

**QUALITY OF UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION IN
INDIA: A STUDY OF STUDENT PERCEPTIONS IN
SELECT DELHI UNIVERSITY COLLEGES**

*Dissertation Submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University in Partial Fulfillment for the
Award of the degree of*

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

JAYRATH RAMCHANDRA SHINDE



**ZAKIR HUSAIN CENTRE FOR EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI-110067
INDIA
2011**



JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI - 110067

ZAKIR HUSAIN CENTRE FOR EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

July, 2011

DECLARATION

I, JAYRATH RAMCHANDRA SHINDE declare that this dissertation entitled "QUALITY OF UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION IN INDIA: A STUDY OF STUDENT PERCEPTIONS IN SELECT DELHI UNIVERSITY COLLEGES" submitted by me in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy of Jawaharlal Nehru University, is my bonafide work. I further declare that the dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this university or any other university.

JAYRATH RAMCHANDRA SHINDE

CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

Prof. Binod Khadria

(Supervisor)

Prof. Binod Khadria

(Chairperson)
Zakir Husain Centre for
Educational Studies
School of Social Sciences
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi - 110067

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to extend my gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Binod Khadria, for his constant supervision, support and guidance. His valuable suggestions have made it possible for this work to attain a form. I specially thank him for bearing with me when I was not able to put forth my views clearly during discussions. I also thank him for entertaining my doubts, and for clarifying them.

I take this opportunity to extend my thanks to all the faculty members of the Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies for their suggestions and guidance, especially during the course work which helped a lot during the dissertation period. I appreciate the assistance provided by the non-teaching staff of Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies.

I extend my gratefulness to the respondent students, for their kind cooperation, belonging to various colleges located in Delhi, and one college located in Kolhapur, Maharashtra. Their assistance has been crucial to get this work done.

I am grateful to Sharmilla, Kailash Ambulgekar, and Neelam for crucial support in data collection. Thanks to Nilesh, Ankit, Rohan, Praful, Vivek, Ramratan, Abhishek, Pawan for keeping the atmosphere jovial during tense moments. Special thanks to Umesh and Shekhar for all the help they provided at short notice.

There are no adequate words to express my indebtedness to my family, especially my mother for her support. This work would never have materialized without her selfless love, and sacrifices.

Jayrath Ramchandra Shinde

Abbreviations

ASC	Academic Staff College
B.El.Ed	Bachelor of Elementary Education
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
NSSE	National Survey on Student Engagement
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource and Development
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
SGTB	Sri Guru Teg Bahadur
IHE	Institute of Home economics
THE	Times Higher Education
TQM	Total Quality Management
UGC	University Grants Commission

List of Tables	Page No.
Table 4.1: Reading and writing during the current school year	41
Table 4.2: Classroom activities during the current school year	42
Table 4.3: Memorizing and Analyzing	43
Table 4.4: Areas of Contribution	44
Table 4.5: Activities done during the current school year	45
Table 4.6: Support from institution in different areas	46

List of Figures	Page No.
Figure 4.1: Relationship with Faculty Members	37
Figure 4.2: Class Participation	38
Figure 4.3: How often has course work emphasized the analyzing activities	39
Figure 4.4: Contribution of institution in analytical and critical thinking	40

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	i
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	ii
LIST OF TABLES	iii
LIST OF FIGURES	iv

CHAPTERS	PAGE NO.
Chapter I	1-11
Introduction	
Demand, Access and Quality	
Skills and Vocationalisation	
Need for the Study	
Objectives of the Study	
Variables Analyzed	
Chapter II	12-29
Review of Literature	
Historical Factors and Quality	
Attempts at Defining Quality	
Measures of Quality	
Purpose of Higher Education	
Analysis of Quality across Countries	
The Emergence of Quality Assurance Agencies	
Education as a Service	
UGC and NAAC on Quality of Higher Education	
Ranking Agencies	
Chapter III	30-35
Method	
Sample of the Study	
Technique Used in the Study	
Procedure	

Chapter IV	36-65
Results	
Quantitative Analysis of Data	
Analysis of the Responses to the Questionnaire	
Summary of findings	
Chapter V	66-71
Overall Findings and Discussion	
Overall Findings of the Study and Discussion	
Limitations of the Study	
Suggestions for Further Research	
References	72-78
Appendix	
Appendix A	

Chapter I

Introduction

Introduction

Most developing countries find themselves engrossed in the debate on quality versus quantity. Should there be quantitative increase in terms of enrolment or focus should entirely be on producing quality manpower? Is there necessarily a trade off between quality and quantity? Harbison and Myers (1964), used the following indicators to build a composite index of human capital stock. These are: Pupils enrolled at second-level (secondary) education as a percentage of the estimated population aged 15 to 19 inclusive, adjusted for length of schooling, and; Enrolment in third-level (higher) education as a percentage of the age group 20 to 24. Based on this index they divided seventy five countries into four levels of human resource development. They also developed a similar index of economic development measured in terms of Gross national product (GNP) per capita in United States dollars And; percentage of the active population engaged in agricultural occupations.

They found that in general higher the levels of human resource development higher were the above indicators. Especially there is strong correlation between human resource development and economic development measured in terms of GNP. Thus it implies that in order to increase economic development there has to be increase in human resource that would imply increase in quantity of the educated manpower. The proponents of quality argue that education devoid of quality is no education at all. However, increase in quantity by itself does not guarantee increase in quality; it needs to be supported by simultaneous increase in resources. The end users of these resources are the students and hence it becomes essential to know their perceptions on quality of higher education.

The quality, quantity debate is put in terms of demand and access for education, in the following section.

Demand, Access and Quality of education

As per the current scenario in India, there is high demand for education but access is restricted to select pockets in terms of region, religion, caste, gender etc. The demand for higher education is growing fast as larger and larger number of students are passing out from school education, expansion of Indian middle class, decline of land based economic system and lately it is being looked at as the more enduring basis of economic security. Hashim (2007). According to Jayram (2007) the ratio of aspirants to available seats for admissions to IITs worked out to 55:1 in 2006, for 5444 seats in seven IITs 2,99,456 students took the exam, thus there is acute scarcity of access to quality higher education and quality varies to a large extent among the institutes. The reason for existence of high prestige and low prestige colleges in India is that the demand for higher quality education gets expressed through the number of applications for entry into top institutes like IITs and IIMs rather than in public pressure to increase the 'quality' at lower prestige institutes. Kapur and Mehta (2004), in their analysis of reforms in Indian higher education. argue that bulk of private investment in higher education goes in engineering, medicine and management and consequently does little for the majority of the students notwithstanding the fact that bulk of students, almost 82 per cent, are enrolled in arts and science. The providers being private happen to charge high fees which might induce students to act like customers who demand service for their pay. As we discuss the findings later we would find views expressed by a few students that support this proposition. Bagchi (2010) has given a contrary view, according to him even in the field of arts and science, government colleges accounted for only 18% of the total number of colleges.

For Walker (2007) “capabilities are opportunities or freedoms to achieve what an individual reflectively considers important”. Though it may be said that college students’ views have still not evolved or matured, the policy makers for this reason cannot afford to neglect them, in fact for this very reason their perceptions become important. Now in this ability of reflexivity the role of education I think comes into play. Education gives one the strength to reflect in a better way allowing one to have real freedom. Education can do this in several ways, by expanding the people one comes in contact with, broadening of horizons etc and access to higher education can allow this to happen in a way not possible by any other. Sen conceptualizes poverty as ‘capability deprivation’ and ‘unfreedom’ (1982, 1985; Dreze & Sen 2002). Capability, according to Dreze and Sen (2002: 35-36), refers to ‘the ultimate combinations of functioning from which a person can choose’ and freedom to “the range of options a person has in deciding what kind of life to lead” Mohanty (2009). Lack of education would stand out as the most important hindrance to progress in today’s economy, when the government projects education as the route for social mobility. So the kind of life a person can live, by participating in various activities like politics, cultural activities meeting new people, ‘broadening of horizons’ etc can be accomplished by making education meaningful and that is nothing but providing it in the first place.

There are social groups identified by UGC (university grants commission) with lower enrolment rates and these include SC, ST, OBC, Women religious minorities specially Muslims. There are regions within India interstate as well as intrastate that have huge disparities in access. Thorat (2008) Urban rural division plays important role in access. Students may not be willing to go too far to pursue studies. Medium of instruction at primary and secondary level determines access to higher education. In majority of cases Opportunity cost of learning in terms of

earnings foregone impact choice of people. The number of seats being limited, merit becomes a criterion for access. Availability of social capital through social networks determines whether to continue to study or not.

Currently there is lot of comparison between Gross Enrolment ratio of developed and developing countries. And developing countries like India may go for higher no of graduates without considering their employability, quality therefore would not imply employability with respect to B.A. programmes it would be about having aware, and effective individuals.

To mention another problem afflicting higher education would be its inflexibility. According to Parikh (1973), educational arrangements are not flexible enough because of the assumption that education is a race in which one or few win while others fail. If institutions and teachers as well assume this then there is not much left to be done on their part as the sheer demand for education will continue to churn out the required few and all the efforts at measuring quality would not be of any use. It is in this context that student perceptions are important not only on quality but other issues which are going to determine their future

Skill formation and Vocationalisation

According to National Knowledge Commission the growing concern today is that the education system is not fulfilling its role of building up a pool of skilled and job ready manpower. It talks of correcting this by providing due linkages between school and higher education which could be done by establishing community colleges that provide two year associate degree course. This it promotes to be done by public private partnership. Higher education in India is said to be skewed in favour of humanities and arts so four fifth of the graduates are said to have no employable

skills. In this scenario only about two percent persons of age 15-29 years receive formal vocational training. Inclusion of polytechnics in higher education and also general arts and science colleges being encouraged to offer associate degrees for a large variety of service sector jobs is one of the suggestions.

The education system is designed for those who wish to pursue higher studies in universities or in technical institutions (like medical and engineering) etc making no allowance for those who do not have the aptitude for higher studies or those who do not want to pursue higher studies for other reasons. Also there would be greater incentive for parents to keep their children in school if they feel some skills or vocational education would be imparted. The parents of majority of the target group mentioned earlier are poor and there is hardly any financial provision like in general higher education sector. So provision of a loan for investment in vocational education with a promise of return by the poor would not be impracticable. Also the amount necessary would not be as high as in other sectors of the economy. (Khadria 2007)

Netherlands is a example where choice opens up after six years of primary schooling plus one transitional year and importantly the other issue is the extent to which mobility is allowed like in Netherlands, after basic elementary education up to class eight, students branch out into 3 streams vocational, general and university, but even if you branch out into vocational and get the basic degree, then also later on you have the flexibility to shift to general education that is continue in main stream higher education. In Sweden, vocational and general streams run in parallel in the same establishments. So these are no separate institutions. Thus the stigma associated is less. In UK the tradition is of linked work and training, so the cooperation between colleges and industry is better developed. The employers representatives are members of the governing bodies of colleges, and are involved in revising course content.

The issue with respect to skill imparting is whether it should be given in a separate stream or within the same institutions. Skills can also be imparted in work linked training systems which combine learning on the job in company training centres e.g. apprenticeship. The choices made by each country regarding the organisation of vocational education training, depends upon political, economic and social factors as well. Like in India because of the caste system there is stigma associated with occupation wise categorisation, thus we see hierarchy, between main stream general education versus the other 'skill based'. In Europe, general culture and abstraction tends to be valued more highly than technical and practical aspects, but in united states typing is part of the standard-secondary curriculum. In India also we have hierarchy and stigma this can be reduced by having similar establishments and vocational type courses introduced for everybody. (Jallade, 1989)

Need for the Study

Students' perception of their personal circumstances and surroundings can influence behaviour. Students' Perceptions of Academic and Institutional Service Quality in higher education affect the students' behaviour (Yilmaz2010). NAAC when undertakes peer visits to institutions has role for interactions with the students randomly and questions are mostly on academic standards and the heterogeneity among students is not acknowledged.

According to Majumdar (1983), the process of education depends on investments made in two complementary parts that is "students can invest their time and money in their own education in a particular field only if somebody else, an institution or, perhaps, society as a whole, also invests in providing them with that education". In the context of this study, the significance of this argument is that

although institutional investment can provide educational and training facilities only individual investments, especially in terms of efforts, will make it possible for them to take advantage of it, and individual efforts would be function of several things. This study is about the interaction between several notions of quality and factors behind the efforts that a student is going to put in. The way this study is contextualized several factors can impact student's efforts in achieving academic excellence per se in a narrow way or in terms of overall development. For example, a student who has gained entry through sports quota may continue to be involved only in sports activities and achieve a degree for the sake of it. It would not be correct to measure excellence in terms of his academic output, or even if there is institutional resolve to do so then apparent mismatch between student's objective and the institution's would have to be understood and acted upon. This study is a small effort in this direction from the point of view of students. Goals of individuals and institutions often fluctuate. Establishing a good fit out of that variance involves continual inquiry for the individual as well as the organization. Also as Conrad and Pratt (1985) put it, goals, by definition, can be more readily changed than purposes, they nevertheless need to be synchronized with purposes, either individual or institutional. In attempts to measure quality there is not much importance given to students' perceptions on quality; though information is sought from students it is sought on pre-established variables. The purpose of the study is to account for.

