



**Anekant Education Society's
Anekant Institute of Management
Studies (AIMS), Baramati**



**Under
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Proceeding

11th National Conference 2022

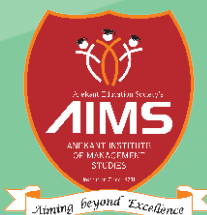
On

**“Innovative Practices for Quality Enhancement
in Higher Education Institutions”
(Online)**

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QUALITY



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Anekant Education Society

Anekant Education Society is established in 1961 under the able guidance of Late Shri Fulchandji Gandhi, Education Minister of the Former Hyderabad State. The founder President of the Society Late Shriman Seth Lalchand Hirachand Doshi, founder President of Premier Automobiles Ltd., and Walchand Group of Industries was determined on attracting the best talent to institutions operating under the auspices of AES. The society has chosen the Jain concept of "Siddhirnekantat" and "Anekantvad" in the nomenclature of the Society. The Society started Undergraduate Programs in Baramati in the year 1962. The college eventually was renamed as Tuljaram Chaturchand College. In a span of about 5 decades of its presence, Anekant Education Society has touched upon the lives of almost every household in and surrounding areas of Baramati.

Anekant Institute of Management Studies (AIMS), Baramati

Anekant Education Society has added another feather to its cap by starting AIMS to provide MBA course. AIMS is certainly working beyond excellence in all the accreditations, affiliations and Certifications of the nominated authorities. The initiative is to develop management professionals with a view to excel in the corporate world as well as take it to new heights. The need is to nurture the talents and hone their skills which are achieved only through AIMS. Since its inception, AIMS is providing quality education and in a period of few years the Institute has made its mark on academic, cultural and social environment of Baramati.

About the 11th National Conference

The aim of proposed conference is to enhance the quality of HEI by adopting various innovative practices. The expected outcomes of this conference are as follows:

- i. Participants will be able to realize the importance of NAAC in the quality of HEI
- ii. Participants will be able to discuss the adopted innovative practices about the quality enhancement in the HEI
- iii. Participants will be able to share the ideas about quality sustenance in the HEI
- iv. Participants will be able to share the innovative practices adopted by HEIs to convert challenges into opportunities

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Exploring the need of Physical & Digital Infrastructures of HEI's: A Students' Learning Outcome Perspective

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Abstract: Higher Education Institutions cater to building knowledge's physical and digital infrastructure requirements. They essentially define the teaching and learning environment. Physical assets for education comprise land, building and furniture and it includes physical facilities for teaching spaces and for ancillary rooms. In the education sector, infrastructure is crucial. The layout of the classroom, auditoriums, laboratories, campus, etc., is important components of the learning environment. The development of physical assets and facilities in higher education is complex and cost-intensive and ensuring their quality and maintaining world standards is very challenging. The present study is intended to create awareness of achieving excellence in this context.

Keywords: Physical assets; facilities; higher education; quality and performance evaluation; built environment; knowledge

INTRODUCTION:

The ever-increasing real estate prices have made it an important component of educational excellence. Infrastructure & learning resources are two important ingredients of higher education institutes. The physical asset and facilities environment give educational institutions their appropriate shape and atmosphere for teaching and learning. Physical assets and the facilities environment also represent the quality of the educational institutions. The physical assets and facilities development in higher education is complex and cost-intensive. Thus, ensuring their quality and maintaining global standards is very challenging. The physical assets and facilities development in higher education involves the provision of buildings, classrooms, hostels, staff quarters, workshops, laboratories, ICT centres, libraries, health centres and sports facilities. The provision of a stimulating learning environment and safety is also a major consideration in physical assets and facilities development. Maintenance, renewal and innovation are other determinants of the quality of the physical asset and facilities development effort

of the institutions that will attract the students, staff and foreigners to the institutions. The aesthetics of HEIs enforces the confidence of stakeholders (read as Parents, students, Industry, etc.) in the outcome of the Institution and its communities. Quality assurance of these facilities right from their planning, to development and utilization will ensure effective realization of set goals and objectives in higher education institutions.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To study the determinants of infrastructure at Higher Educational Institutes.
2. To explore the impact of infrastructure on the quality of higher teaching /learning.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY:

The study focuses on various determinants of infrastructure facilities namely Physical infrastructure and IT infrastructure of the higher educational institute. This study also explores the effectiveness of infrastructure facilities for effective teaching & learning in the higher educational institute.

