

# INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM AT EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS: WAY OUT POST COVID 19

Dr. Rajesh Kumar Pandey, [rajesh.pandey@ssrimr.edu.in](mailto:rajesh.pandey@ssrimr.edu.in), Associate Professor, SSR IMR, Silvassa, Pune

**Abstract-** Institutions have been focusing on imparting education to the students with the best possible means & techniques. The Institutions get involved in student development to an extent that innovations become part of the regular affairs rather an initiative. The recent outbreak of the deadly virus Covid 19 which was declared Pandemic by the WHO has caught everyone with surprise. The apex bodies like NAAC have constituted their framework that necessitates the Institutions to adopt innovative practices in order to create an ecosystem that nurtures talent. The Institutions focus on every facet of developmental requirement and one such avenue through Innovations at Institutions. The Innovations be it in delivery of content, exposure to students, Personality development sessions or various competitions etc. All such avenues equip the students with a better hold on their prospective career.

This paper attempts to understand the essentials of Innovation ecosystem for Institutions. It further demonstrates the innovation ecosystem while highlighting the practices at Institutions at large and respective scope of developments post Covid 19. The article presents the case let constituting the Innovation ecosystem value experienced by Institutions i.e., SPPU, Pune and SSR IMR, Silvassa. The innovation ecosystem has been discussed in the paper on a larger perspective with limited examples of Two Institutions; hence the same may turn out to be the limitation for the study. The inferences gathered from the study will be more indicative in nature rather exhaustive. The article focuses on the NAAC directives and as part of the NAAC Criteria -3 Research & Innovations there are several avenues to be discussed like Collaborations, Consultancy, Innovation Ecosystem, Research Promotions, Extension activities etc. This Article considers the scope of deliberations as the Innovation Ecosystem aspect of NAAC Criteria - 3; hence the thoughts shared in this section are more prone to the Innovation Ecosystems at the Institute and potential way out post Covid 19.

**Keywords:** Innovations, Innovation Ecosystem, Research, Covid 19

## I. INTRODUCTION: INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM

**“You can’t solve a problem on the same level that it was created. You have to rise above it to the next level.” –Albert Einstein**

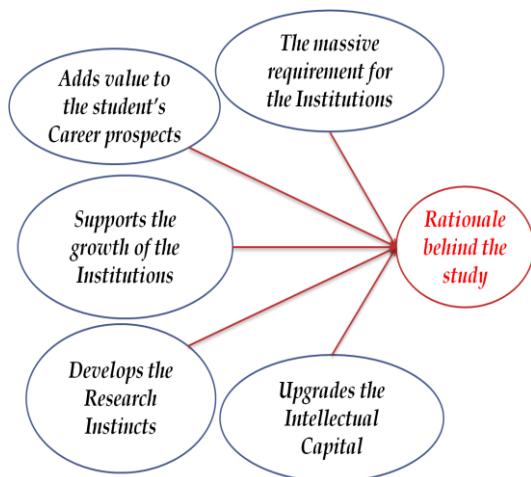
Innovations need to be inculcated as a habit in the mankind. The one who invents doesn’t consider it to be immensely rewarded or a big thing that has an end to solutions. Inventions are always the beginning of larger sphere of means that solves the problems and creates the thrust for the new problem identification & solution. On the Institutional level the Innovations have been revolving more around the curriculum deployment and off late it was realized that the product is the student’s knowledge rather accumulated scores. Personality development of the students is the crux of education today. The Innovation ecosystem must revolve around making the student a competent personality. Research & Exploration to experience something new is the aim of Innovation in Education which encourages the faculties and students to nurture their talent. Problem solving is the core of innovations and the desired results are the base of planning innovations. Creative & fruitful outcomes are results of Innovation in Education.

Innovation enhances the standard of the education as it induces faculties & students to adopt a better way of thinking to solve problems. World of education has found a way to better involve with society, enhance the delivery of curriculum, gauge the improvement of students in improvised way, nurture the intellectual property at the Institutions, maintain & develop the administrative profile of the Institutions etc. The Institutions entering the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of this century are going to be completely different than the Institutions of previous century. Technological Intervention, Faculty profiling, Students interest, Market demand etc., all these are going to keep the Institutions on their toes to deliver better than before and to large extent different than before. Innovations in Education will lead to a brighter learning world.