Objectives of the Study

This dissertation tries to look into the factors determining the quality of higher education, for which it resorts to student perceptions of quality, how much importance the literature based quality variables have for students, how students perceive their

experience in higher education and various criteria that guide their choice of course, college and what future choices they are about to make. Thus the objectives are:

- To find out students' notions on issues related to quality.
- To find out how much importance students' give to the notions of quality mentioned in the literature.
- To explore students' experience of higher education.
- To go into students' choice of course, college and future plans.

Variables Analyzed

The questionnaire had two major parts, quantitative and qualitative. The former corresponds to student engagement, where students had to objectively tick mark their choices and the other part had questions which had to be answered subjectively by the respondent. The respondent had the freedom to either write all the responses on the sheet provided or alternatively the researcher would interview the respondent and note down the responses. The subjective part of the questionnaire can be broadly divided into four themes.

The main theme was to explore the views of the students on quality. Questions in this theme did not give any direct hint of indicators to respondents like availability of infrastructure, qualification of teachers, availability of student counselling etc. Instead it aimed at generating original responses from respondents to have an idea of what all things they prioritised as quality. For example they were asked about their notion of quality education and what in their opinion would improve the quality of education. For further clarity one can refer to question numbers 10, 15, 26, 27, 28 in the questionnaire in Annex.

The second theme is students' views on issues related to quality and were specific to each institution-student context. This broadly includes questions related to strike, resource utilization, placement, extracurricular activities and marks. The idea behind this was to actually get the student's perception on issues mentioned in the literature, to see if they are really as important as they are made out to be in the studies conducted by others. The question on 'strike by teachers' intends to unfold the extent to which teacher is important for student. If the student replies that he or she has suffered very much, then it implies that teacher is really important for the student. With respect to resource utilization, questions were focused on learning resources like library, language labs and other support services like student counselling. Placement is another parameter supported by literature which supposes a direct relation with quality. As per literature, extracurricular activities too support greater quality among college. Many studies measure academic quality in terms of student quality which is measured in terms of marks obtained. Question numbers 6, 7, 8, 11, 12 in the questionnaire corresponds to the issues related to quality as perceived by the students.

The third theme is 'student's experience'. As mentioned in literature review, the alternative definition of quality of undergraduate education, as given by George Kuhn, emphasises student's educational experience in terms of student's active engagement in his or her own learning at the institution. The objective part of the study as shown in part 'A', attempts to unravel student's experience and changes in their personality as perceived by them over the period of their higher education. The qualitative part of the questionnaire also included questions on this theme. In this study the students were expected to reveal their personal experience of their college and any other things that were not covered in the above mentioned themes, but were

never the less important to gain a broader understanding about what all a student forms an opinion about which could also impact his performance. Questions 9, 16, 21, 23 and 24 as well as those in part A in the questionnaire deal in these aspects.

Fourth theme is 'choice of course, college and future plans', responses here reveal factors behind their choice of course, college, influence on this choices, careers they wish to pursue etc. in other words it is all about the various choices made by the students in the initial part of their career and those that they are likely to make in the coming five years. It is about what all influences they had in the choices made; whether they expected guidance for future, their specific career plans for the next few years and also whether there was any urgency to get employed once they finish their graduation. This theme is understood from the questions 3, 4, 13, 17 and 19 as mentioned in the questionnaire.

Chapter II
Review of Literature

Historical Factors And Quality

Any nation may follow different policies towards quality of education depending on several factors. These factors could be financial, political or other. For example, Singapore, a small island state, is considered a good example of successfully establishing a close relationship between education and its productive system. This is attributed to the fact that the then Singaporean leaders were conscious of being surrounded by large neighbours and the need to secure and maintain the country's political independence and for that to be economically secured. They thus opted for education system to fulfil two objectives, first, to establish its essence of national identity and commitment and second was to sustain development of economy. One can say that if during this time, there was a quality assurance agency in Singapore; it would have measured quality not in terms of liberal education but in terms of skill providing education. Thus quality in a nation, at a point in time, given its historical, political and economic circumstances, would be defined in concurrence with the larger national objectives (Halsey et al, 1997). As Barnett (1994), also puts it, modern societies would be framed by definite dominant interests like competing successfully in global economic trade. So higher education considered as a key institute involved in regeneration of knowledge, and higher expertise for the nations, cannot remain isolated from these larger influences and there will be spill over of these objectives into the definitions of knowledge followed by the higher education institutions.

Attempts at defining quality

Unlike definition of production of any physical goods like car or furniture, where the meaning is clear cut and involves no confusion, defining production of educational quality is not so obvious. It varies with interest of various stakeholders

involved. This has led for example, to a report on quality assessment of higher education in Europe to not even attempt a definition because it saw quality as dependent largely on specific national circumstances, which change over time (Lim, 2001). According to Dennison and Donald 2001, different stakeholders, like public, university administrators, faculty and students, have different expectations from education. While the public might want students to graduate with general abilities and emphasize more on criteria like communication skills; university administrators might seek students to complete programme requirements effectively because, for them efficient use of resources is more important. On the other hand faculty would prioritise development of intellectual independence so that they may focus on students' ability to think critically. On the other hand students, being mostly pre-occupied with career concerns, may value the ability to get a good job.

It is possible to identify at least five definitions of quality of higher education (Harvey and Green, 1993 cited in Lim, 2001). The first is to see it as producing perfection through continuous improvement by adopting Total Quality Management (TQM) creating a philosophy about work, people and human relationships based on shared values. The second and less formidable definition is to see quality as a performance that is exceptional, attainable only in limited circumstances and only when very able students are admitted. This is a definition that applies more to higher education provided by elite institutions such as Harvard and Cambridge, where there is huge excess demand for limited places and only the brightest are admitted. The third is to see it as the ability to transform students on an on-going basis and to add value to their knowledge and personal development. This is a definition which accords more with today's concern for higher education for the masses, where the emphasis is more on value adding per se rather than value adding from an already

high level. The dissertation supports this definition of quality rather than the above mentioned second definition. The fourth definition is to see it as the ability to provide value for money and to be publically accountable. This is a definition which has become popular since the public and funding bodies have become less accepting of the universities' assurance of quality, and competing claims for scarce funds have become more pressing. Generally speaking quality is something which fits the purpose of the product or service, once the purpose has been decided (Bogue and Saunders, 1992 cited in Griffith, 2001). Thus, According to the fifth definition of quality, if the education provided fulfils its purpose, whatever that may be, then it is said to be one of quality, provided that it accords with publically accepted standards of accountability and integrating. This is an instrumental approach, which avoids defining the essence of quality, which many believe to be impossible, and, instead, concentrates on what is needed to achieve the purpose or mission of the institution. It makes the quality assurance programme operational and, not surprisingly, is the definition favoured by most governments and higher education institutions when quality assurance was introduced in developed countries (Lim, 2001).

According to MacClenny 2004, an alternative view of quality, articulated by George Kuhn, director of the national survey of student engagement (NSSE) US is that "quality, at least for under-graduate education, should be defined in terms of the student's educational experience, in particular, the student's active engagement in his or her own learning at the institution". Student engagement, or the amount of time and energy that students invest in meaningful educational practices, is the underlying foundation of the effort. (MacClenny 2004). As there is no internationally recognised definition of quality in higher education, the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), of UK, uses the following definition.

Academic standards describe the level of achievement that a student has to reach to gain an academic award for e.g. a degree; they should be at a broadly similar basic level across the UK. Academic quality describes how well the learning opportunities available to students help them to achieve their awards. It is about making sure that appropriate and effective teaching, support, assessment and learning opportunities are provided.¹

If we compare the above two definitions followed by the above mentioned quality assurance agencies, to that of National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), then we find that it is quite similar to the definition of academic quality followed by QAA. The study conducted is more closely based on the definition given by NSSE.

Kumar (2003) has criticised justice Kirpal's verdict which links privatisation of education to quality and defines quality in terms of facilities provided. Kumar with the help of following description of a school shows that quality if measured in terms of facilities provided can be a misnomer. "The especially designed residences separate for boys and girls are centrally air conditioned with every conceivable facility in order to provide more home like and fully secure environment to about 500 boarders. Excellent food is served while maintaining a high standard of cleanliness, hygiene and a well-balanced diet.² the school has facilities like multipurpose hall, swimming pool, preparatory rooms, playpen for kids, music and dance rooms, arts and crafts room, counselling room, well-laid out staff quarters, sports complex, offering facilities for the usual sports plus horse-riding and golf. And then, there is a fleet of 16 air conditioned luxury coaches with attendants and mobile phones."

¹ (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/QAA>)

One can contrast this example of an institute with very less facilities. Now evidently quality need not be present in any of the two extremes mentioned.

Sainik school Satara in Maharashtra was established with a clear purpose as given below on its website 'the aim of preparing boys academically, mentally and physically for entry into the National Defence Academy and other Defence Academies, who hail from financially weaker sections of the society and thereby removing the regional imbalance for such entries in the Armed Forces.' Here we notice three clear and separate functions that the institution is supposed to perform and instrumentally it becomes very easy to measure quality in terms of fulfilling the above mentioned functions. The functions here are; first-entry into the national defence academy, second 'from financially weaker sections' and third 'removing regional imbalance'. The current situation is as follows. The full fee is RS 88166 and fee waiver for low income parents is RS 14000, for parents whose monthly income is below RS 7800. Thus if one attempts to measure quality here by looking at the number of candidates sent into armed forces it would be a gross mistake as the stated aim is not at all fulfilled, in this case it being-candidates 'from financially weaker sections'. Implication of this for our study are many. First, it is easier to measure quality of an institution if it has clearly stated its aims. Having very clear objectives could be easier for institutes like a school but difficult for a college.

Measures of quality

As mentioned earlier quality may not be about the measures or indices, but of educational values, what education ought to be about; nevertheless there have been several attempts in measuring quality of higher education, like Cromberg (1978) and Peterson and Stakenas (1981), for their respective objectives have employed different definitions of quality. Cromberg has defined 'quality of graduates' as the average

amount of subject matter and the depth in which it is mastered by the graduates. He clearly distinguished this from 'efficiency' of education. For him efficiency denotes the ratio of average quality of the graduates and the average costs per graduates, Peterson and Stakenas brings how quality of higher education has been differently perceived by different scholars. For instance, Educational quality as a function of admission standards, educational quality as a function of retention standards, educational quality as a function of class size (student/instructor ratio) increasing class size decreases quality, quality as a function of required performance standards.

According to Conrad and Pratt (1985), quality has often been attempted to be measured by employing quantitative techniques which depend on objective criteria like cost per student, library expenditures, number of earned doctorates among faculty and administrators, number of scholarships and fellowships, student-faculty ratios, faculty- administration ratios, student-support staff ratios, and alumni contributions.

Winston (1997) finds the SAT scores of students in US before entering into college perfectly explain their earnings post college but because of the earnings the college maintains reputation. Thus colleges that are selective are at a clear advantage in maintaining their reputation without doing anything for it. The kind of qualitative study that has been undertaken allows one to investigate findings of this sort like e.g. a highly selective college was part of the survey conducted and the study indicates that students in this group were better informed in terms what course they are opting for and the peculiarities about the college they would be admitted to also the amount of satisfaction they expressed with their experience in the college was on the higher side and on the other hand students from the lowest cut off category were not so sure about their future plans compared to the higher cut off group.

According to Times of India dated 29th December 2010, four major technology companies TCS, INFOSYS, ACCENTURE and COGNIZANT recruited more than 1000 students from single campuses. This exercise along with being cost-effective and convenient to these companies allowed these companies to hire a diverse range of students which according to them was an indicator of quality.

In response to questions asked in the Rajya Sabha on quality of education² the minister's reply given below does not mention the student at all. The reply is in terms of funds, infrastructure, new quality institutions on the lines of central universities and gradual increase in quality by hiring of quality faculty from now onwards. "a substantial increase in plan allocation has been made in the eleventh plan aiming at improvement of quality through increased allocation for improvement of infrastructure in the existing higher and technical educational institutions and by way of setting up of new quality institutions such as central universities in uncovered states, establishment of innovation universities aiming at world class standards, quality institutions such as Indian institutes of technology, Indian institutes of management, Indian institutes of science education and research, Indian institutes of information technology, schools for planning and architecture, establishment of 50 centres for training and research in frontier areas of science and technology etc. The age of superannuation of teachers in higher education has also been increased from 62 year to 65 years. These steps would ensure that over time the best talent comes into the academic professions through a process of tightening entry and liberalizing pay and other incentives." (Minister of state in the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Smt. D. Purandeswari, in reply to questions on quality of education).

