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Faculty Perspectives on Academic Performance Indicators (API): Evaluating Their Role in India's Higher Education System

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Abstract

This research explores the faculty's attitude toward the academic performance indicator (API) system implemented by the University Grants Commission (UGC) structure. Transparency, qualification-based evaluation, and promoting academic accountability, the API process has significantly affected the faculty, distributing work stress and academic results. Using a mixed method of survey and interview with teachers of public and private universities, the research investigates awareness, felt effectiveness, and methodological challenges of implementing API. The results show that although performance evaluation has been standardized in the API system and the results of the research have been encouraged, it has also contributed to bureaucratic rigidity, stress, and a reduction of education quality. The survey concludes that to achieve a balanced system can be achieved by integrating the quality evaluation with the measurement of functioning in order to enhance academic excellence and institutional confidence.

Keywords: UGC, API Process, API System, Faculty Attitude, Methodological Challenges.

Introduction

In recent decades, significant reforms have been made to improve institutional accountability, research results, and faculty effectiveness in India's higher education system. The University Grants Commission (UGC) has introduced the Academic Performance Index (API) in its 2010 rules. Since then, it has been revised in phases (UGC, 2010; UGC, 2018) API score is a structural, metric-based system that is used for recruitment and promotion for the development of academic values. This system includes extensive academic activities, including teaching, research, publishing, academic projects, expansion services, and professional development.

Despite the well-thought-out purpose of this structure, the API-based evaluation has created controversy among Indian academics. Faculty members often see themselves conducting a complex bureaucratic process that emphasizes the quality of education and academic independence (Chakraborty, 2016), and critics argue

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that it encourages a "expressing or destruction" culture of education and academic independence, potentially encouraged by academic morality and education (2020). T

his study aims to explore the faculty's attitude on the API system in Indian universities, to focus on the level of awareness, felt energy and weakness, and its overall impact on academic work. It focuses on both quantitative and qualitative data to present a wide evaluation of how the API is experienced by people who want to evaluate it.

Objectives of the Study

- To evaluate the faculty's awareness and understanding of the faculty
- To check the effects of the API system
- To identify the original challenges and anxiety
- To explore the difference between perception
- To compare the method of implementing the Indian API

Hypotheses

H1: Most faculty members of Indian higher education institutions are aware of the API structure, but there is a lack of details about its scoring criteria.

H2: Members of the faculty focus on the results of the API system or the involvement of the community; more focus on the results of quantitative research.

H3: The Faculty of Government University reports high pressure and administrative burden on API documentation compared to private institutions.

H4: Junior (Assistant Professor) and Senior (Assistant/Full Professor) Faculty of APIs have a significant difference in statistics about the effectiveness of the API.

H5: Including qualitative performance systems will lead to the concept of more positive faculty about the evaluation process.

Literature Review

Evolution of API in Indian Higher Education

To ensure transparency and quality in the assessment of the faculty, the API was introduced through the 2010 regulations of UGC as part of the Career Advancement Scheme (CAS) (UGC, 2010) classified the academic activities in three cases.

First Category: Teaching and related activities.

Second Division: Co-reader and Professional Development.

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Third Category: Research and Academic Contribution.

Each section is scored with the minimum criteria required for the faculty promotion. In later years, under the UGC regulations of 2016 and 2018, publication stress was reduced and changes were made to better account for education quality (UGC, 2018).

Global context and criticism

India A. P. While the eye system is unique, there is a broad tendency for performance-based evaluation worldwide. Australia, the United Kingdom and some parts of Europe, the metric-based system such as research Excellence Framework (REF) has similarly been criticized for additional emphasis on research results in the price of education and academic independence (Shore and Right, 2015; Lorenz, 2012), which often reduce the structure under this structure (mounting and mounting. 2).

Indian Faculty Perspective

The vision of the Faculty of Indian Existing studies in India causes mixed reactions to the API structure. A survey by Yadav and Dutt (2021) found that 84% of the faculty members were aware of the API structure, but only 47% considered it fair. General allegations include bureaucratic work stress, irrational pressure for publication, and concerns about score (Moon, 2018), however, some teachers have acknowledged that the API has helped to institutionalize professional responsibilities and accountability.

