment. Some of the institutions are in the fourth accreditation cycle. The contribution of the library & librarian plays an important role in NAAC accreditation of the institution. The role of the library in the NAAC process is remarkable in terms of its services, holdings, facilities, activities, maintenance systems, green initiatives, etc. On quality indicators, NAAC provides a set of guidelines in library and information services for both universities and autonomous colleges. After the

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visit of the NAAC assessment team in a particular institution, it gives a grade and recommendation for better development and up-gradation of the institution as well as the respective library of that institute. There has been the vast quality improvement of the library facility because of the feedback given by the NAAC assessment team. Through this research, the researcher tries to give an overview of the compliance of the recommendation provided by the NAAC assessment team in college libraries of Assam.

## 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There are discussions in the literature on the quality identification, utilization of library services, management, ICT, based on NAAC's web-based publication guidelines, Self Study Report (SSR) and Annual Quality Assurance Report (AQAR) related to the second and third NAAC cycle accreditation of 'A' Grade colleges<sup>1, 2, 3</sup>.

Role of the library in NAAC process in terms of its services, holdings, facilities, activities, maintaining systems, green initiatives has been discussed by professionals<sup>4, 5, 6</sup>. Pawar and Aghav<sup>7</sup> opine that "The college library acts as a vehicle for disseminating information and the related computer technologies through the best practices for utilization by its community of users and also for the exchange of information among its users." Kumar<sup>8</sup> and Jharotia<sup>9</sup> have discussed all the details of best practices and quality indicators in library and information services suggested to the constituent colleges by NAAC.

## 3 NATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND ACCREDITATION COUNCIL (NAAC)

The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) was established in 1994 with its headquarters in Bangalore. NAAC was set up as an autonomous organization of the University Grants Commission (UGC). The mission of NAAC, as expressed in its vision statement, is to make quality assurance an integral part of the functioning Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

**I) Criteria for NAAC's Assessment:** NAAC has identified a set of seven criteria to serve as the basis of its assessment procedures in terms of Higher Educational Institutions. These seven criteria are as follows—

- ❖ Curricular Aspects
- ❖ Teaching-Learning and Evaluation
- ❖ Research, Consultancy, and Extension
- ❖ Infrastructure and Learning Resources
- ❖ Student Support and Progression

- ❖ Governance and Leadership and
- ❖ Innovative Practices

## II) Criteria for NAAC's Assessment where Library has a Place:

Library occupies the fourth criterion of Infrastructure and Learning Resources. During accreditation, criteria 4.2, Library learning resources have a great impact as it acts as a vital sub-unit.

Criterion IV - Infrastructure and Learning Resources  
4.2 Library as a Learning Resource

**III) Grade-Point of Library in the NAAC Process:** In the NAAC accreditation process, there are 20 out of 100 marks have been allotted for the library. The QIF given here presents the metrics under each Key Indicator (KI) for 4.2 Library as a Learning Resource.

Metric No.		Weightage
4.2.1. Q <sub>i</sub> M	The Library is automated using Integrated Library Management System (ILMS)	4
4.2.2. Q <sub>n</sub> M	<i>The institution has a subscription for the following e-resources</i> 1. e-journals 2. e-ShodhSindhu 3. Shodhganga Membership 4. e-books 5. Databases 6. Remote access to e-resources	6
4.2.3 Q <sub>n</sub> M	<i>Average annual expenditure for the purchase of books/e-books and subscription to journals/e- journals during the last five years (INR in Lakhs)</i>	5
4.2.4 Q <sub>n</sub> M	Percentage per day usage of the library by teachers and students ( footfalls and login data for online access)  (Data for the latest completed academic year)	5

**Table 6 (III)Key Indicators – 4.2 Library as a Learning Resource (20)  
for both UG and PG College**

**IV) Library Beyond 4.2 Assessment Indicators:**Under the 4.2 key aspects, there are some assessment indicators such as –

- Sufficient physical facilities – reading room space, reprography, and internet.
- The number of book titles per student (in the central library) excluding book bank is greater than 80.
- Stored with an adequate number of journals (national + international) and other library resources (i.e. CDs/ cassettes, etc.).
- With newer editions and titles, library resources are extended every year.
- Efficient and user-friendly library operations (issue of books, getting the necessary references, etc)
- The Library Advisory Committee is responsible for the effective functioning of the library.
- The library gathers user reviews and provides recommendations for its improved features.
- The library is computerized and networked with other libraries.