Aug 20 2010

² Questions asked in the Rajya Sabha on august 20, 2010

Another criterion of quality used by public, scholars and employers is the academic 'selectivity' of a college. In this study conducted the sample consists of students from colleges which have different criterion of selection of students. As is evident from the study conducted, the chosen colleges have wide range of selectivity. Some colleges base their selectivity on the marks attained by students in their previous standard. For instance Hindu has been selected on the basis of its high cut off criterion over years while Aurobindo is selected based on its low cut off. On the other hand 'selectivity' can even be based on criterion other than high or low cut off marks. For instance D.D. Shinde is an open institute whose selection criterion is as simple as mere passing the previous stage of education. On the other hand Aditi Mahavidyalaya and Institute of Home Economics, which were selected on grounds of their professional nature, had a selection criterion.

Purpose of higher education

If we have a look at several committee and commission reports on education then the aims and purposes of higher education can be categorised (Barnett, 1988) into philosophical and operational aims. Philosophical aims are considered as those ends an educational process must serve if it is to be termed as education at all. Operational aims are those which result into results and products which are preferably measurable. It has to be a different kind of education, its approach has to be such as would aim at transforming the youth into a functioning and better adult, capable of making decisions, capable of deciding between what is right and what is wrong and then promoting that which is right and putting down that which is wrong. He must needs be trained to establish the greatest possible association between thought and

action and thus remove a terrible lacuna which exists in our public life and in administration.

Following are the aims of higher education as proposed by the Kothari Commission(1964-66):

- To seek and cultivate new knowledge, to engage vigorously and fearlessly in the pursuit of truth, and to interpret old knowledge and beliefs in the light of new needs and discoveries;
- To provide the right kind of leadership in all walks of life, to indentify gifted youth and help them develop their potential to the full by cultivating physical fitness, developing the powers of the mind and cultivating right interests, attitudes and moral and intellectual values;
- To provide society with competent men and women trained in agriculture, arts, medicine, science and technology and various other professions, who will also be cultivated individuals, imbued with a sense of social purpose;
- To strive to promote equality and social justice and to reduce social and cultural differences through diffusion of education; and
- To foster in the teachers and students, and through them in society generally the attitudes and values for developing the good life in individual and society.

Thus we find that though most commissions would as well prefer education as a process that would serve the philosophical aims. Also students too are in favour of these as findings of the study reveal. Then it is definitely the connecting link between the two i.e. the institution and the teacher as the implementers of education where the problem may lie. It would be apt to quote here, “differences in beliefs about the purposes of education and the consequent design of courses may not be resolvable.



There may be times when it is of benefit to students to experience different approaches. However, open discussion through the process of course design or review can help teachers define what is important to them and clarify what they believe in. If that clarity then helps teachers communicate with students, there is hope that both student and teacher will at least engage in the same endeavour.” (Toohey, 1999).

Study conducted by Lewis showed that students were not concerned with academic interest in course content, structure and organisation, also showed that personal problems can seriously affect a student’s capacity to cope with academic demands Lewis (1984). According to Radford et al (1997) mentions ability to think clearly, learning to learn, communication skills, learning to work with others, personal maturity, wider perspectives, leadership qualities, employment skills , a useful qualification and social skills as the gains from higher importance in the order of importance. Boy’s study based on a sample of over 3500 undergraduates, found interest in subject, to be better educated, to learn more about the subject, having nothing better to do after school as the reasons for entering into universities.

When the students were interviewed for this study, under one particular theme of questions they were directly asked about their personal notions about quality. What this study finds out is that students too prefer the non-measurable outcomes. They are very happy with the fact that their personality has undergone change, they are more confident than during their school days, they are happy to participate in hostel life and other activities.

Analysis of quality across countries

The Higher Education Council of Australia has given a typical definition of what a university does. It is to produce Australians to take a leadership role in the

intellectual, cultural, economic and social development of the nation and its regions, the creation and advancement of knowledge, and the application of knowledge and discoveries to the betterment of communities in Australia and overseas (Lim, 2001).

With the objective of improving quality in higher education, universities often undertake improvisation of curriculum from time to time. For instance, in the UK, the movement to make 'enterprise' skills and personal transferable' skills a formal part of the curriculum was widespread and received considerable financial support from government. Many universities and polytechnics revised courses to incorporate a greater emphasis on personal abilities such as communication, team work, creativity, problem solving and the ability to manage one's own learning(Elton, 1994)country wise (Toohey, 1999).

Other attempts to ensure quality in higher education had more force behind them; in New Zealand, for instance, legislation required universities and polytechnics to specify the outcomes of all courses and "to certify that those outcomes had been met through criterion-referenced (standards-based) assessment (ministry of education, 1991), in a climate of reduced funding for higher education, the Australian government offered significant additional funds to those institutions which could convince assessment panels that the education they offered was of the highest quality" (Nightingale and O'Neil, 1994 cited in Toohey, 1999).

The emergence of quality assurance agencies

Massification of higher education in the developed countries like UK and US led to crunch of funds for the governments which led to establishment of external assurance agencies, which would provide a measure of performance of an institution so that funds can be provided on this basis. Thus essentially what the agencies do is not tell more about a particular institution but to develop indicators so that institutions

can be compared to each other. higher education is often linked to innovation. it is expected to be innovative rather than produce homogenous output. But as mentioned above if higher education institutions develop their institutional objectives in order to promote innovation then it would not be possible for the assurance agencies to compare these institutions. Quality in higher education is not a new concern and universities and other institutions always had various measures to ensure quality of their work. For instance they have been critical about selecting quality minded people to work for them. Yardsticks commonly used include the qualifications necessary for students to gain admission and subsequently to gain a degree; the qualifications necessary to be appointed to an academic post or to achieve promotion to professor. “The formal evaluation or assessment of higher education by national agencies is a contemporary phenomenon which appeared towards the end of the 1980s and can be seen as part of broader trends towards new forms of accountability in the public services and the professions, a trend aptly characterised by Neave as the ‘rise of the evaluative state’” (Neave, 1988 cited in Brennan and Shah, 2000).

Skills

As per 11th plan document, quality improvement in higher education will be brought about through restructuring academic programmes to ensure their relevance to modern market demands, this shows us the current government view where quality is defined in terms of restructuring academic programmes such that they meet market demands in terms of skills. We can see here an apparent conflict between different agencies of the government, the Planning Commission and the NAAC. If we look at the assessment criteria of NAAC, we find mention of curricular aspects but they are about adherence to the laid down curriculum rather than improving academic

programmes. Accordingly, if there is a dominant ideology emerging in higher education, it is that of operationalism.(Bennet 2000). For him higher education that is designed around skills is not higher education. It is a substitution of technique for insight, strategic reason for communicative reason; and of behaviour for wisdom. On the other hand, the governments of developing countries like India, have economic growth as a major agenda. Arguing specifically from point of view of India, where unemployment is still a major problem, vocationalisation is much needed solution. The study conducted comprised of students of B.A., B.Com, B.Sc. and B.El.Ed and of these the general degree students were asked the question as to why they did not opt for professional or vocational education. The majority replied their lack of interest in these courses as the major determining factor behind such choices.

Education as a service

Services as in economics is the intangible equivalent of an economic good. Characteristics of services are they are intangible heterogeneous, they are simultaneously produced and consumed. Now when one treats education as a service distinction has to be made for several reasons. Else the problem is that in normal services, customer would not have to make efforts but a student has to put in efforts to get the services delivered.

According to Khadria (2010), the fundamental difference between educational and other services is that while other services are geared towards production of goods or services educational services are geared towards production of more producers of commodities and providers of services endowed with knowledge and skills. According to Brennan (1996), contemporary management theory as developed in manufacturing and service industries if applied to education would turn students into

customers, academic staff into producers or providers, universities into businesses and their departments into profit centres. In my study I don't intend to ask students whether they are happy as customers but rather their views as students.

SERVQUAL is a model developed by Parashuraman and others in US. It was originally measured on 10 aspects of service quality and later on modified to measure 5 parameters with respect to education. It measures the gap between customer expectations and actual experience. It has been used to measure education service as well by making changes like this:

- Reliability: ability of a university to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.
- Assurance: the knowledge and courtesy of teachers and their ability to convey confidence and trust.
- Tangibles: appearance of institutions physical facilities, equipment personnel, communication materials.
- Empathy: caring individualised attention.
- Responsiveness: the willingness of university to help students and provide prompt service

There have been several criticisms on this model from psychological theorists in terms of validity. The major problem is also that educational services are considered in same league as any other services, terming the student as a customer being the major problem

UGC and NAAC on quality of higher education

UGC is the body appointed by government of India and NAAC is a nodal agency appointed by UGC for the purpose of monitoring, assessment and accreditation of quality among higher education institutes. The approach of the UGC with respect to quality of higher education is as follows. Quality and excellence in higher education are not activities, but are products of an environment which has to be built bit by bit and all the levels. The UGC recognizes that quality in higher education hinges on (a) physical infrastructure, (b) number and quality of teachers, and (c) academic governance in universities and colleges. Furthermore, the UGC has, under the Eleventh Plan, put in place a manifold strategy: Sensitize institutions on quality and excellence, support them to evolve institutional arrangements for the purpose, provide institutional arrangement at the apex level for their periodical assessment and accreditation, and make development grants contingent upon their being assessed and accredited.

For UGC quality consists of basic requirements for the institutions of higher education. And this is considered to be a base for building up excellence. Faculty development is considered as the obvious way of improving quality. Action plan to address this includes (i) specially designed orientation programmes on teaching methodologies, pedagogy, educational technology etc., for all new entrants at all levels, (ii) refresher courses for serving-teachers to cover all the teacher at least once in five years.

NAAC has identified the following seven criteria to serve as the basis of its assessment procedures:

- Curricular Aspects, Teaching-Learning and Evaluation
- Research, Consultancy and Extension,

- Infrastructure and Learning Resources,
- Student Support and
- Progression,
- Governance and Leadership,
- Innovative practices.

Delhi University colleges are not accredited by NAAC due to strong opposition by Delhi University Teacher's Association (DUTA). In 2004 UGC asked DU to implement grading system for colleges but it was opposed by the teachers and the DUTA president mentioned that "There is need to strengthen higher education in the country. But the accreditation system is stamping the colleges and the students. St Stephen's College and Shyamlal College are extremely different from each other in every sense and judging them on the same parameters will be wrong".

Ranking agencies

Most of the world universities ranking like THE and QS world university ranking are rankings of the major universities of the world and have not much to do with undergraduate students also any attempts in India to follow suit with these ranking agencies are going to be farce attempts given the heterogeneity of the colleges. Times Higher Education in its latest surveys to rank higher educational institutions have reviewed 5 major criticisms from previous surveys.

- Biased toward North America and Western Europe
- Biased toward English speakers
- Asked unrealistic questions that perpetuated high scores for the traditionally "elite" institutions

- Limited selection of institutions; favoured the traditionally elite
- Did not take teaching into account

To give another example, the London school of economics and politics stood at a lowly 67th position in 2010 Times Higher Education-QS World University Rankings this was attributed to the fact that LSE academics publish papers in social and economic sciences, which have lower citation rates than the natural sciences; so on a simple "citations per paper" used by QS in analyzing the Scopus publications data, it slips down the list any other institute which has more science publications would be at an advantage³. A major criticism of the ranking agencies in context of the study is that they rely on objective measures in order to simplify their job.

³ <http://science.thomsonreuters.com/globalprofilesproject/finetune/> (ACCESSED 02.07.2011)

Chapter III
Method

Sample of the Study

This is an exploratory study. Such studies bring out the issues which can be further explored or researched upon by others. Survey method was used to bring out the differences in opinions and views by different respondents. For this study the sample chosen was such that it included a high cut off college i.e. Hindu college, a middle cut off college, i.e. SGTB⁴ Khalsa college and the lower cut off category colleges which includes Aurobindo and Ram Lal Anand. Also, students from these colleges were enrolled in non-professional degree courses like Arts, Commerce and Science. The second group of students were enrolled in professional courses i.e. B.El.Ed. Students in this course are trained to teach students of elementary education. Though it was not planned earlier, due to easy access, questionnaires were administered to students of D.D. Shinde college in Kolhapur city of Maharashtra.

The study was carried out on 58 students as far as the qualitative data was concerned of which 34 were girls and 24 were boys. Also 26 students were from Delhi and 8 were from Maharashtra and 22 belonged to other states, two students did not mention their state. The quantitative and qualitative responses differ in number because some students could only answer the qualitative part due to lack of time which was accepted by the interviewer. Hence qualitative data was available only for 54 students.