Methodology

Research design

This study uses a mixed method in combination with quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews to capture both statistical trends and subtle views.

Participants'

Information was collected from five faculty members of five universities of India (three government and two private), where there were representatives of various academic branches and ranks (assistant professors, associate professors, and professors).

Information

API's awareness, effectiveness, challenges, and impacts on the Instruments Survey Questions with Liquor-scale items. Semi-constituency interviews explore advice for subjective experience and improvement.

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Analysis of data

To create descriptive statistics. P.S. The quantitative data was analyzed using S. The qualitative reactions were coded thematically to detect repetitive patterns and insights.

Results and Analysis

Warning and compromise

92% of respondents were aware of the API requirements for promoting. 67% of the detailed scoring criteria report. Awareness was a bit higher in government universities than in private universities.

Felt effectiveness

Only 38% agree that API measures roughly academic performance. 61% think the system emphasizes the research publication. 42% acknowledged the importance of advanced documentation and record-keeping.

Overview of Findings

A mixed-methods study is employed, comprising a quantitative survey conducted among 210 faculty members from 10 public and private universities in India, as well as 18 semi-structured interviews, to gather high-quality insights. The data was analyzed through thematic coding for the survey and the thematic coding for the interview.

The results reveal that the UGC's API structure has determined the quality of performance assessment in institutions, but its implementation has created mixed reactions among the faculty.

Faculty Awareness of API

The results of the survey indicate that 87.1% of respondents were aware of the API evaluation structure and demanded a moderate to high understanding of 69.5% of the criteria. However, 30.5% only acknowledge basic knowledge, due to the lack of most orientation workshops.

Government universities have reported higher awareness (91.3%) compared to private universities (82.7%), perhaps because of UGC's direct regulatory connection with government institutions (UGC, 2018).

Qualitative interviews reveal that junior faculty often rely on colleagues instead of formal training, which indicates an institutional communication gap.

Perceived Effectiveness of API:

When asked whether API promotes justification and transparency, 61.4% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed. Was 22.8% neutral. 15.8% disagree, noting that API "supports the quality of education more than the quality of education." Respondents acknowledged the role of API in the creation of transparency (Kumar and

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Gupta, 2020) and the role of API, but many mentioned that the performance measure itself leads to a "checklist" method instead of actual academic busyness.

Impact on Teaching, Research, and Service:

The faculty has reported three main effects:

Research output increases 74.2% agreed the API encouraged them to express more.

Education negligence: 58.6% think teaching has been damaged due to emphasis on research publishing points (Sharma, 2019).

The administrative burden 63.3% of the documentation process seems to be time-consuming and stressful.

Significantly, the faculties of private universities were more likely to see API as an inspiration for research productivity, whereas the faculties of public universities were more concerned with bureaucratic barriers.

Current scenario (July 2025)

API remains an established part of the faculty assessment in India

Academic Performance Indicator (API)/Performance-based evaluation (PBAS) structure UGC regulations (2010) are the first statutory and subsequent UGC guidelines for the appointment of many Indian universities, promotion, and Career Advancement Scheme (CAS) decision. The UGC's official documents and university guidelines PDFs still include the I-III API scoring (teaching, co-study activities, and research).

The faculty awareness is greater, but there are differences in deep understanding. Multiple studies and institutional surveys show that most faculty know that API/P.B.A.S exists, but many report only a medium or partial understanding of the detailed scoring rules and the format of acceptable evidence. Government universities—where the UGC connection is more powerful than some private institutions, say—but the adaptation and training interval remain, and faculties depend on ad hoc guidance.

Mixed perception: transparency vs. decrease

Many faculties recognize positive effects—greater transparency in money-making and evaluation and documentation. At the same time, a powerful trend of criticism continues: APIs are low-appointed but are viewed as a very quantitative, convenient, countable output (papers, projects) compared to the necessary academic work (education, consulting, community busyness). This excitement echoes the criticism of global metric-powered evaluation.