**V) Objective Indicators:**NAAC has created a set of objective indicators to promote the evaluation of the Library and Information Services of Academic Institutions.

- To promote effective and interactive access and use of information resources for all users.
- Secure, comfortable, well-lighted, clean space, with adequate and appropriate seating arrangements
- To plan well-framed rules and guidelines on access hours, circulation policies, and other regulations to provide better services to the users.

**VI) Guidelines of the NAAC for the College Library Services and Collections:**There are total four principal factors of the guidelines that influencing the development and maintenance of college library services and collections. These are-

- Management of Library and Information Services
- Collection and Services Provided to Users
- The Extent of the Use of Services
- Best Practices for College Libraries

Here it is given details about all the four primary factors-

- **Management of Library and Information Services:** The criteria compiled here would greatly encourage the improvement of the standard and the maintenance of library services. The Affiliated College Libraries may firm up their performance by equipping/enabling themselves to answer the following queries in the affirmative-
  - Does the library function to facilitate use by students and faculty on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays?
  - Does the library have extended working hours before/after the class hours and are they appropriate?
  - Does the college have a Library Advisory Committee? If yes, what is the library committee's role?
  - Are the Librarian's qualifications, experience and pay on par with those of the academic staff and according to the norms of the government / UGC?
  - Has the librarian attended/participated in orientation/refresher courses and (national/regional) workshops/seminars?
  - Does the library have separate premises of its own? Does it contain minimum infrastructure facilities such as utilities, staff area, reading hall, periodicals section, circulation counter, service area, Information Display, etc.?
  - What is the ratio of the seating capacity of students and faculty to the users?
  - Is the Generator facility extended to the library?
  - What are the library's steps for overall maintenance and cleanliness?
  - Do the computers and Internet facilities exist in the library?
  - Are the library functions automated? If yes, are they fully/partially automated?
  - What are the financial/funding sources other than the state, central, and UGC grants?
  - Is there any defined policy for collection development, stock verification, promotion, and training of library staff?

#### **Collection And Services Provided To Users:**

- **Collection:** The Library is expected to provide comprehensive, authoritative, and up-to-date resources that help its mission and meet its users' needs. Resources may be provided in a variety of formats, including print or hard copy, online, electronic text or images, and other media. A college library must have the number of resources as prescribed by the government, UGC, AICTE, and other governing bodies. The collection of a college library may answer the following, for maintaining the quality of the resources-

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## i. Mention the total collection of Documents

- Books
- Text Books
- Reference Books
- Current Journals – (a) Indian (b) Foreign
- Peer-reviewed Journals
- Back Volumes of Journals
- Magazines
- E-Information Resources – (a) CD's /DVD's (b) Databases

## (C) ONLINE JOURNALS

- Special collection – (a) Competitive Examinations (b) Braille materials/ Rare collection (c) AV Materials
  - Book Bank
- ii. Ratio of the library books to the number of students enrolled
- **Services:** The library plays a vital role, both quantitatively and qualitatively, in supporting the academic activities of the institution by establishing, sustaining, and promoting Library and Information Services. A wide range of services is provided by the library. College Libraries may answer the following basic queries for ensuring appropriate services to the academic community.
- i. Does the library provide the following basic services?
- a) Circulation Services
  - b) Clipping services
  - c) Bibliographic compilation
  - d) Information display and notification services
  - e) Reference/referral services
  - f) Photocopy and printing services
  - g) User Orientation/Information Literacy
  - h) Resource sharing/ILL
  - i) Internet / digital resources availability
  - j) Any others
- **The Extent of the Use of Services:** Performance evaluation of college libraries needs to be undertaken at regular intervals to sustain and enhance their quality. The evaluation will normally be done on the compilation of usage statistics. The following parameters will help to determine the extent of the use of the library and its services.

- a) An Average number of books issued/returned per day. [     ]
- b) Average number of reference inquiries (users) per month (percentage may be specified) [     ]
- c) Number of per capita services per month [     ]
- d) Average No. of users visiting/accessing documents per month [     ]
- **Best Practices for College Libraries:** Some of the best practices that can boost the academic information environment and usability are given below–
  - a) Library Computerization with standard digital software.
  - b) Inclusion of sufficient information about the library in the college prospectus.
  - c) Compiling student/teacher attendance statistics and locating the same on the notice board.
  - d) Periodically displaying newspaper clippings on the notice board.
  - e) Career/Employment Information/ Services.
  - f) Internet Facilities to different user groups.
  - g) Programs in the field of Information literacy.
  - h) Suggestion box and timely response.
  - i) Displaying new arrivals and circulating a list of those to academic departments.
  - j) Conducting book exhibitions on different occasions.
  - k) Organizing book talks.
  - l) Instituting Annual Best User award for students.
  - m) Annually organizing competitions.
  - n) Periodically conducting user surveys.