## II. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

Innovations have been the requirement for every operation and in this cutting edge innovative economy where every product is a result of innovative quotient,

it become further more imperative to exercise innovative practices. The World of education is also an area where the innovative practices have taken the front seat. Be it the academic delivery, educational premises, evaluation & assessment or be it the overall development through extra-curricular, The Educational Institutions are becoming innovative in their respective operations. India has one amongst the largest higher education system in the world. As on Nov. 2019 in India we have altogether 920 Universities which includes State Universities (404), Deemed Universities (126), Central Universities (50) & Private Universities (340) (www.ugc.ac.in). Approx. 40000 Colleges and around 10000 Stand Alone Institutions in the Nation explain the mammoth strength of the higher education. Such huge presence would certainly require a progression that inspires the stakeholder. There comes the role of innovation ecosystem. NAAC & NBA are the premier accreditation bodies that have considered Innovation ecosystem as one of the important parameter. The massive requirement of innovation, the positive impact on careers of the students, growth of the Institution and developing the research instincts at Educational premises rationalizes the significance of this study.



**Fig. 1: Significance of the study**  
Source: Author's Study

### III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The Author has considered the following objectives for the article:

1. To understand the essentials of Innovation ecosystem for Institutions
2. To demonstrate the innovation ecosystem while highlighting the practices at Institutions at large and suggest way out post Covid 19.
3. To present case let & examples constituting the Innovation ecosystem value experienced by Institutions.

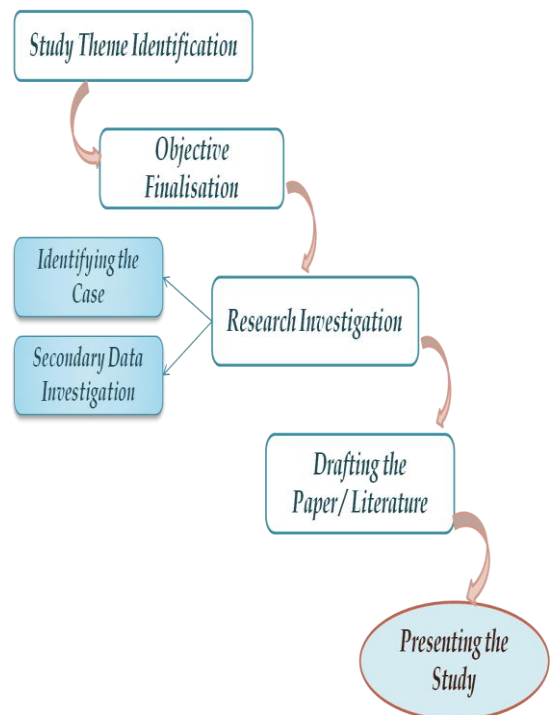
### IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

A study on *Innovation Ecosystem at Educational Institutions: Way Out Post Covid 19* is an exploratory

& descriptive study conducted massively by the help of Secondary data, with primary data limited to an Interview of the Head of Institution. The Researcher has also attempted to exhibit the learning gathered from the examples of academic Institutions. The study aims to understand the essentials of Innovation ecosystem for Institutions. The study demonstrates the innovation ecosystem while highlighting the practices at Institutions at large and suggest way out post Covid 19. The study further presents the case let constituting the Innovation ecosystem value experienced by Institutions. The inferences gathered through the study are based on overall essence of Innovation Ecosystem with examples of selected Institutions. The results are generalized and hence it may turn out to be the limitation of the study and the inferences gathered will prove out to be indicative in nature rather exhaustive.

### V. RESEARCH PROCESS:

The Researcher has adopted the following Research process for the study:



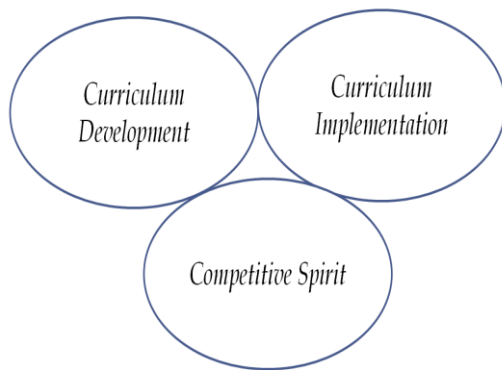
**Fig. 2: Research Process**  
Source: Author's Study

