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**ICT Based NAAC Framework:
Opportunities and Challenges**
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Student Satisfaction Survey: Tool to Enhance Quality in HEIs

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Satisfaction of one's curiosity is one of the greatest sources of happiness in life.

Linus Paulk

Introduction: In solar system, sun is at the center while all other planets revolve around it rather these planets need to revolve for their existence. Analogically, we can say that student is like the sun while all other factors engaged in higher education are like the planets. As human beings adapt and keep of thinking adapting to the sun, so shall with the students. While adapting or coping up with students, Higher Educational Institutes (HEIs) have to understand the students and their changing trends. Rapid globalization has created deep impact on every aspect of human life and education is not untouched now. One of the objectives set forth by NAAC is to create global competencies amongst students and it is in consonance with need of the time. One of the mean to achieve this objective is to actively take into account the urges of students from them and 'Student Satisfaction Survey' is one of such mean to that end. In this paper, the researchers have tried to understand the concept of student satisfaction survey, its applicability in Indian scenario, outcomes and challenges.

Objectives:

In this paper attempt has been made to achieve following goals.

1. To understand the concept of student satisfaction in the changing era,
2. To study the loopholes in its application and
3. To suggest solutions to overcome the problems.

Research Methodology: This research paper is theoretical in nature. In this paper attempt has been made to study the concept of student satisfaction survey, its applicability in Indian education system and investigate challenges before it. The literature used in it is purely from secondary sources such as articles and reports.

Literature Review:

1. Dr. Izana Williams and George Wain (2015-16) 'The Role of Student Satisfaction Data in Quality Assurance and Enhancement: How Providers Use Data to Improve Student Experience'. The study states that use of student satisfaction data helps the institution to improve them in multiple ways.
2. Mehdi Pour & Zerehkafi (2013) 'Student satisfaction survey is a systematic process of collecting consumer data, analyzing this data to make it into actionable information, disseminating the results throughout an University and implementing satisfaction survey as a management information system that continuously captures the voice of the student through the assessment of performance from the Student's point of view.'
3. Stoltenberg (2011) 'social aspect as well as academic aspect of the educational process should not be underestimated when trying to improve student satisfaction with university.'

What is Student Satisfaction?

Gauging satisfaction becomes necessary to evaluate success of any institution. It also helps to find out lacunae and corresponding modes or modalities which ultimately helps the institution to cope with time. Measuring of satisfaction is not one time process rather in the constant changing world, it is periodical. Satisfaction is a fulfillment of need or desire and the pleasure obtained by such fulfillment. 'Satisfaction is the feeling of pleasure or disappointment attained from comparing a product's perceived performance (outcome) in relation to his or her expectations. If the performance falls short of expectations, the customer is dissatisfied. If the performance matches the expectations, the customer is satisfied. If the performance exceeds expectations, the customer is highly satisfied or delighted.' (Wikipedia) Student satisfactions defined by

Wiers-Jenssen, Stensaker and Groggaard (2002: 185) as students' assessments of the services provided by universities and colleges. In this context, we can say that services provided by HEIs do act as metrics for measurement of student satisfaction. Broadly speaking, while determining student satisfaction, two views are visible, first is that students are customers and hence student satisfaction is that of a customer. Hill (1995) suggests that the primary customers of the universities are the students, and so Higher Education is increasingly recognizing that it is a service industry and is placing greater emphasis on meeting the expectations and needs of students. However, Indian view is altogether different from the above 'student as consumer' view. In *University of Delhi vs. Ram Lal*, Supreme Court of India refused to hold university as 'industry'. Even the term 'industry' given in *Rajappa's* case specifically excludes educational institutions from its purview. The term 'industry' is defined in the context of workman and not student however, analogically one can certainly say that in India, educational institutions are not business oriented¹. Now a day, education sector has undergone radical changes due to globalization and hence in this era of privatization, it becomes imperative to say that students are customers.

Student satisfaction is the subjective perceptions, on students' part, of how well a learning environment supports academic success. Strong student satisfaction implies that appropriately challenging instructional methods are serving to trigger students' thinking and learning. (Celia C Lo, 2010)

Indicators for student satisfaction: According to the revised guidelines of NAAC, student satisfaction would be regarding teaching learning process. The indicators may include use of student centric methods; use of ICT for effective teaching; mentoring the students and innovation and creativity in teaching-learning. All these indicators must cumulatively culminate in creating comfort feeling as well as intellectual stimulation in the student. All efforts of teachers and institution would be impactful only when students perceive it to be meaningful. Besides these indicators, infrastructural facilities, sports facilities, library, hostel facility may also help in scaling student satisfaction.

In consonance to the 'student as consumer' concept, placement and career counseling also happens to very vital indicator. The student satisfaction as expected in the new RAAF does not seem to take cognizance of it directly. Student satisfaction as per new guidelines aims at creating urge for higher education amongst students such as pursuing post graduation and doctoral study. This may ultimately result in better placement but this is not always true as in case of social sciences, many unemployed students with higher education can be seen.

Student Satisfaction as Tool for Quality Improvement: As stated earlier, student is the key factor in gauging satisfaction while satisfaction of stakeholders is the crux of success of institution. Hence satisfied student is indicative of accomplishment of every educational institution. It is the student who is the ultimate beneficiary of education system. Globalization has made higher education as the significant criterion for determining development. Higher education requires immense focus in order to thrive in the competition and satisfied student would certainly assist in the competition. Endeavouring to attain utmost student satisfaction would definitely lead to improvement in quality of higher education. Student satisfaction is nothing but strengthening the indicators of student satisfaction such as quality teachers, student centric teaching and learning, extensive use of ICT in consonance with modern time, improved infrastructural facilities taking into account needs of students. Post NAAC accreditation, even rural colleges have developed as per the requirements of NAAC and thus accreditation and assessment by NAAC has succeeded in achieving its goals to some extent. In order to keep pace with changing circumstances, NAAC has introduced the concept on student satisfaction giving it special weightage and making it to be done by independent persons.

Problems before Student Satisfaction Survey: The concept of student satisfaction is quite new in Indian scenario and hence it will face problems in the beginning, the researchers have tried to locate these problems which needs to have critical evaluation.

1. Indian universities can be broadly classified on the basis of financial sources as public universities and private universities. Public universities are provided with financial assistance from either the Central Government or State Government. Necessary corollary of it is that these universities are not free to decide its fee structure at its sweet will but are guided by respective governments. Generally these

¹ The names of schools are involve the word 'Mandir' meaning temple. The schools or colleges are regarded as places where one can acquire knowledge while Goddess *Saraswati* is regarded as knowledge giver