**VII) Role of Library in the Development of NAAC Accreditation Process:**

- The Library supports curricular aspects of the institution by maintaining curriculum of different programs
- Rendering special services for both advanced learners and slow learners.
- Updating IT facilities including Wi-Fi, Facilities for e-content development.
- Demonstrate gender sensitivity in providing facilities such as Safety and Security, Counseling, and Common Room.
- The Library can help green campus initiative.
- The Library plays a significant role for differently able persons.
- A Librarian can introduce a course on Human Values and professional ethics.

- Library organizes –
  - a) Birth Anniversary of Dr. S.R. Ranganathan (Librarians Day),
  - b) Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam (Reading Inspiration Day) and
  - c) Shakespeare (Book and Copyright Day).

### **VIII) Role of Librarian in the Development of NAAC Accreditation Process:**

Librarians can actively engage in the field of NAAC's Peer Team. They host to plan NAAC related meetings and awareness programs and can be an anchor. Librarian maintains academic audit and many types of records and facilitates - planning, communication, management, presentation, and every activity of NAAC. For attending professional development Programs viz., Orientation Program, Refresher Course, Short Term Course, etc. by the Librarian, the weightage can be more in the institution. The Librarian needs to play 2 basic roles – a) As a member of the college team and b) As a leader of the Library. Librarian supports student's field projects and internships and supports development and capacity enhancement schemes.

### **4 RESEARCH PROBLEM**

The study is intended to find answers to the following questions:

- a) What are the recommendations provided by the NAAC assessment team to the college libraries?
- b) Do the libraries implement the recommendations given by the NAAC assessment team and does it reflect in the subsequent NAAC accreditation meetings?

### **5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The study was conducted to find out:

- a) the major areas of college libraries that were looked into by the NAAC assessment team;
- b) some common recommendations provided by the NAAC assessment team to the college libraries; and
- c) whether the NAAC recommendations were fulfilled by the respective colleges or not.

### **6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

For this study, data are collected from both primary and secondary sources. Secondary data is collected from the NAAC website and NAAC Peer Team



Team Report of the respective colleges.

For primary data, a survey was conducted based on an online questionnaire prepared for the study. As defined in the limitations of the study, the survey was conducted among the NAAC-A graded college libraries of Assam.

The questionnaire had a series of questions arranged in an order related to the topic and presented to the respective librarians to collect the data. It had both open-ended and close-ended questions and was sent by mail to the librarians of the colleges. Out of the 21 colleges, only 11 colleges' librarians responded to the questionnaire. Data collected from the secondary sources and questionnaire have been tabulated, organized, and analyzed to meet the objectives set for the study.

The discussions and findings are based on the response of these 11 college librarians. The following table enumerates the major areas considered by the NAAC team on their visit to the college library.

Special collection	Institutional repository
Bookbank facility	Circulation System
Classification of books	Building facility
Toilet system	Library staff
Digital catalogs	Stocks of reference books
Collection development	Library Management System
The Facility of e-books and e-journals to all the students, teachers, and non-teaching staff of the college.	Individual textbook section and an individual reference section with the chief librarian and reference librarian.
Use of technology for cataloging purpose under SOUL	Books and magazines focusing on multidisciplinary aspect and their benefits for the students
ICT Infrastructure	User Attendance
Library Service	The Separate identity of the library
Sufficient seat arrangements for the students	Automated housekeeping operations and Status of the library automation
Implementation of recommendation	Networking connectivity
Newly enhance collections	User's footage record-keeping system
Budget system	Digitization
Subscription of Scholarly Journals	Inter-Library Loan Service

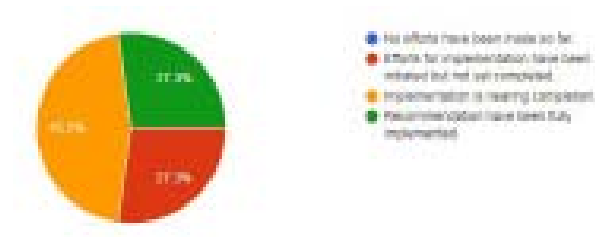
**Table 1 Major Areas considered by the NAAC Assessment Team during their visit to the college libraries**

Following is the list of recommendations for the libraries given by the NAAC Assessment Team. It has been collected from both primary data (online questionnaire) as well as secondary data (NAAC Peer Team Report).