### VI. ESTABLISHED PRACTICES: INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM AT INSTITUTIONS

The present status of Institutions focus majorly on the Curriculum Development, Curriculum Implementation and Competitive Spirit. Ideally these correspond to the major motives of the Institutions, however the Innovations in these aspects shall lead to developments. Autonomous Institutions and Universities have freedom to develop curriculum. The affiliated Institutions focus on implementation of the curriculum. The competitive spirit is the aim of the both University / Autonomous and affiliated Institutions. Promptness in

delivery of education, ensuring the conduct of examination, maintaining the Institutional accord etc. has remained the regular feature of the Institutions. The Choice based Credit system (CBCS) and Grading system with the Outcome based Education fundamental have taken the University education to the next level of delivery. Over the last couple of decades this system has spread its existence and made the educational institutions think beyond the obvious. The Autonomous Institutions by & large are experimenting more in the curriculum deployment. The aim of institutions largely rests with placements and any immediate benefits like competitive results. These established practices need to go through the paradigm shift. The Governmental projects like Start-up India, Make in India, Skill India etc. are also having an influence on the Institutional plans. Start-up & Innovations have become ask of the moment for the Institutions.

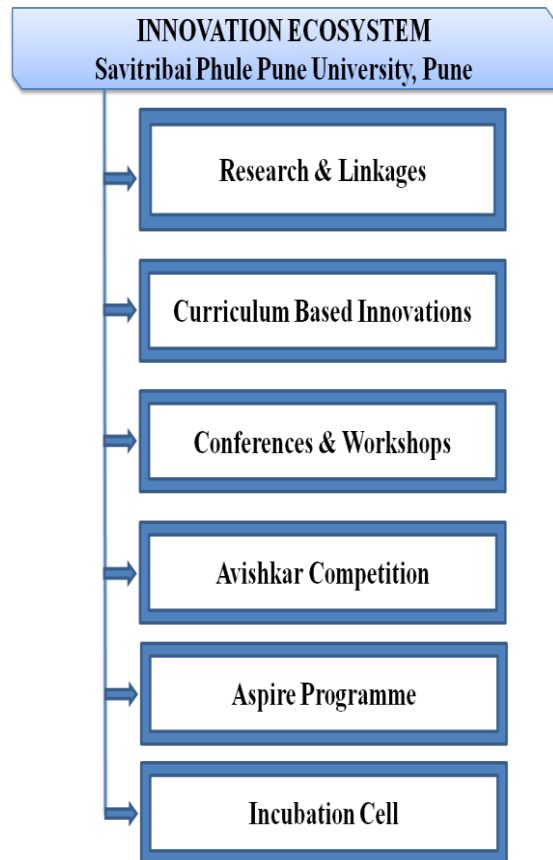
Existing Innovation Ecosystem



**Fig. 3: Existing Innovation Ecosystem**  
Source: Author's Study

**CASE - 1: SAVITRIBAI PHULE PUNE UNIVERSITY, PUNE**

Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune (SPPU), formerly known as University of Pune is one among the premier state universities in the Nation. Pune, as the Educational hub is referred as the oxford of the east, hosts a huge section of academic curriculum. A cosmopolitan City Pune, is enjoying a good demand from the education aspirants. SPPU, Pune is a renowned Educational establishment with a host of affiliating Institutions & the University departments. As part of the Innovation Ecosystem the success at the Maharashtra State Level Competition Avishkar has been a good attempt. Accordingly the ASPIRE Programme supports the intent of the Research instincts. The Recently constituted Startup & Innovation Cell has been a feather in the cap whereby not just the university departments but the affiliated Institutions are gaining momentum. The Incubation Centre at the SPPU, Pune is a dream come true for the aspiring youths of the University.