Technique Used in the Study

The survey was conducted from January to March probes undergraduates about their exposure to and participation in effective educational practices, their use of time in and out of class, what they feel they have gained from their educational experience, the quality of their interactions with faculty and other students and the

⁴ Sri Guru Teg Bahadur

extent to which they feel the institution provides a supportive environment. Non-probability sampling is used primarily in exploratory studies. Convenient sampling is a special kind of non-probability sampling whereby units that are selected for inclusion in the sample are the easiest to access and also are able to offer an answer of interest to the study. Students from Institute of Home Science (IHE), D.D.Shinde Sarkar college, Aditi Mahavidyalaya and Mata Sundri College for Women were chosen as per convenient sampling. On the other hand Students from Hindu college, Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Khalsa college (SGTB Khalsa), Aurobindo college and Ram Lal Anand college were chosen with the help of purposive sampling. This kind of sampling is a form of non-probability sample in which the subjects selected seem to meet the study's needs. In this study the selected three colleges are respectively in the range of higher, middle and lower cut off. These methods suit the purpose best, given the time and resource constraint of the research.

The dissertation is based mainly on primary data for which questionnaire and observation were the major techniques. Questionnaire is the structured set of questions, answers to which is provided personally by the respondents. Questionnaire included open ended and closed ended questions. More stress was on open ended questions to generate a dialogue between researcher and the respondent. Open ended questions are also important from the point of view that since the respondents get the freedom in answering, the researcher gets more and varied information based on the respondents' logic and understanding. As there was very less time to build rapport the researcher allowed the students to leave out questions which were uncomfortable to them. Personal and socio-economic information was asked towards the end of the questionnaire so that revealing it right in the beginning does not distract the

respondent from giving opinions freely. Some questions were asked just for the purpose of rapport building.

Interview as a technique involves structured questions in which answers are recorded by the interviewer himself. Interviews were semi-structured ones. Semi-structured interviews are those that are in-between structured and unstructured ones and are used in both qualitative and quantitative research. A structured interview includes a given set of points and definite questions and allows little freedom to make any adjustments to any of its elements. It is used in quantitative research. On the other hand unstructured interviews are those that are much flexible and are used in qualitative research. In the survey conducted though there was a predetermined order of questions, which was often maintained but was also made flexible to the context. For instance under the theme of, what quality is, there were various sub-questions and there was every chance that respondent could evaluate these closely related questions on similar grounds. So some questions were explained more at the time of interview as and when it was required. When respondents were found eager to share information, they were probed further with questions like 'why' and 'how'. The interview was unstructured to the extent that it was being conducted more in the form of natural conversation. This is distinct from the previous technique on grounds that answers in this technique are filled by the respondent.

Procedure :

I too being a student it was very easy to get access to colleges. The places where it was easy to find students who had no classes, were sports ground, canteen, and several empty spaces within the campus which were occupied by students. When I approached students for interview normally they were very enthusiastic to respond.

As I wanted to interview only final year students, I used to introduce myself first and ask the student if he belonged to the final year. If I encountered first and second year students they were told that I was looking for third year students, many used to be disappointed, and some of them would comment 'we know enough to tell you whatever you want to know'. Students are more likely to be found in groups, ranging from three to even ten. Approaching a bigger group was a challenge in many ways as the questionnaire was not of small or of average size, there was danger that students being in a group would discuss together and give replies, influencing each other's answers, not giving the right answers due to peer pressure etc. Therefore one-to-one interview was preferred to group discussions. I was twice lucky in two different colleges viz. SGTB Khalsa and Aurbindo to meet students who had got entree through sports quota. Both of them acted as gatekeepers as the sports quota students happen to be extroverts and know many students across streams and standards. There was no specific time to meet students. Somebody or the other was available all the time. It was only in the afternoon that frequency of students would be reduced but as I could interview only one student at a time it really didn't matter what time it was, several students of Hindu college were interviewed outside their hostels. During my visits to Hindu college in the north campus of Delhi university I also attended a seminar organised by the DUTA (Delhi University Teachers Association), it was organised to put the views of the teachers on the semester system, attendance for this seminar was scarce. But whoever was present participated actively and cleared their concerns.

An interesting aspect of the study was, an apparently similar response by two different students would have to be interpreted differently. In response to the question 'is there an urgency to get employed?' A response of 'yes' by the student would have to be interpreted depending on whether he is in B.El.Ed programme or in a B.A.

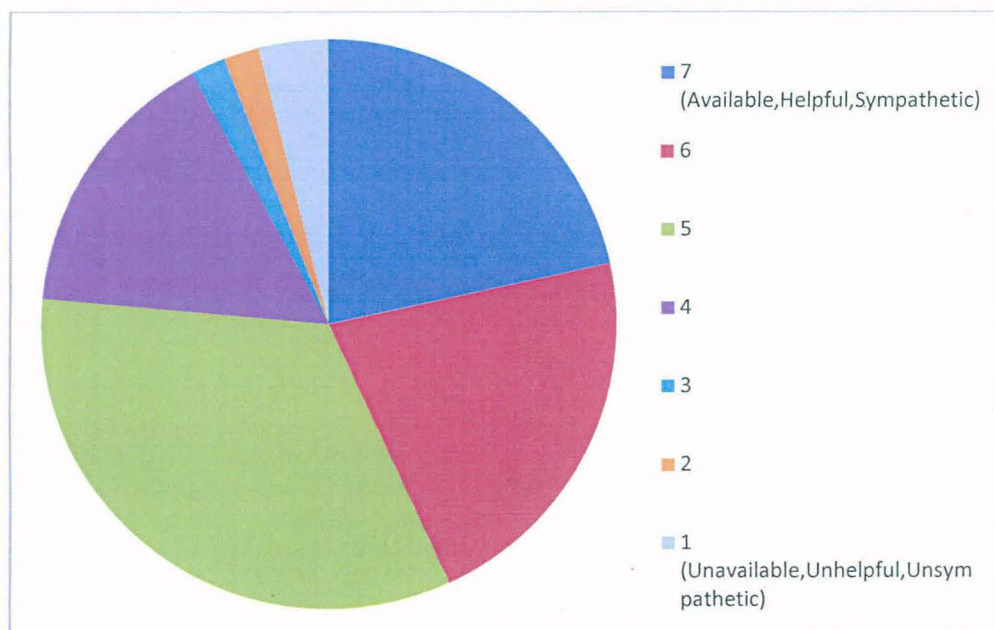
programme. The student in the B.El.Ed. programme knows exactly when he might get a job that is after completing the degree and giving the due entrance exam to become a teacher, the syllabus for the entrance would be more or less based on what they studied during the course. In case of the BA pass student, urgency to work may imply a constraint on the academic output as the kind of effort he has to put for the uncertain job would be over and above what he has to study during the course. Myself being a student establishing rapport with the students was easier. The statement of purpose mentioned right in the beginning of the questionnaire helped a lot in convincing students to take the interview seriously, and the researcher had a wonderful time collecting data.

Chapter IV
Results

Quantitative Analysis of Data

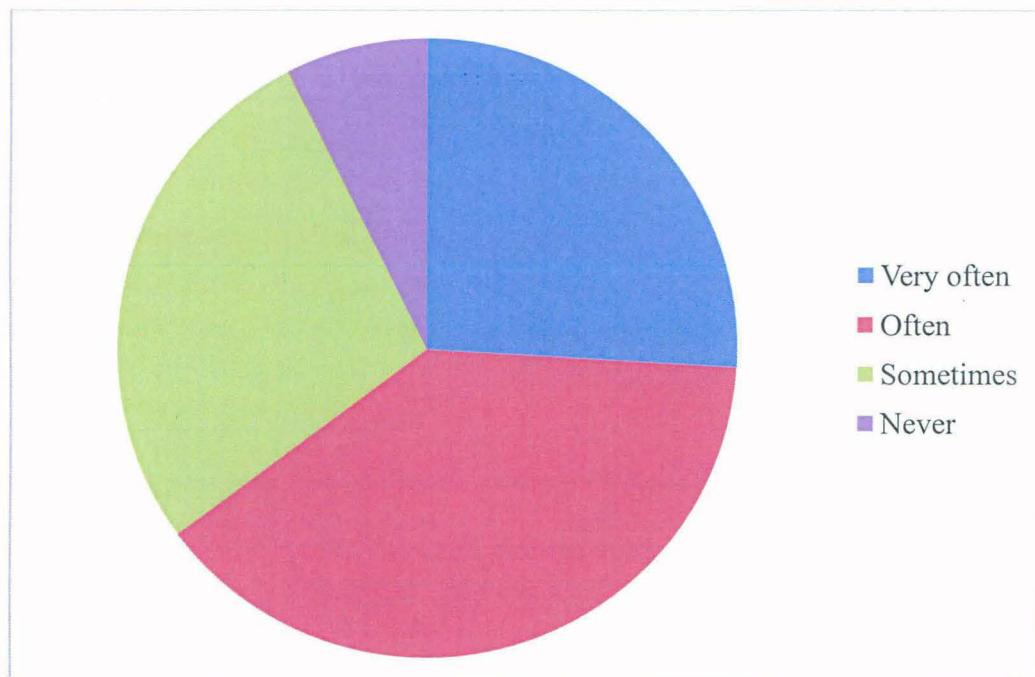
Among the tasks frequently performed in an academic year, more than 50 per cent of the students interviewed have opted for class participation, worked on project with other students on various projects and discussion of class matters with those outside class. Out of the various academic participation listed out, only 3 proved to be good for more than 50 per cent of the students interviewed. Most of the student do not seem to discuss or worked much with faculty or instructors. Even if they had discussions about class matters or various intellectual ideas, it was mostly with acquaintances outside class. As is evident from table 1, 50.94 per cent of the students interviewed support this finding. Otherwise discussion whether with faculty or instructor or anyone with respect to other issues' do not find much importance in student's life. This is also evident from the kind of relation students have with their faculty. When questioned to rank their relationship on 1-7 scale such that lower the score poorer is the relationship, around 16 per cent of the students interviewed said to have a neutral relation. This is explained better with the following pie chart.

Figure 4.1: Relationship with Faculty Members



Though not in huge numbers but around 8 per cent of the students said to have poor relation with faculty which stands in sharp contrast with the kind of relation they had with other student. 98 per cent of the students had above neutral relationship with other students. In students perspective relationship with administrative personnel and offices were even worse than that with teacher. 17.65 per cent of the students interviewed had ‘unhelpful, inconsiderate, rigid’ relation while only 11.76 per cent of the students interviewed had ‘helpful, considerate, flexible’ relation with the administrative personnel and offices.

Figure 4.2: Class Participation

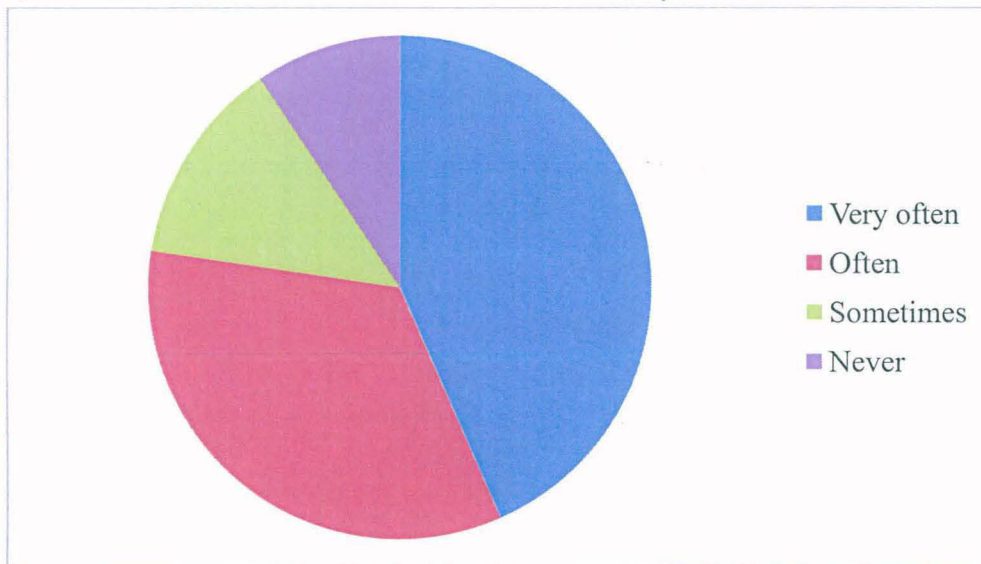


As is evident from the fig 1, 64.84 percent had participated in class quite often. This is followed by ‘worked with other students on projects’ which is quite a common experience for 53.71 per cent of the students interviewed. 50.94 per cent of the interviewed students had some discussion on class matters even outside class.

Thus on the whole, apart from these 3 parameters quality in terms of various things done, did not prove to be very good.