Defining Educational Infrastructure:

The elements of educational infrastructure include examinations, curricula or curriculum frameworks, teacher education, inspection systems or other means to observe and improve instruction, and a teaching force whose members succeeded in those curricula and exams as students. Some national Institute systems have all of these elements while others have different subsets; a few U.S. subsystems have a few of the elements. In some cases the elements are deliberately aligned, while in others they appear to be somewhat independent. Teachers who work with such infrastructure have instruments they can use to set academic tasks that are tied to curriculum and assessment. The framework can help them to define quality in students' work and provide valid evidence of instructional quality. Teachers can develop a common vocabulary to aid them in working together to identify, investigate, discuss, and solve problems of teaching and learning. They thus can develop occupational knowledge and skill that are held in common and communicated within the occupation and over time. Such knowledge and skill can inform standards of quality work in education, as they do in plumbing and electrical work. Individual Institute systems with such infrastructure also may have the means to influence instruction more broadly. The mere existence of infrastructure does not ensure excellent or effective education; that depends on how well the infrastructure is designed and used. Design deals with the scope, content, and organization of curricula; the nature of assessments; the organization and content of teacher education; and the links among these elements. The design of infrastructure also influences use, both through the extent to which the instruments are made intelligible and accessible to practitioners and by the existence of agencies and procedures that monitor and improve use. Use can be influenced by the presence or absence of time and procedures for collective work on teaching and learning, by standards for entry to the occupation, by requirements for education and training, and by criteria for promotion; in some national systems, for example, promotion and tenure depend on the demonstration of competent classroom practice.

Determinants of infrastructure:

There are two determinants of infrastructure & learning resources such as Physical Infrastructure and IT Infrastructure.

1. Physical Infrastructure: Buildings, classrooms, laboratories, and equipment- education infrastructure - are crucial elements of learning environments in Institutes and universities. There is strong evidence that high-quality infrastructure facilitates better instruction, improves student outcomes, and reduces dropout rates, among other benefits. Physical infrastructure performance measurement would bring value added to the educational institution whether in infrastructure and organization activities. This continuous improvement has been described by Bon et.al. (1994) as a feedback loop which opens the door for continual incremental improvement. The goal of physical assets and facilities performance measurement is merely to improve the physical assets and facilities delivery process into the education activities. Physical assets are those characteristics that the building and facilities must bear or possess to guarantee their attraction to users and ability to enhance utilization for the achievement of the predetermined goals for which they are being provided. Eneahwo (1999) insist that the quality assurance of the institutional physical assets and facilities can only be guaranteed if basic conditions and guidelines are followed. Basically this means that infrastructural development must make provision for adaptability or alteration probability, flexibility in user demands, accessibility to students, staff and society and due regards for aesthetic and clean environment (Enahwo,1999; Stevenson, 1987). Sallies (2002) has developed a quality indicator checklist which shows what the physical environment and facilities in higher educational institutions must require both in qualitative and quantitative terms. These include availability of infrastructural development programmes which is facility provision, adequacy of the facilities in terms of currency and relevance to purpose. Students friendliness and centeredness of the infrastructural facilities which is attractive to

students and suitable for their needs and regular maintenance of the facilities and renewal of the dilapidated ones. The infrastructural development must be of international standard to attract foreign students, staff and recognition; and must be environmentally safe and of high sanitary standard.

2. IT Infrastructure: Following are the other important modes in which digital technology has been transforming the delivery of educational content in Indian Institutes in recent times.

ICT Labs/Multimedia Centre

State-of-the-art ICT laboratories/multimedia labs can play an enabling role in harnessing the use of technology for improving the learning outcomes for students. These also create opportunities for the latest learning styles and ways to create and collaborate on cutting-edge IT-backed paradigms.

Interactive Whiteboard

With the use of interactive whiteboards, a teacher can now project any subject on the touch-sensitive whiteboard surface with the help of a projector and a computer, they can conduct lessons using their finger or with a pen or stylus. Thus, whiteboards have replaced the whole idea of a traditional blackboard nowadays.

Interactive Projector

The interactive projector, which is a portable solution, helps to convert any surface (existing projector screens, whiteboards, or wall surface) into an interactive surface. Along with it, an interactive pen that can be used to draw, point or click just by touching the screen is now becoming popular in many Institutes across the country.

Big Interactive LED/LCD Panels

These days many Institutes are implementing big Interactive LED/LCD Panels to help enhance the digital learning endeavours of their students. Since digital learning often involves audio and video presentations, 2D and 3D animations, graphics etc. a smart classroom that is digitally equipped with big interactive LED or LCD panels come very handy for this specific cause.

Digital Podium

A digital podium is a modern-day lecture stand that comes equipped with various media components/devices that enable an uninterrupted learning session. Some of its sub-components are a public addressing system fitted with amplifier, speaker and mic etc.

Digital Library and Automation of Libraries

Digital libraries and e-books have facilitated access to a wealth of knowledge available online that can now be accessed with the help of a mobile phone, tablet or laptop, anywhere, anytime, with an Internet connection.

E-diary: Connecting Parents and Institute

Such an online portal which is available 24 hours a day, keeps parents up-to-date with their children's activities and progress, and also in touch with the teachers concerned.

