

EDITORIAL :

AND, NOW, THE EDUCATIONAL AUDIT :

Educational Service is basically a social service of the noblest order. The ultimate aim of education has to be service to the Society. Hence the performance of any educational Institution has to be viewed in terms of the economy, effectiveness and efficiency with which it brings about development in the given human resources. The performance has to be subjected not merely to a financial audit but to some thing more than this - which may be termed as Academic Audit OR an Educational Audit which should cover not merely financial aspects but should concern itself with the Quality aspect; in other words, it has to ascertain the unit cost ratio, the efficiency and effectiveness of the performance.

Educational Audit involves the measurement, monitoring and evaluation of the performance of an Educational Institute. Evaluation is not merely measurement. It usually means a descriptive or a quantitative measurement plus a value judgement. Educational Auditing is more of evaluating than measuring. Also that in educational audit, value judgement are not just acknowledged; their significance and importance properly highlighted.

The Educational Institutions have always been subjected to financial audit. They were inspected by Educational Inspectors, panels of experts appointed by the Government/ Funding Agencies, Local Enquiry or Affiliation Committees appointed by the Universities, depending upon the type of Institution and the level of education that is imparted by these institutions. The inspection or probing carried out by these bodies was not deeper, if not superficial,. Now, a deeper probe is needed. A procedure and practice needs to be established where a deeper probe is made and attempts are made to get a screening and an X-ray of the performance of Educational Institution. Steps have been taken in this direction and we have before us the concept of "Accreditation" in our Country though we are yet to start practising it. In Western Countries, they have gone a step further. It is, now, what is called an "Educational Audit."

Educational Audit encompasses the systematic investigation, analysis and subsequent reporting on the performance, resources and systems of an Educational Unit, which may be a particular program or all the programs conducted by an Institution. The performance evaluation in an Educational Audit embraces all aspects of the activities of the educational unit/Institutions and considers both effectiveness (i.e. quality, the relation between the expectations and outcomes) and efficiency (which covers relevant considerations of economy and the relationships between inputs and outcomes).

Thus performance evaluation being a complicated and complex activity needs an integrated approach as it has to consider both efficiency and effectiveness. Work carried out in U.K. by Further Education Unit (F.E.U.) 1989 - RP 304 is worth mentioning here. The workshops that were organised by this F.E.U. as a part of their "Towards

Educational Audit" project, suggested five essential issues as worth considering in this connection and these are :

- 1. Staff Student Relation (SSR)*
- 2. Unit Cost*
- 3. Values added*
- 4. Responsiveness to community*
- 5. Standing on Community.*

of these, the first two are related to efficiency and the remaining three to effectiveness. F.E.U. has suggested the tools of measurements in terms of indicators, e.g. the first two reflect the efficiency whereas the third reflects effectiveness and is indicated by the enrolled students, rates of acquiring qualifications and rate of success of gaining employment and the value added to the development of human resources.

Indications for responsiveness to the community could be gathered from number of new contracts/consultation works, number and range of new activities undertaken etc., Number of unsolicited enquiries, invitation to participate in social activities could be taken as indicators of standing in the community.

Thus, it is time for us and for all those concerned with quality and standards of Engineering Education to think, discuss, deliberate on the process and procedure of performance evaluation we would like to adopt and take steps to arrange for the performance evaluation, which may be called accreditation or academic educational audit; what name is given is immaterial provided this presents us with total picture of the performance in terms of the three E's - Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness.

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Editor

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