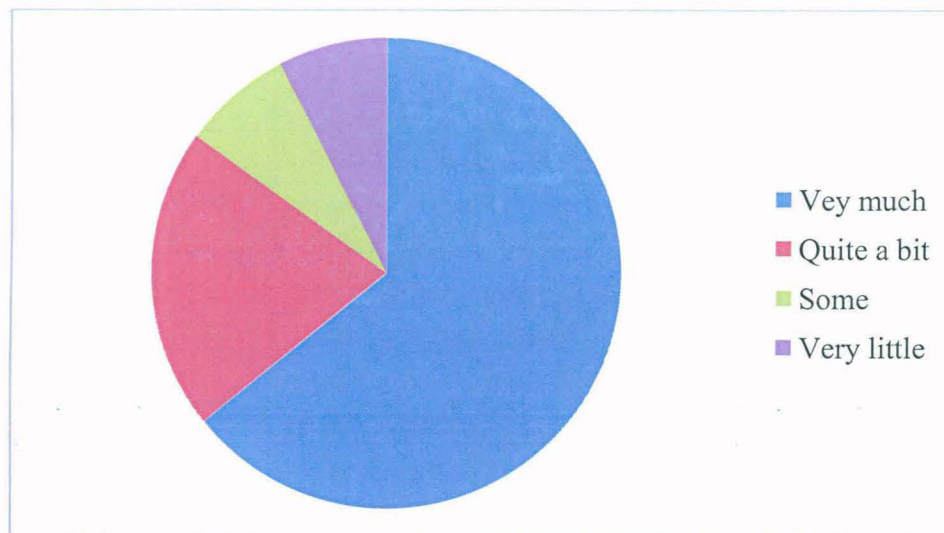
As far as performance of mental abilities is concerned, analyzing rather than memorizing was more emphasized by students 43.4 per cent students interviewed practiced memorizing rarely while 77.36 per cent of students were more keen about analyzing, as shown in the figure below.

Figure 4.3: How often has course work emphasized the analyzing activities



Students feel their institution has contributed in terms of improving their writing, speaking and analytical skills. However even among the 3, in student esteem, analytical and critical thinking has been strongly promoted. Only 30.98 per cent of the students felt that their institution provides work-related knowledge frequently.

Figure 4.4: Contribution of your current institution in analytical and critical thinking



In terms of practice of extra-curricular activities, students felt colleges performed well only with respect to promotion of theatre, music or other performances. For 61.11 per cent of the interviewed students, colleges encouraged this aspect of extracurricular activity often or more than often. Students felt there has been lack of proper engagement from colleges to promote physical activities or spiritual activities, though they are important for an holistic development of a child and hence important from quality perspective.

Students also did not take as much initiative in matters of spending significant amount of time on academic requirements as they devoted to campus activities.

The first part of the questionnaire corresponds to the quantitative part of the analysis. Broadly it includes the kinds of activities which were encouraged in institutes, the contribution of institutes in student's life and kind of support received from institutes. These include variables which in literature are thought of having direct impact on quality of higher education.

Table 4.1 looks at how much reading and writing students have done in their current school year. It tries to delve into the fact whether students practiced more of self-reading or more of assigned book reading. Given the ranking scales as mentioned in the table, almost 33.33 per cent of the students interviewed, read assigned books with a frequency ranging from 5 to 10. They form the highest numbers of non-self reading category of students and belonged to the frequency range of 5 to 10. Students who mostly read assigned readings constituted 29.63 per cent of the students interviewed while for those who preferred self-readings the proportion was 11.76 per cent.

Table 4.1: Reading and writing during the current school year

Activities	Frequency				
	None	1-4	5-10	11-20	More than 20
Assigned books or reading	3.7	22.22	33.33	11.11	29.63
Self-readings	3.92	50.98	19.61	13.73	11.76

The following table looks at overall students experience in the current year from the point of view of knowing how often the student have undertaken the mentioned variables in their one year of higher education. The variables range from performance related to class, experience with other students and experience with instructors. As far as class related variables are concerned, class participation, presentation in class and coming to class with preparation becomes important. Majority of the students who participated in class activities formed almost 39 per cent of the interviewed students and they were found to participate often in such activities. On the other hand class presentation has not been much common activity for students

in the current year as majority of the practitioners, amounting to around 34 per cent, were found to present in class only sometimes. Coming to class without preparation is highest among those who do so ‘sometimes’ and form around 40 per cent of students interviewed. Of these three variables, students were found to emphasis more on class participation and coming to class without preparation. Almost 65 and 66 per cent of the interviewed students were found to participate often or more often in class and hardly come to class without preparation. Working with other students on projects, discussion class matters with those outside class all reflect student’s relationship among each other. Around 53 students interviewed had worked on projects with their students in class, while almost 51 per cent of the students discussed class matters or ideas with those outside class. However working on project with other students is the only parameter which has the highest number of students performing very often. Discussion with instructor did not have many students on the extreme, yet majority of the students who had discussions with instructor were found to have it rarely. Only 5.56 per cent students were found to have a discussion very often, with the instructor. The frequency of discussion with faculty regarding one’s career followed the same pattern. But 11.32 per cent of the students had discussions about careers very frequently with faculty. As far as working with faculty is concerned, majority of the students, around 43 per cent, were found having worked only sometimes with faculty.

Table 4.2: Classroom activities during the current school year

Activities	Rankings			
	Very Often	Often	Sometimes	Never
Class participation	25.93	38.89	27.78	7.41
Class presentation	15.09	32.08	33.96	18.87

Come class to without preparation	13.21	20.75	39.62	26.42
Worked with other students on projects	27.78	25.93	31.48	14.81
Discussion with instructors	5.56	38.89	44.44	11.11
Discussion with faculty or advisor about career	11.32	28.3	33.96	26.42
Worked with faculty	7.55	20.75	43.4	28.3
Discuss class matters or ideas with those outside class	20.75	30.19	45.28	3.77
Discuss on other issues	12.96	33.33	42.59	11.11

The following table 4.3 deals with the emphasis given by students on kinds of mental activities. Students who were found to memorize quite a bit accounted for 39.62 per cent of the interviewed students but the proportion falls to almost 17 per cent for greater memorizing. The reverse is the case with analysing. The proportion of students who were found to analyse were lesser than those who memorised 'quite a bit' but were greater than those who memorized very much. The students who were found to analyse 'very little' and 'sometimes', were 9.43 per cent and 13.21 per cent of the interviewed students, respectively. Those who analysed very much were the highest in proportion, accounting for 43.4 per cent of the interviewed students.

Table 4.3: Memorising and Analyzing

Mental Activities	Rankings			
	Very much	Quite a bit	Sometimes	Very little
Memorising	16.98	39.62	26.42	16.98
Analyzing	43.4	33.96	13.21	9.43

Analysing the contribution of one's institute in student's life we can see that acquiring job related knowledge was 'very little' for only 19.61 per cent of the students and was 'very much' applicable for 35.29 per cent of the students. Writing skills improved 'very much' for 28.85 per cent of the students and the improvement was 'quite a bit' for 36.54 per cent of the interviewed students. Only for 15.38 per cent of the students it had least implication. Speaking skills improved for 39.62 per cent of the students by high standards. Students who felt that their educational process hardly improved their speaking skills formed a minority of 3.7 per cent. Analytical and critical thinking was enhanced very much for 64.15 per cent of the interviewed students. 20.75 per cent of the interviewed students said to have been 'quite a bit' impacted upon by institutions with respect to their analytical and critical thinking.

Table 4.4: Areas of Contribution

Areas of Contribution	Contribution			
	Very much	Quite a bit	Sometimes	Very little
Acquiring job or work-related knowledge	35.29	27.45	17.65	19.61
Writing skills	28.85	36.54	19.23	15.38
Speaking skills	39.62	37.74	18.87	3.7
Analytical and critical thinking	64.15	20.75	7.55	7.55

In terms of various activities done on institute, table 4.5 explains different activities like theatre, music, physical fitness programme and other spiritual programmes supported by institutions. Only 9.26 per cent of the interviewed students seem to find no support from institutions in promotion of theatre, music or other performances. This activity seem to be encouraged often but not very often. Unlike

this, physical fitness programmes are organised by colleges ‘very often’ as has been felt by 20.75 per cent of the students interviewed. However on the whole culture of music, theatre and others are encouraged ‘quite often’. Almost 61 per cent of the interviewed students said theatre and others were encouraged more than sometimes as against only 37 per cent of students who said the same for fitness programmes and a mere 30 per cent who said the same for spiritual activities.

Table 4.5: Activities done during the current school year

Activities done	Frequency			
	Very Often	Often	Sometimes	Never
Attended theatre, music or other performances	16.67	44.44	29.63	9.26
Participated in physical fitness activities	20.75	16.98	33.96	28.3
Participated in spiritual activities	10.2	20.4	28.57	28.57

As shown in table 4.6, students spending quite a bit time on academic and related activities are 50 per cent of the interviewed students while only 3.2 per cent of the students spend very much time. As little as 18 per cent of the interviewed students had spent little time on education. Almost 61 per cent of the found their institution had encouraged diverse activities to the extent of ‘often’ and ‘very much’. Lack of encouragement from institution for campus activities was witnessed by only 1.92 per cent of the students. As high as almost 72 per cent of the interviewed students found campus activities were at least quite a bit encouraged by the institutions.

Table 4.6: Support from institution in different areas

Support from Institute in	Frequency			
	Very much	Quite a bit	Sometimes	Very little
Spending significant amount of time studying and on academic work	32	50	10	8
Encouraging divers contacts	40.74	20.37	20.37	20
Attending campus activities	36.54	36.54	7.69	1.92

Analysis of the Responses to the Questionnaire

Hindu college (No. Of students – 10)

This group based on the highest cut off out of the surveyed colleges consists of ten students. At least one of the parents of six students is a post graduate. Some have not mentioned but three of the student's siblings have a professional degree. Seven students lived within 20 minutes of college premises and three of these stayed on campus. Two students lived at a distance of around 30 km.

What is quality?

What most students reply is, there should not be too much emphasis on marks which is currently the case, then there should be freedom to explore, things necessary to become a better citizen , understanding society and some sort of career guidance system rather than focus on placements. New ways of teaching, use of documentaries, movies, are other ideas that find mention.

Issues in quality

With respect to use of resources, library finds the most frequent mention, one student mentions chemistry lab to be good but physics lab to be bad, one student put it as 'library good but same not with respect to sports', one student mentioned that they have to buy some course books from outside, one student said she didn't make much use as she is a slacker, and one said she is not too fond of library. Seven students said they suffered very much due to the strike, but a mathematics student said that self study would be sufficient to get good marks if one wished to. One said suffered little bit. Three students emphasised need for placements, for five, teaching should be the focus, one put it very well when she said that 'enough is done for curriculum so placement can be focused'. Participation in extracurricular activities too evoked a mixed response, with two students replying that they enjoyed too much and should have studied more, while two said they didn't participate at all and should have. Others mentioned activities like drama and dance societies, being involved in right to food act, debating etc. Physical activities don't find much mention but for one student in tune with other group students. five students said they gave importance to marks while three said they didn't , two mentioned the context in which they have to give importance 'to get entree into higher education'.

Student experience.

Hostel being close and its advantages like social network, being able to lead 'a proper college life', with festivals, cultural activities, liberal environment, people from all walks of life are some of the positive things mentioned by students in this group. Unhelpful administrative staff which is also substantiated by the objective questions finds a mention in dislikes about the college, one student mentions problem

of infrastructure and, other students not being much social. Almost all but for one said they are happy with the college life. In terms of changes in personality being more aware and open to things, becoming extrovert, confident, being able to socialise etc are the responses of the students much in line with other college students.

Choice

But for one student who said that he did not know much everybody had most information with sources being newspapers, students, good ranking etc. While history and English language students put interest as the reason for choice of course and college, two science students mentioned influence of brother, brand of college as reasons for their choice, two girls mentioned teaching as a safe job for girls and the influence of their parents in choice of course, two students wanted to pursue civil services exam or a government job as their primary reason behind pursuing a degree. Most wanted to pursue still higher education, one student expressed intention to join FTII at Pune. One mathematics honours student said he might take a drop to join coaching classes to prepare for MBA entrance examinations . But for one student, none mentioned urgency to get a job immediately. There are clear differences in choice of course and information regarding college between this group and the B.El.Ed. (Bachelor of Elementary Education) student group. Influence of parents though present in this group too, it was more in B.El.Ed. group. Also B.El.Ed. group had relatively little idea about which college they are going into. Among reasons for not opting for vocational or professional courses the response was, 'tried engineering' by one student, one had taken a year's gap to go for medical education but left the effort in between, one put it as 'wanted experience of college life' while others were 'not interested'. One may note here that the expression 'wanted to experience college

life' is curious as even medical and engineering students go in a 'college' but they are assumed here to be not having the kind of life 'these' students are going to have.

SGTB Khalsa college (Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Khalsa college) (No. Of students - 8)

But for one student who lived 36 km from the college all others lived almost nearby. This college was the first one to be surveyed and at that time questions on parents education were not included in the questionnaire.

Quality

Quality for this group means not only infrastructure, but knowledge about world, 'more experience of practical side of life', 'there should be more seminars' and 'it should be more rigorous'. One student mentioned that at times even there is no water in the bathrooms, he gave this example but he was commenting more on the general working of the college. Demand for more seminars is found across students of all colleges.