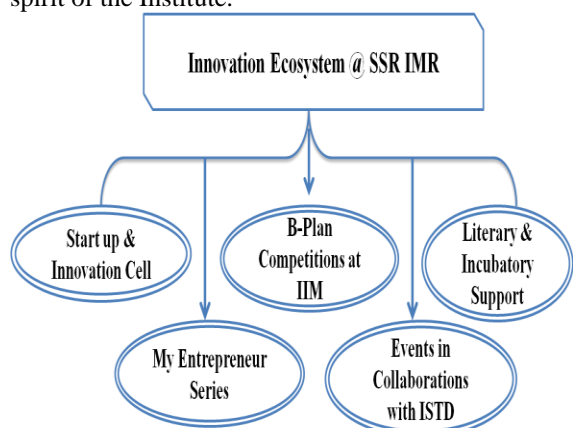


**Fig. 4: Innovation Ecosystem – SPPU, Pune**  
Source: [www.unipune.ac.in](http://www.unipune.ac.in)

**CASE - 2: SSR IMR, SILVASSA, UT of DNH & DD**

SSR IMR Silvassa was established in the year 2008 and is now permanently affiliated to Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune (Formerly known as University of Pune). A NAAC accredited institution, SSR IMR Silvassa is one of its kind institutions in the Union territory of Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu. The MBA education imparted at IMR resembles a true innovative practice constituted by the Institution. Research, Literary Work, Incubatory support, Entrepreneurship workshops, Conferences & Seminars, Business Idea Contests & B-Plan presentations etc., keeps the Students engaged & Faculties occupied. The Institution has adhered to the norms of the University on the innovative practices front. Under the leadership of Director, guidance of IQAC and efforts from the Academic & Research Coordinator at the Institute, the Start-up & Innovation cell at the Institute was created. The Cell has the responsibility of organizing Programmes pertaining to the awareness & promotion of Entrepreneurship among students. Under the cell, the Institute has conducted workshop on entrepreneurship, session by social entrepreneur, sessions by MSME team, conference & seminar on related terms etc. The Institution has MoUs

with Organisations to develop the overall competitive spirit of the Institute.



**Fig. 4: Innovation Ecosystem – SSR IMR, Silvassa**  
**Source: Author’s Observation & Interview with head of the Institution**

The Institute has a unique practice of “My Entrepreneur Series” whereby students meet the Entrepreneurs in the Industrial society and interview them with the aim to learn the practices of the businesses and respective Challenges. The exercise is fruitful & adds to the efforts of making students think towards Entrepreneurship. The perspective of the Institute is to build a culture of entrepreneurship development at the Institute with the help of related activities. The resultant testimony would be the recent development in 2019, where a couple of students of IMR together have started a Franchise business – Food Mohalla at Silvassa. The focus on Entrepreneurship continues with organizing the Workshop on Entrepreneurship & visiting IIM campus for Business Plan Competitions. The collaboration with ISTD, Silvassa Chapter has given further momentum to student development. The Institution has major focus on imbibing literary excellence among students in the form of Research Paper writing and Case studies development. The students at IMR have drafted more than 100 Research Papers and Case studies. Altogether the Institution has crossed 250+ literary achievements with publication in the UGC Care List Journals. The Director at IMR, understands the criticality of the COVID 19 and believes that the innovative practices at IMR shall continue the same way and for that matter with better momentum. She believes the world is now going more digital, the Institute shall follow the path with participations in events on digital platforms, publications in online journals, participations in Webinars, conducting innovative e-events etc. The innovative ecosystem at IMR is defined and bound to succeed.

Source: Interaction with Dr. Praveena Muley, Director, SSR IMR, Silvassa  
[www.ssrirm.edu.in](http://www.ssrirm.edu.in)

