



A Report on “2-day National Conference on “Innovative Mechanisms and Standards for assuring quality in Higher Education institutions”

IQAC-KLEF and ASC jointly hosted a 2-day National Conference on “Innovative Mechanisms and Standards for assuring quality in Higher Education institutions” on 22nd and 23rd March-2019.

The meeting began at 9:30 am on 22-3-2019 in the Peacock hall with the Chief Guest, and the other dignitaries lighting the lamp.



In his introductory address Dr. K Ramakrishna, Dean Quality elaborated on the need for a meeting of this magnitude and relevance in the context of the growing awareness of quality issues in the field of Higher Education in India. He felt sure that it would help in the perception, popularization and proper implementation of the innovative ideas that have been brought into vogue by international media.



The Vice-chancellor Dr. L S S Reddy declared the Conference open and presented a brief survey of the various milestones reached by KLEF University in its long climb to the pinnacle of the A++ ranking by NAAC and the university being accorded the Tier-1 grade among select universities in India.

In his inaugural address Dr. Agrawal complimented K L University on the dual achievement of A++ rank in NAAC and for becoming a 'Grade-1' University. He spelt out the regimen to be followed in the next 5 years when sustenance itself demands a high quantum of quality work in research. In a major part of his speech Dr. Agarwal laid out the road map for future attainments. He spoke on areas like social relevance, public utility and financial viability. He stressed that higher education should cease to be a government responsibility and transform itself into a social commitment as well as responsibility. Judging by international standards the best of Indian institutions have far less alumni participation. He said that we are not handicapped with lack of funds alone but India also faces a huge dearth of academic leadership. He concluded his highly inspirational speech with the thought that India has just passed the fledgling stage and has entered a period of consolidation.



The key note address by Dr. P.V.S. Prasad put the issue on an even keel and suggested that we may also look at the problem from a contextual angle. He said that any society depends on three deciding factors – the state, the market and education. He opined that all educational institutions should develop standards & benchmarks. However, to join the elite brand of institutions one is forced to choose between uniformity and flexibility. By preferring the latter one can build one's own brand and thus achieve uniqueness.



These two speeches laid a marvelous platform for the takeoff of the conference.

The experts from various domains then gave presentations packed with knowledge and acumen. Three panel discussions were held on the themes academic leadership, IQAC systems and Industry Institute connect.

The second day of the conference started with Prof. V. Venkaiah's presentation on Academic Leadership and Governance. An academician par excellence, Prof. Venkaiah presented the current scenario of higher education in India and the growing need for educational leaders. He noted the Welcome shift towards private organizations and the growing awareness of quality. The concepts of autonomy and accountability and different methods of resource mobilization would contribute to the progress of higher education in India. He also indicated that educational institutions perform for better when they are merely managed by professionals.



Dr. K.L. Narayana, Dean (R&D) gave a power point presentation which showed all the principals that are followed in the institute for the enhancement of quality of research.

Dr. K. Subba Rao, Principal (CoE) in his power point presentation displayed the various parameters of academic training like communication, soft skills where quality enhancement has been achieved.



The post lunch session on Day-2 was allocated to academia industry connect.

The guests of honor Dr. Rama Krishna, M.D., Efftronics Systems Pvt. Ltd. and Mr. P. Srinivas, Director-Zauba Corporation, Hyderabad made two presentations on what the industry looks for in young engineers.

Dr. Rama Krishna from his vast experience abroad has clearly stated that there is greater productivity in the west. There is a great change between India and the west as far as best practices and methodologies are concerned. He opined that wealth has to be created and clarity of purpose is needed for that. Indian mindset and learning methods belong to the 17th Century which shows that Indians have missed all the fruits of industrial revolutions.

About industry academia interactions he said India has to adopt two policies immediately (1) the students must go for internship of six months once during graduation and (2) students have to be prepared for the jobs they are going to handle. He said that of all those who undergo internships at least 40% of the students will be getting employment.

The second suggestion by Dr. Radha Krishna was that, all faculty should go on a one-month visit to an industry once every two years. This will facilitate exchange of knowledge between industry and university. The teacher would also get to know who technology works.



Mr. Srinivas in his presentation was very critical about teaching and pedagogy. A teacher should create a learner. The student should become an explorer.

Industry prefers learners, explorers and problem solvers. In the USA only 10% teaching is done and 50% of the time the student concentrates on learning methodology. They should also know time management. The industry needs people who can plan, implement and solve problems. It is imperative the teaching pedagogy in universities should undergo suitable changes.

Delegates from various organizations presented their papers.





FEEDBACK

The feedback from the delegates was highly encouraging. While all of them agreed that this Conference is just the need of the hour they gave their perspective suggestions on many other parameters.

A whopping 82% of the audience felt that the inaugural address by Dr. P. Agrawal was ‘highly motivating’ and 28% felt it combined vision with innovation.

But overall the conference by general consent was related highly as one rich in content and serious in intent.

The key-note address by Dr. V S Prasad was voted by 75% as imaginative, 15% thought it was “informative” and 10% felt it was ‘initiative’.

The three panel Discussions were found to be highly satisfactory with the one on IQAC systems getting the lions share of the delegate vote at 82%, while the one on Academic Leadership was a close second at 77% and the one an Industry-Institute connect was voted by 66% but it took the house by its popular appeal and the highly elite and evedite Guests of Honor.

The address by Dr. V. Venkaiah, former Vice-Chancellor of Krishna University, established once again the crucial role that 'tradition' plays in the Indian education system and what we need for the future is a continuum rather than the exclusion of one for the other. His speech was voted by 64% as 'strong on content' 12% as well-researched and 24% felt it was both 'strong on content and well researched'

The papers presented at the conference were rated between 68% and 56%.

The delegates showed a moderately mixed reaction to the three organizational aspects of the conference with 78% satisfied by the implementation of the program schedule 76% with hospitality and with transport.

The Two-Day National Conference concluded with distribution of certificates to the participants.