Issues in quality

Six students each said they made use of resources, and that they suffered due to the strike by the teachers, two each said they didn't use resources much and didn't suffer much due to the strike. Like other students who had mentioned non utilisation of resources the reason for doing so is attributed to 'self problem', 'I am a slacker', etc and not to the institution. In Reply to the question on educational experience this group's response was quite different from other college groups. Issues with teacher motivation were mentioned by three students also one student mentioned how there is difference in approach by teachers from DU and from JNU and how it affects

students. Four students felt there should be focus on teaching and two students were in favour of focus on placements, two students were for both. There were two students in this group who had got admission through sports quota. Their views regarding most of the things were found to be strikingly different from others. Their attitude would be much relaxed, happy go lucky types. They acted as my gatekeepers in at least two colleges, they knew many students and were always willing to make contacts and make people available for interviewing. One student who had taken NCC from this group explained the way in which NCC had influenced their behaviour and a hope for entry into the armed forces through NCC entry.

Student experience

Students like their counterparts in Hindu college said they wished for projector based classes, better use of even available resources would help was also found to be a common refrain. The ground of this college was closed due to commonwealth games and long after the games were over the grounds were still not made available to the students. Almost all students felt that their personality has undergone change. One student mentioned 'I am from a small town of Jamshedpur and now I am in Delhi so experienced a lot of change', NCC students mentioned increase in leadership traits, others mentioned reduction in hesitation, increase in confidence etc.

Choice

Only one student mentioned urgency to get employed other six have no urgency. In this group but for two NCC students who wanted to give CDS exam, all plan to pursue post graduation in their subjects. Two science students in this group said they chose the discipline because they were strong in science and maths while

others said it was out of interest, influence of parents is seen to be minimum for this group in contrast specially to BEIED students. Choice of college was largely determined by cut off rather than any other reason.

Sri Aurbindo college and Ram Lal Anand college (No. Of students -11)

This was the first college from a lower cut off range. When i expressed my intentions to interview to the first student i met he said that, 'you have come to the wrong college and should instead go to better colleges to know what is quality', we continued the discussion and completed the interview.

Student information

Only one post graduate degree otherwise at least one of the parent is graduate for this group. Five students live at a distance of more than 25 km, six students live quite near the college. The proportion of students living very near the college is quite high compared to high cut off group.

Quality

Views here include interpreting things in his own way, copying does not lead to quality, confidence level should increase, application in chosen field, achieving something for the future, one student gave way to his anguish this way 'girls discussed most, canteen crux of all activity, different ideas not respected, search for talent missing, activities, competition less', he went on to explain how the certificates for athletic meet were not even signed by the concerned official. Good infrastructure, sports and social activities, faculty, regular seminars, friends etc are mentioned as components of higher education.

Issues in quality

In response to the question do you enjoy educational experience one student had this to say, 'it's ok, good to be engaged somewhere' while one student put it like this, 'loving my days in college'. A B.com student complained that there are more seminars in science stream than in arts stream. Resources used consist mainly of library and complaints about non availability of ground and sports facilities are most frequent out of all groups studied. But for two students all said they suffered due to the strike. Three students each said there should be focus on teaching and placements; Four emphasised both while one vouched for career counselling rather than a placement cell.

Student experience

Almost all students from this college gave hints of their dissatisfaction with the college. One told how he wished to be in a better college and how he was here by default rather than by choice; he had referred the prospectus but was unhappy with the experience. Likes about college are common like friends, freedom but dislikes in this group are different than from other groups. One student had this to say about his principal 'the principal is not at all visible' he went on to elaborate how a dynamic leadership could behave like and make changes according to will but how in his college the principal is not even seen, entry of outside crowd which is mentioned by one more group of students as well, is a frequent entry for this group, one student also mentioned how slangs even for teachers are common to a great extent, she described some groups of students as 'arbitrary'. Otherwise, like other students they too were happy with their personal college life. Less hesitation, increase in confidence, contacts for future, are the similar ideas that emerge in this group too, only one student who

was also very critical of the college in general said that his confidence level was down during graduation as compared to school days.

Choice

A response to the question on how much information he had about the college before admissions, she replied 'not much else would have avoided it'. This response sums the views of around seventy percent students of this group. One student also mentioned that he had information and interest about psychology and philosophy but he chose to opt for B.B.E. (Bachelor of Business Economics) keeping future prospects in mind, one student lamented that this is a DU (Delhi University) college but without the atmosphere of one. Even from other students who were not studying in north campus colleges such a view was put forth in response to questions on student experience. Eight students said choice of course was by interest. Student who had opted for B.B.E. said he did so on the last day, he intended to express the hurry in which he took the decision rather than a well planned decision. Another student in this group lamented choosing commerce rather than opting for B.P.Ed.(bachelor of Physical Education) to add to this his college did not have a ground for sports. Also rarely did students mentioned their choice restricted by the cut offs, their views reflected as if it was considered to be a given. Plan for next five years for majority is post graduation.

Mata Sundri college for Women (No. Of students – 6)

Student information: Education of parents is quite modest in this group with just one parent a postgraduate and one a graduate all the others were either 10th or 12th pass. Three students stay around 15 km from college, others did not mention.

Quality

Better infrastructure, good teachers, teaching methods, building personality, thinking critically are things mentioned by students which are broadly in line with what others have mentioned. Learning without burden is considered to be important by one student and unavailability of course books in the library where otherwise so many books are available is a concern which is raised by students in other groups as well.

Issues in quality

Generally they enjoy classes, but two students mentioned names of subjects like education and political science in which they enjoy more because of the way of teaching of the teachers. Three students were unhappy with the resources available as one mentioned that library was not ready yet, another one mentioned that very little sources or services were available, other than library other resources do not find a mention at all in this group. Participation in extracurricular activities is on the lower side in this college, 'this college never gives me opportunity to participate, and awareness is not seen in students'. Four students said they suffered due to the strike while two said they enjoyed. With respect to placements only two students, which is proportionately low compared to other groups, said that focus should be on teaching others felt teachers should at least guide, one student said 'there should be link between education and current knowledge. But for one student all said that they give very much importance to marks, this finding is in contrast to students from higher cut off colleges.

Student experience

Following are some of the comments by students on what they liked or disliked, 'didn't like anything about this college', lifts are used only by teachers and facilities are not matched by fees, 'not in north campus', this is what students had to say about the dislikes about their college, one may note here that fees in this college for a BA programme are in the range of about RS 10,000. The likes mentioned are common like 'good teachers' etc. On a personal level though like other students these too are happy with their college life.

Choice

But for one student who said 'almost all necessary information was collected and one should do to have a better choice' all others had bits and pieces of information. 'never heard name of this college' 'because this is a girls college' was the response of two students, proximity was mentioned by one student. All students wished for guidance in future plans. In future plans four of them wanted to be teachers, one IAS and one 'better human being'.

Aditi mahavidyalaya (No. Of students – 5)

Quality

Most students from Aditi mention teaching strategies as quality to them. This has to be seen in the context of they pursuing B.El.Ed. programme. Three out of five mention teaching strategy, teaching methodology, as what constitutes quality to them. One mentions 'providing knowledge and one mentions quality where 'the child is in centre'; this group does show the influence of their current professional degree (B.El.Ed) on their views about quality. People 'not doing their job sincerely and they

are not to be relied for anything, teachers want to earn outside', population explosion and corruption figure among the reasons for absence of quality. Integrated education and freedom are suggestions by one of the respondent. Not only in this group but in most groups the question on purpose of higher education generates a lot of ideas. For this group they are; being a good human being, lot of research, knowledge, knowing basic subjects and 'surely to get a job'. Now all these ideas are expressed by different individuals and that explains that students as well look at education from multiple perspectives also that not all mention all of the above mentioned things. And in times of homogenisation and standardisation we must be aware that students are going to have a variety of reasons for pursuing education. I contend here that this variety expressed by the students reveals the strong public good nature of higher education.

Student experience

Two students mention that they enjoy classes because they are 'interactive' and they enjoy practical classes'. For one student it is because 'we learned so much about the primary education of the child', for one student it is 'learning new things and come near my goal of good and effective teacher'. For this group the components of good educational experience include helpful, sensitive, well qualified faculty, being child centred, interactions and supportive infrastructure. One student mentions 'helpful, sensitive, well qualified faculty as the most satisfactory part my college'

Issues in quality

Four students reply in the affirmative to the question on optimum use of resources. One mentions that only library is made use of as other services are not available here. All five mentioned that they suffered due to the strike and they had to

come and go. In comparison the students of IHE also pursuing B.El.Ed. said that their teachers never went for strike. However the students of IHE also lamented that their college was secluded from the DU (Delhi University) and were unhappy about this. With respect to strike all five said that they suffered. None said that they should focus on placements this is on expected lines as they are in a course where their entry as teachers would be based on an entrance test rather than any efforts by the teachers or the institution. Three students mentioned they don't participate at all in extracurricular activities while one mentioned *rangoli* and another in music and dance. Three students mention they like teachers and two don't like infrastructure and facilities, while two also mentioned that not all of their expectations were satisfied. Two said their personality has undergone a lot of change while for two it was not, 'being more confident' , 'earlier was very shy' are the most common responses under the sub-theme. Two students said that they don't give much importance to marks as 'they have to face entrance exam before the job', one said it is useful 'only for pursuing higher education', one mentioned she gives 'too much' while one student said she had to give as she is 'forced by family members other than parents'.

Choice

Just like other groups only one student mentioned that there is urgency to get a job soon. One student had almost all information about the college as he put it 'nothing was left to know', two had satisfactory information and one mentioned that she will 'always choose this college as it is most convenient'. However with respect to choice of course; one student mentioned that it was chosen by parents to get a job and it was good for girls. For only one student it was interest while for two parents

had a major influence. Plan for next five years includes pursuing education and serving as teachers.

IHE Institute of Home Economics (No of students – 10)

Student information

Ten students were surveyed from this college. Parents of six students are graduates, parents of two of them are 12th pass, and parents of one of them are 10th pass, seven students from this group live at a distance of more than 25 km from the college, one student at four km while two students did not mention.

Quality

Better teaching methods, friendly behaviour of teachers, practical rather than textual knowledge, are the common themes that emerge, even in this group. Some of the newer ideas that emerged in this group are 'quality depends on institution', 'corruption and restrictions on students', 'to be an accomplished person, one student put it as 'let children live, learn, explore and express'.

Issues in quality

Almost all students except two who did not respond said they made use of resources available, they specifically mention use of resource room. 'Teachers in our college never go for strike' was the universal response to the question 'did you suffer due to strike? Interestingly, though they were happy for this, they were not happy with the fact that their college was 'secluded' from the Delhi university colleges, as it did not participate in many of its activities e.g. elections. The expression that it is different from a 'DU college' comes to the fore bringing out the brand value associated with

Delhi University colleges. Overall development, personal and social benefits, greater interactions between teachers and students, are other things that find mention. Four students felt teachers or institution should focus on placement while two said focus should be on teaching. Given the fact that all these students are in B.El.Ed. and have to give an entrance to get a teachers job, the above responses might seem to be surprising, but a possible explanation may be that this college charges fees around RS 30000 which is quite high compared to fees at another college surveyed providing same course but charging fees around RS 3500; and none out of five surveyed students from this latter college said that the teachers or institutions should focus on placements, rather all the five vouched for teaching curriculum as the focus area. Physical training and self defence training are some of the different things mentioned under extra-curricular activities, most said they participated in one or the other activity but demanded more facilities and college teams for different sports.

Student experience

All the students said they enjoyed classes. Interactions, discussions, friendly teachers are the components mentioned. One of the things that stands out from other colleges under the heading dislikes about the college is, to quote one student, 'our college do not participate in any of the activities that are held in DU, no one knows our college much', being a small college, 'not enough space, no ground are other things mentioned in dislikes. Like all other groups here too all students mention that their personality has undergone a change, feeling of secularism, 'feminism has inbuilt in me', increase in confidence, change in attitude, seeing things critically are the changes mentioned. Three students said they don't give much importance to marks

obtained otherwise all said marks as 'very important'. But for one none mentioned urgency to work.

Choice

Seven students had almost no information about the college, one said 'almost all of it', two had some. Also in contrast to other colleges seven students out of ten said that their choice of course was influenced or forced by the parents, the maximum influence of parents, with two of them mentioning teacher's job considered as safe for girls as the reason, while four mentioned interest as one of the reason as well. Higher education, studying, teaching, getting settled, doing job etc figure among the plans for next five years.

DDS (D. D. Shinde Sarkar College Kolhapur) (No. Of students – 8)

This college is located in Maharashtra and questionnaire was administered through a friend. Total eight students are surveyed in this group. As this college is located in another state it in many ways in a different league altogether. The major difference however between Delhi colleges and this college is that this college is an open access college i.e. admission is based not on cut off criteria but to whoever wants it, with minimum eligibility being a pass in the previous division. This college also boasts of being English medium for arts and commerce stream, this is not the case with colleges in Delhi as they are necessarily English medium.