**EXHIBIT - 1: EXAMPLES OF INNOVATIVE PRACTICES AT INSTITUTIONS & UNIVERSITIES**

Sr. No.	Name of the Institution & Cycle of NAAC accreditation	University	Innovation Ecosystem (Highlights of leading set of Innovative practices)
1	Sri Aurobindo College, Delhi  1st Cycle, 2018	University of Delhi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outreach Programmes like Health Checkups &amp; Traffic Management</li> <li>• Eco Club Constitution</li> <li>• Best Innovative Idea &amp; Best Display of business Awards</li> <li>• Bio Gas Plant by Students</li> <li>• Green Banking &amp; Green Economics projects</li> <li>• Synchronizing Education and Employment project</li> </ul>
2.	Amity University, Noida Campus  2nd Cycle, 2018	Amity University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculty Mentoring</li> <li>• Research Infrastructure &amp; Seed Funding</li> <li>• International Affairs Department to facilitate collaborations</li> <li>• Eminent experts including Nobel Laureates</li> <li>• NRDC-Amity Innovation Facilitation Centre</li> <li>• Amity Innovation Incubator</li> <li>• Human Value Quarter (HVQ) - Community based activities</li> <li>• ‘Rainbow Drive’ for birds</li> <li>• Amity Polo Cup to sponsor support for the education of under-privileged girl child – AMITASHA &amp; Male child - ATULASHA</li> </ul>
3.	IILM Graduate School of Management, Greater Noida  1st Cycle 2016	IILM Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Career Trek initiative for developing Research instincts</li> <li>• Expert Mentoring</li> <li>• Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) Conference – International Connect</li> <li>• Classroom to Community</li> <li>• Journal Publication – IILM Management Perspective</li> <li>• Partnering with NGOs</li> <li>• Green Day at IILM Campus</li> <li>• Seed Funding and Duty leaves for Research Projects for Staff</li> </ul>
4.	Madras Christian College, Chennai  3rd Cycle 2019	Autonomous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solar Power Plant – 30% of Energy saving</li> <li>• Organic Farming &amp; Go wild efforts</li> <li>• Patent - Coconut fibre as a suture material</li> <li>• Community Interface programme (Education, Health &amp; Hygiene, Business Development etc.)</li> <li>• Automation and Simulation Lab</li> </ul>
5.	The National College, Bengaluru  3rd Cycle 2016	Autonomous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community development through NSS &amp; NCC initiatives</li> <li>• Go-Green, Grow-Green</li> <li>• Bangalore Lalitha Kala Parishat – Cultural Initiative since 1992</li> </ul>
6.	Jai Hind College Basantsing Institute of Science and J.T. Lalvani College of Commerce, Mumbai  3rd Cycle 2015	University of Mumbai	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avishkar – Annual Research Convention</li> <li>• X’plore an exhibition – Science Stream</li> <li>• Research Inclination, Publications - Refereed Journal - “Different Strokes” &amp; Sabbatical Leaves to staff</li> <li>• Special Grants – Centre for Research</li> <li>• NGO Connect</li> <li>• Spandan - CSR /Extension activities meet</li> </ul>

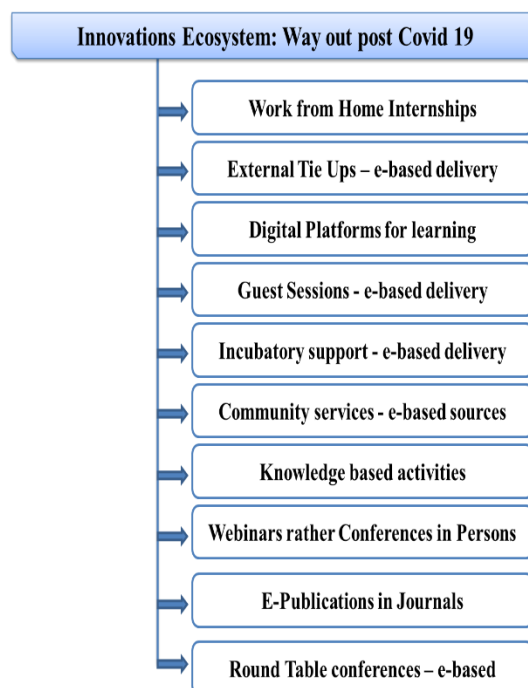
7.	International Institute of Management Studies (IIMS), Pune 1st Cycle 2020	Sai Balaji Education Society (SBES) Autonomous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Functional Incubation Centre – 14 Start ups</li> <li>• Social Connect &amp; Social Projects</li> <li>• Rotaract Club of SBES</li> <li>• Incentive scheme entitled “B.H. Agalgatti award”</li> <li>• Innovative Conferences, Conclaves and FDPs</li> </ul>
8.	Nirma University, Ahmadabad 3 <sup>rd</sup> Cycle 2020	Nirma University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directorate of Research &amp; Innovation (DRI) - Constituted at the University to foster research</li> <li>• Research Promotions – Staff &amp; Students</li> <li>• Innovation projects &amp; Competitions for students</li> <li>• Theme based events through Student associations</li> <li>• Grants &amp; Scholarships for Students for R&amp;D</li> <li>• Idea Lab Projects, Project design &amp; Development Modelling Initiatives</li> <li>• Students Blog – To capture innovative ideas</li> </ul>