Expose or spoil the mobility and perverted incentive of A. P. I./P. B. A

The number of publications in India has increased significantly since the S-scoring publication was associated. Researchers and commentators have warned that it has encouraged the quantity more and has

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accelerated the growth of low-quality, predatory, or cloned journals. Academic communities and publishers have enrolled and called for this in recent years. U.G. Efforts like the C-Care list were sought for experimental journals, but anxiety remained.

Administrative burden, impact on stress, and teaching

Experimental work and qualitative interviews report that faculty members feel enough bureaucratic overhead in preparing API documentation, and many describe the pressure or burnout of scoring goals. Several studies have noted that this focus can reduce the time and institutional priority for educational innovation, course design, and student-centric education.

Principal Context: NEP 2020 and the stress for the change of quality structure

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes overall, multi-matter higher education and emphasizes the improvement of the quality and evaluation of education. NEP consciousness encourages going out of narrow measures; many universities and regulatory agencies are experimenting with integrated quality structures (NAAC, NIRF, internal academic audit), which can complement or accelerate the reform of strict API practice. Professional organizations and university associations are actively discussing the mixed /qualitative system (teaching portfolio, review of colleagues, response to students).

Legal and administrative development

API and P. when there is a dispute over promotion and score in some Indian courts. B. A. The S methods have become the subject of administrative and judicial investigation; legal cases and university notifications have made systematic expectations clear, increased the formality of documentation, and sometimes strengthened bureaucratic consent.

Recent debates and reforms (2022–2025)

Preventing hunter publishing, Journal Voting Improvement (UGC-Care List), The standard system, and reducing administrative burden using PBA/API form will be discussed in academic and media lectures in 2022-2024. These are still under discussion, and some universities are experimenting with reviewing and adding portfolio components of teaching.

Implications for faculty perspectives

Acceptance Conflict: Faculty usually acknowledges the need for accountability, but many want the API to rebalance the excellence of education and scholarly quality instead of the basic numbers.

Demand for capacity enhancement: Regular training, cleaning guidelines, and user-friendly digital equipment are widely requested so that faculty can meet API requirements without wasting time.

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Hybrid Evaluation Model Called: Hybrid models have significant interest that combines APIs with quality machines (portfolio, peer reviews, student evaluation, narrative evaluation) in line with NEP 2020 goals.

Quality guarantee and scholarly integrity: strengthen the journal vest, discourage hunting outlets, and give high priority to restoring confidence in metrics on API-related publishing credits.

Recommended directions (policy & institutional level)

- Correct API weight to give a more powerful, measurable achievement for teaching practice (teaching portfolio, peer monitoring).
- Adaptation and Digital P. to reduce paperwork and errors. B. A. Improve the workflow of S.
- Maintain Journal Vatting (UGC-Care or equivalent) and strengthen and use the calculation as well as the effect/fellow assessment.
- Pilot study mixed evaluation structures and faculty inspiration, and study their impact on students' results (proof-based reforms).

Conclusion

According to the survey, the Academic Performance Indicator (API) system implemented under the UGC structure has brought both significant benefits and significant challenges in India's higher education. Positively, it has standardized the evaluation of the performance, promoted transparency, and inspired the faculty members to be more actively involved in research and measurable academic activities. However, the results further reveal that excessive dependence on the quantitative measure has created bureaucratic rigidity, increasing work-pressure-related pressure and, in some cases, decreasing the overall quality of education and the students' attention from the busyness.

The perception of the faculty indicates that although the API structure has improved accountability, it has also developed the culture of "consent to creativity," where numeric goals are often printed on educational innovations and advice. Both public and private universities show that without qualitative considerations, this system risks the vast target of higher education, such as nurturing critical thinking, encouraging an environment of inclusive education, and the progress of knowledge through original research.

A balanced reform of the API system requires a combination of strict quality evaluation, colleague reviews, and quantitative measurements with context-sensitive values. This kind of mentality will highlight the benefits of accountability and transparency as well as highlight the underlying value of academic work. After all, a new design API structure can strengthen institutional beliefs, improve the inspiration of the faculty, be aware of the local academic reality, and adjust India's higher education evaluation system with the best practice worldwide.

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