Student information

Parents of five students have education equivalent to senior secondary or lesser than that. Parents of two students are at least graduates. The highest distance at

which a student lives from his college is six km and six out of eight students live within twenty minutes of walking distance from the college. This is in big contrast to Delhi colleges where students spend lot of time in travel.

Quality

Along with teachers and teaching methods, seminars, presentations, lectures by experienced personalities from outside, 'selection of teachers avoiding nepotism', practical knowledge, making students competitive at the highest level possible, are the things mentioned under this theme.

Issues in quality

Use of resources finds mention only of library. This college does not own a ground; NCC and NSS find mention among extra-curricular activities. Four students were for emphasis on placement while three were for teaching. Five students said they give very much importance to marks, while three said they don't. Naval NCC is mentioned by many students.

Student experience

All the students said they enjoyed educational experience albeit for a variety of reasons like, it develops personality, teachers are friendly and supportive, lot of fun, also this is the only college where administrative staff was considered friendly by at least one student. Weekly elocutions with compulsory attendance, writing articles for college magazine, is mentioned by many students under what they like about college. College not having proper infrastructure, absence of 'good' books in library, teachers not able to control indiscipline among students, are the dislikes mentioned.

Changes in personality are similar to that mentioned by DU students like increase in confidence, becoming conscious and acquiring skills like writing.

Choice

Teaching in English medium is mentioned as the most important reason for choosing this college. Most students had lot of information through friends, ex students about NCC, discipline, compulsory attendance etc. A notable difference with respect to DU students comes to fore in terms of future plans. Not a single student mentioned post-graduation as an option which is quite startling if compared to DU students where at least 50 percent planned to go for post-graduation. Students in this group mentioned IAS preparations, doing social work, MPSC (Maharashtra Public Service commission) exams, officer in the navy as their plans. And like DU students these students too were 'not interested' to go for vocational or professional qualifications.

Summary of findings

Third year students were interviewed as they would be more likely than the first and second years to talk freely and also to give a comprehensive view about their experiences and future plans. When the issue of student comes up for discussion with respect to higher education, mostly student protests and movements are talked about but the silent majorities are left out.

Never during my study was I actually trying to prove something with the help of evidence from the field. Rather it was listening to many students on a range of questions which were well thought out. And there was a variety of response along

with common responses in opinions put in front of me in spite of the obvious commonalities like age, college etc that they shared.

From the study it becomes evident that students had access to a wide range of resources which includes library, resource rooms, science laboratories, gym and sports facilities. B.El.Ed. students specifically mentioned use of resource rooms. But of all these resources, library seemed to be of some importance when an overall analysis is done. Mostly students use library though they are often found to be not so happy with the library condition. This is to say, often libraries ran out of course materials or suffer from space crunch. Hence in this context though colleges stand up to one of the quality parameters, in real terms its significance can be questioned. After knowing the students' point of view one can say that placement is probably not as important a variable as perceived in literature. This is because majority opted for the option that teacher or institutions should focus more on teaching than on placement. This response is also in tune with the question about whether students felt any urgency to get employed soon after graduation. Most of the students interviewed across colleges supported similar view that they had no urgency to get employed. This probably can be a hint towards increase in aspiration among students for higher education. Out of extracurricular activities such as sports, NCC, debates, and college festivals; none of the students were happy with the sports facility, either because sports infrastructure was unavailable or even if it was, there was lack of institutional support. In this context IHE, the only college, is worth mentioning where students (all girls) were happy with the physical education and self-defence training. There was a mixed response with respect to the extent to which students considered obtaining marks important. This is significant in the sense that even if fifty percent students consider attainment of marks to be not of much value then the measurement of college quality

in terms of student performance in annual examinations would be problematic. As far as strike is concerned majority of the students said they suffered. Their course was not completed. Even if it was completed, it had to be hurried. Therefore the importance of teachers for better quality of education as mentioned in the literature is justified by the study.

The third theme deals with student experience of their education, this theme gave them a chance to elaborate their personal experience in general and their comments on issues not covered under the above two themes. Two things that emerge from a wide range of likes and dislikes are high and middle cut off colleges i.e. Hindu and KGTB Khalsa students are mostly satisfied with their college or academic environment as unlike low cut off colleges i.e. Sri Aurbindo and Ram Lal Anand. The most appraised aspects of the colleges include their free and liberal atmosphere in the college premises, hostel life, cultural atmosphere and college festivals. On the other hand low cut off college students expressed problems with library facilities, disturbances from 'outside crowd', dissatisfaction related to poor teaching staff etc. Irrespective of the nature of college, all students experienced improvement in their personality.

With respect to the last theme the study explores reasons behind their choice of course, college and future plans. One particular student in a BA pass programme was very clear about why he chose this programme. "NCC was always my favourite and enrolling in a BA pass programme would allow me to spend time on activities which I would like to pursue" Many students had to be explained what is an ITI. Many of those interviewed may not even have thought about it as an option so the demand for education as mentioned in the literature is on the higher side but not for vocational if your income level is good enough to attain general college education.

Choice of college in most cases was determined by merit rather than anything else one might add that some students didn't choose college per se but were made to by circumstances including lower marks, distance from home and parents influence applicable mainly to girls to go for a professional degree in elementary education as 'teachers is a safe job for girls'. The choice of students from D. D. Shinde Sarkar College in Maharashtra is worth mentioning. Of the eight students surveyed six lived within fifteen minutes from college and two lived at six km from the college. Also medium of instruction i.e. English was mentioned by almost all the students this is on expected lines as this happens to be the only college following English as medium of instruction.

A question on opinion of students with respect to the introduction of semester system was added later so views of only lower cut off college students were obtained, as they happened to be surveyed later. One of the general perception I got regarding the semester system was 'yes it should definitely be there'. When probed further into the desirability of semester system, students answered, 'it will lead to more learning' when probed further on whether it will lead to stress they replied that 'they have enough leisure'. But again the responses would be different across streams as science students spend more time inside the classrooms and the labs, and arts and commerce students relatively have more time outside the class. So students' leisure time needs to be channelled properly so they have a experience which would be cherished later.

Chapter V
Overall Findings and Discussion

Overall Findings of the Study and discussion

Importance of teachers and teaching methods found to be the most frequent mention, freedom to explore rather than memorize was another common mention. The theme on quality also generated the most diverse responses as compared to other themes. The professional degree students from Aditi Mahavidyalaya and Institute of Home Economics probably had an impact of their current courses in reply to questions on theme of quality. Their replies included 'focus on teaching methodology, 'child centred environment' as the essence of quality. Thus it is evident that they located the quality issue in the domain of student and the teacher, while the general degree students had diverse opinions on what quality meant for them.

Extracurricular activities which find mention in the literature are found not participated much by the students and they are dissatisfied with this. Some colleges don't have grounds and some, even if they have, there is not much institutional support for these activities. Increase in confidence, is another major feeling the students experienced in them. With respect to how much importance students gave to marks there was a mixed response. 'very much' and 'not much' were both common replies. Students didn't give much importance to marks preferred academics for the sake of it rather than for marks. The response of very much was attributed to ability of higher grades to make entry for postgraduate courses easier. Importance of practical life was emphasized by many under different themes. The student experience theme implied that all the students from diverse colleges expressed satisfaction as well as dissatisfaction in several aspects, but largely the students from higher cut off college were more happy as compared to others; this is on expected lines as the Hindu college happened to be located in the North campus of DU which is well renowned. In terms of future plans the professional students mentioned lesser choices as expected i.e. to

get a teachers job while the general course students mentioned a variety of options from civil services preparation to Film making.

One of the conflicting finding of the study is that when the students were asked about quality in subjective part of the questionnaire they emphasized that mastery of basic concepts rather than rote memorizing should be emphasized however for a similar question in the objective part 43.6 % students mentioned that their course emphasized analysis. An explanation of this could be that students felt that the course required them to analyse but that was not taking place in practice.

The feeling that more educated graduates would be frustrated does not find a resonance in the study conducted. They have time in their hands, and many mentioned that there was no pressure from parents. The kind of career the general degree students look forward to is not based on their current degree for e.g. MBA, film making, dancing, civil services. There are many who said they loved their subjects, specially the history students at the Hindu college. It would be difficult to include them into frustrated unemployed graduates once they finish their studies.

With respect to quantitative part of the questionnaire, following are the overall findings students put greater importance on reading materials as assigned by institutes. Reading more of the assigned materials ensure better and more assured performance as compared to that of self-readings. It probably denotes student's greater inclination to attain better marks and perform better academically. Self learning which promotes greater analytical and critical learning was found to lose importance among majority.

On the whole students had better relation among themselves than with faculty or others. This is reflected in student response of activities done in colleges as well as

from direct question about their relationships. However as far as faculty student interactions were considered, the majority who at all interacted were found to have done it only sometimes, whether it is in the form of career oriented discussions or other purposes. With reference to analysis of mental ability, students were found to give more emphasis on analytical skills. As supported by literature, students too perceived the importance of analysis over memorizing.

As far as contribution of institution in student's life is concerned, analytical and critical thinking of majority of the students seems to have been improved much in their perception. This is the only parameter in the context of contribution of institutions that stands out significantly since almost 85 percent were found to be benefited at least quite a bit.

One suggestion that follows from literature as well is that a college should have a stated purpose in addition to preparing students for examinations, just not this but the student body needs to be informed and made aware of it through prospectus before admission and through counselling after admissions. The principal of the college being the major implementer should be a remarkable individual who has to be motivated enough to bring about necessary changes. It would be apt to quote two students here, 'the principal is not visible' the other quote is with respect to sports certificates, 'which were not even signed by the authority'. The teachers in the colleges use a common staff room, a separate chamber would provide for greater interactions and freedom for teachers.

Students from D. D. Shinde Sarkar college, lived in proximity of the college, this would always be an advantage in terms of access but provision of good colleges in all parts of the country would do wonders to the human resource development.

There was not much vocational inclination or interest even for a few who urgently wanted to work after graduation. They were aware that their current programme was not going to directly provide the job that they wanted, but this in no way suggests that they were unhappy with their current programme.

This study uses qualitative methods giving more importance to student's experience of higher education which itself includes a wide range of factors. This study therefore gives broader insight into reasons for a student's selection of a particular course, college, overall educational experience and their individual perception of quality. In one of the colleges surveyed for instance Hindu college, would be a high quality college if we consider educational quality as a function of admission standards. But on its own this information does not tell us anything about the kind of experience students are having. Therefore one should also consider students' perception of quality.

Limitations of the Study

This study suffers from time and resource constraints without which it could have looked deeper into the students' perspective of quality with a large sample. Generalising the findings is much more difficult due to having a non probability sample. Though the questionnaire has been as inclusive as possible, the objective could have been better justified with a larger number of students. However, the study looks into the matter from the point of view of qualitative analysis. Given more time this qualitative analysis could have been attempted giving a holistic idea about the student's perception of quality.



Suggestions for further studies

In this study, sample used was a non probability sample. Thus from the category of high cut off only one college was selected. Also the fact that students sampled from one college constituted students from different streams. In a larger study, probability sample can be used and more colleges to represent a single category can be chosen. Also by increasing the sample size it would be possible to accommodate students from each stream in equal proportion to generate course wise analysis of an issue. The scope of the study can be increased by applying both qualitative and quantitative methodology to get a holistic view, non participant and participant observation would be very useful in getting deeper insights into the student world.