**Source:** Respective websites of the Institutions listed in the references section

## VII. SUGGESTED PRACTICE: WAY OUT POST COVID 19

The Innovations shall always be the part of Institutional culture. Academics shall always require innovations to shoulder its growth. Right from the Physical Classroom to the advent of digital classroom, all is attributed to be the massive development in the field of education. Today students find more dependency on search engines like Google than Teachers. The innovations have been in varied formats, some in favour of education while the other being debatable. Amidst all these, Corona Virus spread as Covid 19 has brought world at standstill and Education sector is certainly not far from its impact. Covid 19, the global Pandemic has created an atmosphere where education probably has been the least attended area as compared to Health & hygiene and Economy at large. The Schools & Colleges have found the online education as rescue. *The same online education, which once upon a time, was criticized in classrooms, for being intangible & non effective.* The likes of Byju’s & Unacademy were considered as the expensive form of education. Well, the fortune of education provider like these won’t be at big demand at once because the affordability shall still be a question, but the crux of the matter is the medium of education. The Teachers shall now be e-content providers & shall be available to students on electronic formats. When it comes to Innovation Ecosystem at Institutions, during & post Covid 19 the following will be activities that shall take a leap: Work from Home Internships, External Tie Ups – e-based delivery,

Digital Platforms for learning Digital Business Avenues, Guest Sessions - e-based delivery, Incubatory support - e-based delivery, E-Business Plan Competitions, Community services through e-based sources, Knowledge based activities more rather physical involvement activities, Webinars rather Conferences in Persons, E-Publications in Journals rather conference proceedings or print avenues and Round Table conferences on Electronic platforms.



**Fig. 5: Innovation Ecosystem – Way Out Post Covid 19**

**Source: Author’s Study**

## VIII. CONCLUSION:

The Innovation ecosystem develops with every passing moment at the Institutions and such Institutions are referred to be similar to the learning Organisations. The Developments in the curriculum or the pedagogy or be it the altogether atmosphere of the Institution, everything culminates to the growth of the Institution. In the era of massive turmoil, the Pandemic has taught a lesson to be *proactive than before, Innovative than before and Resourceful than before.* As discussed in the way out to Covid 19 with respect to Education world, a massive dependence on E-learning & web sources will be witnessed. Technology certainly shall play a leading role, which would have been anyways a situation in the name of modernization, however today with Covid experience, it has become the need. The online education players were established before the Covid period, however the service seekers had affordability as a primary thought. Today it is their need to opt for Online mode, whether established classes or established medium. The Institutions have experienced the online mode of teaching for almost one half of the year 2020. In months to come effects will be measured not with the aim of whether to continue or stop online

mode of teaching instead the measurement will aim at making it further effective. The Innovation ecosystem commands the growth of Institutions. The Intellectual growth, Pedagogy enhancement, curriculum & extra-curricular development, the strategic intent of Institutions etc. have been witnessed in past and shall continue to be the functional priority at Institutions however what will matter the most is “**believing in Innovations**”.

#### **IX. REFERENCES:**

- [www.ssrivr.edu.in](http://www.ssrivr.edu.in), accessed on 18th Jun. 2020
- [www.ugc.ac.in](http://www.ugc.ac.in), accessed on 18th Jun. 2020
- [www.unipune.ac.in](http://www.unipune.ac.in), accessed on 15th Jun. 2020
- <http://www.aurobindo.du.ac.in/pdf/SSR.pdf>, accessed on 16th Nov. 2020
- [http://auup.amity.edu/NAAC\\_pdf/NAAC-SSR.pdf](http://auup.amity.edu/NAAC_pdf/NAAC-SSR.pdf), accessed on 16th Nov. 2020
- [http://www.iilmgsm.ac.in/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Self-Study-Report\\_NAAC-23rd-Sep\\_FV\\_23.9.pdf](http://www.iilmgsm.ac.in/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Self-Study-Report_NAAC-23rd-Sep_FV_23.9.pdf), accessed on 16th Nov. 2020
- <https://ncjayanager.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/SSR-2016.pdf>, accessed on 17th Nov. 2020
- [http://mcc.edu.in/images/IQAC/NAAC/TNCOGN10631\\_SSR.pdf](http://mcc.edu.in/images/IQAC/NAAC/TNCOGN10631_SSR.pdf), accessed on 17th Nov. 2020
- [http://jaihindcollege.com/NAAC\\_SSR\\_3rdCycle.pdf](http://jaihindcollege.com/NAAC_SSR_3rdCycle.pdf), accessed on 18th Nov. 2020
- <https://www.iimspune.edu.in/images/pdf/NAAC/IIMS-SSR-14-1-2020.pdf>, accessed on 19th Nov. 2020
- <https://nirmauni.ac.in/naac2020/>, accessed on 19th Nov. 2020
- <https://www.success.com/10-inspiring-quotes-on-innovation/>, accessed on 19th Nov. 2020
-