Acquiring the latest books and journals	Extended hours of service.
Up-gradation of the library facilities	Increase of staff members
Must be fully computerized	Must be automated
Library set up in a more spacious building for future growth.	Enriched with more quality of journals of wider scope
Initiating subscription to e-journals	Maintenance of manuscripts
Strengthening of ICT facilities and enhancing their use	Collaborating with other institutions for developing library services.
To access e-resources	Digitization of library
Engagement of adequate professional staff	To add the latest reference and textbooks
To enhance reading room capacity	To improve the library
Incorporating inputs from stakeholders	An increasing number of computers
Library up-gradation with e-journals for different subjects.	Library up-gradation with e-journals for different subjects.
Longer library hours	Construction works for the central library to be expedited.
Use of ICT tools for effective management.	To increase the number of academic journals
Increase the number of e-resources	Increase the size of the library
Holding seminars, workshops among students to increase the reading habits	Needs a big push in terms of space and library resources for future growth.
Giving a very better service not only to the students and teachers but also to the local peoples.	High-speed internet connectivity along with regular computer operator so user can use properly to the optimum level in their respective field.
Digitization of library	User's tracking system
Enhancement of e-books and e-journals;	Conducting training/workshop for non-professional library staff;
Equipped with INFLIBNET facility	Incorporating inputs from stakeholders
More staff is needed	Opening of a digital Library
Creation of individual accounts for every teacher and procurement of more books.	Stocked with a wider selection of subjects & journals
Use Standardized Software for Automation	Initiate Digitization
Use of Digital System	International Journals
Number of e-books	More space on the book section
Fully automated & enriched	Adding more numbers of recent books

**Table 2 Lists of Recommendations of the Libraries by NAAC Assessment Team**

Efforts undertaken by the colleges to implement the recommendations of NAAC: The data collected indicates that less than one third college libraries have implemented the actions recommended by NAAC to them. Almost half the college libraries are about to complete the actions to be taken for improvement as suggested by NAAC and one third of the actions have been initiated and yet to be completed.



**Fig 3 Efforts Undertaken By the Institutions to Implement the NAAC**

9. **Suggestions:** Following are some of the suggestions based on the study which can be taken into the consideration by college libraries for development.
  - a. **Development of Library Website:** The libraries should build their own library websites.
  - b. **Fully Automated Library:** Those libraries which are partially or half automated, need to fully automate their libraries.
  - c. **Development of Digital Library:** The college libraries should develop digital libraries for managing and preserving information.
  - d. **Providing Balanced Collections:** The libraries should provide a balanced collection of resources in terms of books/journals/e-resources/reference books/ periodical/ manuscripts etc. and thereby service based on them.
  - e. **Library Infrastructure:** The libraries should plan modular buildings having scope for further expansion.
10. **Conclusion:** It is concluded that a library should strictly follow the guidelines that are set by NAAC and should fulfill the recommendations given to the college libraries during their accreditation. If a library is developed and progresses taking care of the given recommendations, then there is a chance to achieve a better grade during the next accreditation cycle.

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## ANNEXURES

### ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

The image shows a Google Forms interface in a web browser. The form is titled "Recommendations of the NAAC Assessment Team for the A Grade Colleges". The text inside the form reads: "Respected Sir/Madam, I am Rajashree Bordoloi, student of MLIS programme of the Department of Library and Information Science, Gauhati University. I have designed this survey to collect data regarding the recommendations of the NAAC Assessment Team towards the A-Grade colleges in Assam. My focus of the study will be especially on the recommendations towards the libraries. I request you to please spare a few minutes to fill in the questionnaire." Below this, it says "Thank you" and provides contact information for Rajashree Bordoloi (Email: rboradoloi@gmail.com). It also lists contact details of the Department of Library and Information Science, Gauhati University, Assam, with an email address: boradoloi.rajashree@gmail.com. At the bottom, there is a section titled "Name of the A-Grade College" with two options: "A. Jorhat Women's College" and "B. Arya Vidyaapeeth College".

#### ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE LINK

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1iD8TO23QSK4mU-M6i5JqMbvBgx5qiNQKnfq4zjYpFfg/edit?usp=sharing>