References

References

- Airen, J.W. (1967). College education in India. Bombay.
- Akerlof, G. A. (1970). The Market for "Lemons": Quality Uncertainty and the Market Mechanism. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol. 84, No. 3, pp. 488-500.
- Altbach, P. (1972). The university in transition: an Indian case study. Sindhu publications.
- Barnett, Ronald. (1994). *The limits of competence: knowledge, higher education and society*. The society for research into higher education and Open University Press.
- Bennet, N., Dunne, E. and Carre, C. (2000). *Skills development in higher education and employment*. The society for research into higher education and Open University Press.
- Brennan, J. and Shah, T. (2000). Managing quality in higher education: an international perspective on institutional assessment and change. Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.
- Bugelski, R.; Lester, O. P. (1940). Changes in attitudes in a group of college students during their college course and after graduation. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol 12, pp. 319-322.
- Chattopadhyay, S. (2009). The market in higher education: concern for equity and quality, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 44, No.29, pp. 53-61.
- Conrad, C. F., and Pratt, A.M. (1985). Designing for Quality, *The Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. 56, No. 6, pp. 601-622.
- Crombag, F. M., (1978). On Defining Quality of Education. *Higher Education*, Vol. 7, No. 4, pp. 389-403.
- D'souza, Errol (2004), 'Contractual Arrangements in Academia, Implications for performance', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 39, No.11

- Donald, J. G., and Denison, D.B. (2001). Quality Assessment of University Students: Student Perceptions of Quality Criteria, *The Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. 72, No. 4, pp. 478-502.
- Drury, David (1993), *The Iron School Master: Education, Employment and the Family in India*. Hindustan Publishing Corporation. Delhi
- Evans, G.R. (2002). *Academics and the real world*. The society for research into higher education and Open University Press.
- Freedman, M.B. (1969). *The college experience*. Jossey brass Inc Publishers. San Fransico.
- Geisler, Paul R., and Lang, Peter. (2006). *Higher education at a crossroads*. New York.
- Griffith, D.L. (2001). *Quality Assurance in higher education: A study of developing countries*. Ashgate Publication.
- Haggerty, M. E. (1932). Faculty Quality: A Crucial Element in the Improvement of College Instruction. *The Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. 3. No. 3, pp. 127-132.
- Halsey, A.H., Lauder, H., Brown, P., and Wells, A.M. (1997). *Education: culture, economy and society*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Harbison, F.H., and Myers, C.A. (1964). *Education, manpower, and economic growth: strategies of human resource development*. Mac Graw Hill Publications.
- Hashim, R.S. (2007). "State of Higher Education in India", India Development Report. pp 71-86 .
- Haspel, A E. (1978). The Questionable Role of Higher Education as an Occupational Screening Device, *The Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. 7, No. 3, pp. 279-294.
- Jallade, J. (1989) 'Recent Trends in Vocational Education and Training: an overview', *European Journal of Education*, vol.24 no.2.
- Jayaram, N. (2006). India. In Farest, JJF and Altbach,P. (Eds.), *International handbook of higher education, part two: regions and countries*. *Springer Publishers*, Netherlands.

- Kapur, D., and Mehta, P.B. (2004). Indian higher education reform: from half- baked socialism to half baked capitalism.
- Khadria, B. (1996) 'Child Labour: Reform Through a Fiscal instrument' *Economic and Political Weekly*. Vol 31, No.30,
- Khadria, B. (2007) 'Social Collateral and human capital' *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol 42, No. 13
- Kumar, K. and Sarangapani, P. (2004). History of the quality debate. *Contemporary Education Dialogue*. Vol. 2. No. 1.
- Kumar, Krishna., (2003). Judicial Ambivalence and New Politics of Education. *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 38, No. 49.
- Lewis, Ian. (1984). The student experience of higher education. Croom helm, USA.
- Margaret S. (1979). Evaluating the Quality of Teaching, *Peabody Journal of Education*, Vol. 56, No. 2; pp. 77-82.
- Marginnson, Simon (2007). 'The Public/Private Divide in Higher Education: A Global Revision'. *Higher Education* 53, pp 307-333.
- McClenney, K. M. (2007). Research Update: The Community College Survey of Student Engagement. *Community College Review*, 35, pp. 137.
- McClenney, Kay M. (2004). Redefining Quality in Community Colleges: Focusing on Good Educational Practice, Vol. 36, No. 6
- McKinney, K., (1988). Five Components of Quality Teaching. *Teaching Sociology*, Vol. 16, No. 3, pp. 298-301.
- Melanie, Walker and Unterhalter, Elaine. Eds (2007), Amartya Sens Capability Approach and Social Justice in Education. Palgrave Macmillan

- Mishra, S., (2006). Quality Assurance in Higher Education: An Introduction. National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) In Collaboration with Commonwealth of Learning (COL).
- Mohanty, A.2009 'Multilingual education-- a bridge too far?' in Mohanty, Panda, Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas (eds.) (2009) *Multilingual Education for Social Justice*. New Delhi, Orient Blackswan
- Moss, Ronald L., and Young, Robert B. (1995). Perceptions About the Academic and Social Integration of Underprepared Students in an Urban Community College. *Community College Review*, Vol. 22, No. 47.
- Pascarella, E. T. et al., (2006). Institutional Selectivity and Good Practices in Undergraduate Education: How Strong Is the Link? *The Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. 77, No. 2, pp. 251-285.
- Patnaik, P (2007). 'Alternative Perspectives on Higher Education'. *Social Scientist*. Vol 35. No. 11-12. (Nov-Dec). pp 3-14.
- Peterson, G. W. et al. (1981). Performance-Based Education: Method for Preserving Quality, Equal Opportunity and Economy in Public Higher Education, *The Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. 52, No. 4, pp. 352-368.
- Private sector in education: trends causes and consequences. A. Vaidyanathan . this is an expanded and edited version of the C D Deshmukh Memorial Lecture 2007 given at the council for social development, Hyderabad.
- Radford, J et al. (1997). *Quantity and quality in higher education*. Jessica Kingsley publishers. London and Bristol. Pennsylvania.
- Rao, Nitya. (2000). Quality with Quantity, *Economic and Political Weekly* , Vol. 35, No. 48 November 25.

- Report by Prof. Seyed E Hasnain. Vice-Chancellor, University Of Hyderabad. On Twelfth Convocation Tuesday, June 22, 2010.
- Sarangapani, Padma. (2010). Quality Concerns: National and Extra-national Dimensions. *Contemporary Education Dialogue*, Vol. 7, No. 1.
- Sengupta, J. (2011). India's Jobless Village Youth. *Rights and development Bulletin*. Centre for development And Human rights Special double edition. Vol. 5. Issues 1&2.
- Solomon, Lewis C and Midge A. La Porte (1986). The Crisis of Student Quality in Higher Education. *The Crisis of Student Quality in Higher Education*, Vol. 57, No. 4, pp. 370-392.
- Spence, M., (1973). Job Market Signaling. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol. 87, No. 3, pp. 355-374
- Stange, K., (2009). Ability Sorting and the Importance of College Quality to Student Achievement: Evidence from Community Colleges. University of Michigan, Health Management and Policy.
- Stella, A., and Bhushan, S., (2011). Quality assurance of transnational higher education: the experiences of Australia and India. Australian universities quality agency and the national university of educational planning and administration.
- Teichler, Ulrich and Barbara M. Kehmc. (1995). Towards a New Understanding of the Relationships between Higher Education and Employment, *European Journal of Education*, Vol. 30, No. 2, pp. 115-132.
- Tinto, Vincent., and Russo, Pat. (1994). Coordinated Studies Programs: Their Effect on Student Involvement at a Community College. *Community College Review*. Vol. 22, No. 16.
- Toohy, Susan. (1999). *Designing courses for higher education*. The society for research into higher education & Open University Press.

- Vedder, Paul (Global measurement of the quality of education:A help to developing countries?)
- Velaskar, Padma. (2010). Quality and Inequality in Indian Education: Some Critical Policy Concerns, *Contemporary Education Dialogue*, Vol 7, No.1.
- Venkataraman, Geetha (2007): 'Teaching Students to Think', *Economic and Political Weekly*, .
- Verble, M S (1979): 'Evaluating the Quality of Teaching', *Peabody Journal of Education*,
- Volkwein, Fredericks J. (1989). Changes in Quality among Public Universities. *The Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. 60, No. 2, pp. 136-151.
- Wilson, J. D. (1982). *Student learning in higher education*. Croom helm. London.
- Winch, Christopher. (2010). Search for educational quality: The Dialectic of Inputs and Outputs, *Contemporary Education Dialogue*, Vol. 7, No. 1.
- Yilmazl, H., Demircanl, V., Bal1, T., and Koskan. O. (2010). Students perceptions of academic and institutional service quality at the Faculty of Agriculture: The case of Suleyman Demirel University, *African Journal of Business Management* Vol. 4, No. 6, pp. 1107-1115.
- Young, J. E. (1958). Educational Growth: Can We Improve Its Measurement and quality, *Peabody Journal of Education*, Vol. 35, No. 4, pp. 221-227.

Appendix

Questionnaire

Statement of Purpose:

Students are expected to invest a lot of time, energy and other resources into education. Their parents also invest money and other resources into education of their children. Provision of quality education is what everyone desires but there are dilemmas, opinions and prescriptions about what we mean by quality education. This survey is all about your take on quality, or what it means to you. The interviewer himself being a student would urge you to take the interview seriously and would be more than willing to share with you his experience of still higher education. You are ANONYMOUS unless you wish otherwise. Thank you very much.

Jayrath R Shinde. (MPhil scholar, Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies, JNU)

Supervisor: Professor Binod Khadria.

PART A

1. During the current school year, about how much reading and writing have you done?	None	1 to 4	5 to 10	11 to 20	More than 20
Number of assigned textbooks, books, or course readings.					
Number of books read on your own, for personal enjoyment or academic enrichment.					

2. In your experience at your institution during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following?	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Never
Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions				
Made a class presentation				
Come to class without completing readings or assignments				

Worked with other students on projects				
Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor				
Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor				
Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student life activities.)				
Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)				
Had serious conversations with students who are very different from you in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values.				

3. During the current year, how much has your coursework emphasized the following mental activities	Very much	Quite a bit	Some	Very little
Memorizing facts, ideas, or methods from your courses readings so you can repeat them in pretty much the same form.				
Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory, such as examining a particular case or situation in depth and considering its components				

4. To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?	Very much	Quite a bit	Some	Very little
Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills				
Writing clearly and effectively				
Speaking clearly and effectively				
Thinking critically and analytically				

5. During the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following?	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Never
Attended an art exhibit, play, dance, music, theatre, or other performance				
Exercised or participated in physical fitness activities				
Participated in activities to enhance your spirituality (worship, meditation, prayer, etc.)				

6. To what extent does your institution emphasize each of the following?	Very much	Quite a bit	Some	Very little
Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work.				
Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds				
Attending campus events and activities (special speakers, cultural performances, athletic events, etc.)				

7- The quality of your relationships with people at your institution.

a) Relationships with other students

Unfriendly, Unsupportive,
Sense of alienation

Friendly, Supportive,
Sense of belonging

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

b) Relationships with faculty members

Unavailable, Unhelpful,
Unsympathetic

Available, Helpful,
sympathetic

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

c) Relationships with administrative personnel and offices

Unhelpful, Inconsiderate,

Helpful, Considerate

Rigid

Flexible

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8- If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending?

Definitely yes probably yes probably no definitely no

PART B

1. What is the number of students in your class? To what extent do you think student faculty ratio is actually an important criteria of quality education? What is the distance of your college from home? Whom are you staying with?
2. Do you remember any of your classmates who dropped out or are doing something else? What was the most important reason for him/her to drop out?
3. What different things determined your decision to choose this college and this course?
4. Why did you not enrol in a vocational (e.g. ITI) or a professional course (e.g. Engineering or medical)?
5. What is the amount of fees you paid and other expenses that you incurred during the last year?
6. Do you make optimum use of the learning resources and other support services available in the institution? If 'no' why? If 'yes' how?
7. How much of importance do you give to the marks obtained in annual examinations?

8. Earlier when the teachers were on strike did you suffer? In what ways?
9. Do you enjoy classes and overall educational experience? Please elaborate.
10. What all do you think should be components of a good educational experience?
11. Do you think your teacher and institution should do more to place you in some companies or you think they should focus on teaching the curriculum?
12. What sports and extracurricular activities do you participate in? What more would you have liked to do?
13. What all information you had about the college before admission? What more information would have led to a better choice?
14. How many siblings do you have and what are they doing?
15. What do you think is the most crucial link between career and quality of education?
16. What do you like and dislike about your college?
17. Are you employed? Is there an urgency to get employed or earn money?
18. Do you intend to be self employed / start a business, if so, how?
19. What is your plan for next five years? Why?
20. Is there a feedback mechanism in place? (e.g. student representatives /union) and how effective is it?
21. In what ways has your personality changed as a result of enrolment in the College?
22. Were your expectations from the college adequately satisfied? How?
23. What are your comments on the social atmosphere at the college?
24. Are you happy with your life in the college? a) Yes b) No

25. Subject of study and future plans

- a) Was your line of study chosen by yourself? If 'no', who helped you in choosing the subject of your studies?
- b) For what reason was that line of study chosen?
- c) What career do you hope to take up?
(Government service, Teaching, Higher research, Law, Business, Agriculture, Politics, Domestic, Others(specify). Reasons:
- d) What career would your parents like you to take up? Reasons
- e) Do you require guidance as to (1)Further studies (2) Job seeking after college
- f) Do you feel worse off due to lack of proper guidance in the choice of your line of study earlier in your career?

26. What do you think about quality education? In what ways can quality of education be improved?

27. In your opinion, is the present education system providing quality education? Yes/No.

If no, what are the possible reasons?

28. What do you think should be the purpose of higher education?

29. What are your views on the semester system? Why are you in favour or against it?

30. College Class. Age Sex State

Marital status: Single / married / widowed / divorced or separated

Birth-place (a) state (b)Rural / Urban

Mother tongue: Caste: Religion:

Total family income (a) monthly (b) yearly

Education of Mother Father

Percentage of marks in 12th 1st year 2nd year

Name.

Email