Educational Games

In many instances, games as a means of teaching, especially video games have been found to help develop students' creative thinking, their ability to deal with complex situations and their successful resolution, as well as help enhance their critical thinking. These days, a number of Institutes are using such tools to enhance students' learning capabilities.

Classroom Activity Management Software

The introduction of such software facilitates teacher-student communication, because it makes it easy for the teachers to see on their computers what the students are doing on their devices, or share their screens with them and vice versa. Along with this, an SMS notification system, usually connected to the e-diary, provides the parents with the possibility of receiving timely information on their children's performance, and activities. This bolsters the communication process between parents, students and teachers too.

Home Assignments and Review Software

This software makes it easy for teachers to assign tasks, keep a record on them and of each student's performance, while at the same time enabling students to organise their activities, do their assignments and submit them to the teachers – all of this can now be carried out via internet.

Wi-Fi Campus

To increase the access of digital content among students, a number of educational institutions these days are transforming their campuses into Wi-Fi Campuses that not only enhances the e-learning habits in students but also gives them an option to access Massive open online courses (MOOCs), Google Classrooms, Video (Skype/Zombie) Conferencing, etc.

Cloud-based E-learning Initiatives

To expand the horizon of sharing knowledge with students and teachers on the same online education platform, cloud-based systems offer the perfect environment for a digital/virtual classroom as they offer seamless access to information, easily shareable data and foster a means for tracking multi-user collaborations. Besides, there are a host of benefits that a cloud based system offers. Firstly, since cloud based applications run on web browsers and are compatible with most mobile devices, there is no need for expensive hardware and Institutes and students need not own specific computers or laptops to access material. Even a cheap smartphone can allow students to access relevant academic applications. Furthermore, there is no need to invest in external storage devices since there are several platforms available that offer free cloud-based storage services.

Bio-metric Attendance System

Thanks to a bio-metric attendance system being implemented across many modern-day Institutes, much ease and transparency in the attendance system of not only students but also teaching and non-teaching staff is now being achieved. Given the very important role being played by digital technology in speeding up learning in Institutes and in transforming the delivery of educational content across Institutes and the phenomenon's subsequent growth and acceptance across Institutes, it could certainly be said that Institutes that successfully join the bandwagon now and harness the technology for their advantage, hold a greater chance of enjoying the early-mover advantage in this segment.

The impact of infrastructure on educational quality

A review of the most recent literature indicates that investments to improve Institute infrastructure has effects on the educational quality at least in the following three dimensions:

1. **Attendance and completion of academic cycles.** According to UNESCO, the Institute drop-out rate in Latin America is 17 percent, and greater in rural areas. Several studies have found that the physical conditions of Institute buildings positively affects Institute completion and cycle completion rates, and increases registration. For example, in Peru the World Bank found that investments in Institute facilities had a very significant positive effect on students' attendance rates.
 2. **Teacher motivation.** Evidence in Bangladesh, Ecuador, India, Indonesia, Peru, and Uganda indicates that teachers in Institutes with good infrastructure have, on average, 10 percent less absenteeism than teachers in Institutes with deficient infrastructure. In fact, the study found that infrastructure had a greater effect reducing absenteeism than teacher salaries or the effect of the administrative tolerance for absences.
- Learning results.** Studies carried out in the United States, such as the one conducted by 21st Century Institute Fund in 2010, found positive results which are statistically significant between Institute infrastructure and standardized tests to measure learning processes in many parts of the country. With lower student socio-economic levels, the results were higher.

3. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION:

Empiric evidence indicates that there **is a direct relationship between Institute infrastructure and educational performance**, and that investments in educational infrastructure contribute to improve the quality of education and the economic performance of countries. Poor physical conditions, particularly at higher education institutions, can negatively impact students' learning outcomes. Examples include dark classrooms with inadequate ventilation, broken furniture, leaking restrooms, unkempt cafeterias and pantry areas, and a disorganized library arrangement.

One of the best indicators of a student's success is the classroom environment, where the physical setting and architectural features of the building have a big impact on how well students do in school. A useful resource for every educational setting is the library. It plays a significant part in both teaching and learning. Libraries must be adaptable enough to embrace modern technology like e-books, digital books, campus-wide libraries, and access to the central library. E-libraries and digital literature are essential in light of the recent outbreak of the coronavirus. There should be designated reading and conversation areas because this encourages students to work together more. Another essential part of the educational infrastructure is the playground. It promotes a student's physical and mental well-being and fosters a healthy environment on campus. Playgrounds must be versatile, adaptable, and secure. It must also have adequate room to accommodate multiple sports at once.

Rivera explains "To optimize investments in education **it is essential for authorities to observe the significant role of infrastructure** interacting with other essential educational inputs to be able to undertake comprehensive proposals that together, improve the quality of education, thus promoting greater equality of opportunities and contribute to reduce inequalities and advance toward a real productive transformation in the region".

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