

CRITERION WISE ANALYSIS

Criterion 1: Curricular Aspects

Its should be pointed out at the outset that the various programmes of research and teaching developed by the University are fully in keeping with to overall mission which it was set up, viz. a) to carry out interdisciplinary research on socio-cultural and historical aspects of Karnataka and Kannada Language, literature and culture and b) to communicate the results both to the scholars and the public in Kannada language, Initially, the faculty and doctoral research were the thrust areas of the university's academic programme. Recently, however, some undergraduate and postgraduate courses have also been initiated. The University has thoughtfully made provision for a nodal agency called Adhyayananga for coordinating all its teaching and research programmes.



The Peer Team feels that, in terms of its basic objectives of research and related teaching, the university has done a commendable job. All its departments have shown unusual acumen in pursuing fruitful research, although some of them may have been more productive than others.

A notable feature of curriculum development in the university is adoption of a stream-lined procedure on the one hand and the flexible modality on the other, Regular Boards of Studies, Expert Committees and National curricular sources provide the stream-lining while a degree of involvement of the students in terms of articulating their preferences and felt requirements in the process give it the needed flexibility. Close interactions between the faculty and the students appear to be the major channels for feedback. These interactions take a number of formal and informal forms: regular faculty and student seminars; regular six-months reports submitted by research scholars; continuous education of students bases on assignments and conventional examinations; encouragement of inter-active modes of teaching in the class room appear to be some of these useful mechanisms.

The University established a Distance Education Center in 2001 to widen the scope of its academic programmes and spread knowledge to a wider section of the society. The Center offers 12 post-graduate diploma courses on various topic; two post-matric courses and one certificate course. Care should be taken so that the energy of the teaching faculty does not get dissipated by so many distance education courses and their time and attention are diverted from research and classroom interaction.

The University has a well-planned procedure for devising new teaching programmes and for revising and updating the curricula of existing courses. There is 30% representation each for teaching, fieldwork and project work in the various teaching/research plans.

It is also noteworthy that some of the courses are job-oriented. The Peer team however feels that demanding job orientation from its various curricular and research programmes will be an attempt to divert his from its original course, which is that of research and knowledge development.

Criterion II: Teaching, Learning and Evaluation

It should be noted at the outset that the academic programme of the University is done on a rather limited budget. Out of the total budget allocation of the University less than 5% is allotted for the academic programmes. This figure is manifestly low and efforts need to be made for assigning higher amounts. This extra money could be utilized for the improvement of libraries, introduction of field training to students and to initiate more project work. The University however should be praised of what it has done in spite of the paucity of financial support.

During the years 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 the University had 278 and 277 working days respectively. Out of these 218 and 217 were teaching days. These figures satisfy the stipulation made by the UGC. It is also heartening to note that teaching is mainly conducted by full-time teachers and the role of part-time teachers is marginal. From these figures it is clear that the research and teaching processes in the University are complementary to each other, as well as uninterrupted and regular.

In addition to classroom teaching, it is noteworthy that various Departments adopt other procedures like seminars, projects and field training. The Departments also have provisions for organizing seminars/conference/workshops every year. The University itself has provisions for organizing seminars/conferences and holding of special lectures. At the time of convocation a series of special seminars are held on various topics. Apart from these, the University organizes three series of special lectures. These seminar and lecture series serve to disseminate new ideas and, in addition, serve as a platform for innovating and experimenting with fresh ideas.

It is also to be noted that all departments have their own, albeit small, libraries, which are used for references sources by both the faculty and students. It therefore became clear to the Peer Team that the University offers well-designed teaching and learning opportunities to its students and faculty members.

The evaluation method being adopted by the University is also to be viewed favourably. Single evaluation is adopted in the case of UG courses (in Music and Visual Arts), while double evaluation (if necessary, a third one), comprising one internal and one external evaluation, is followed for PG courses. In the case of the Ph.D. Programme, the University adopts, like most others, two external and one internal evaluation. The process is completed by open defense. The University adopts both central and door evaluation and question papers are set unit-wise in order to cover all prescribed topics in respective papers. Apart from this, the evaluation procedures incorporate regular assignments and seminars by the PG and Ph.D. students; bi-annual evaluation Ph.D. students on the basis of written notes presented by them etc., thus bringing in it elements of regularity and continuity in evaluation procedures. We may also note what the University conducts the UG and PG examination and announces results regularly, adhering to a strict calendar.

The admission procedures adopted by the University appears to be objective and fair. A combination of entrances tests, interview and past academic performances is used for the purpose.

The teachers employed by University fulfil qualifications stipulated by the UGC. Out of the total regular faculty strength of 68, 40 teachers have Ph.D. degree to their credit and 11 hold M/Phil degrees. The rest have a Master's degree.

The University provides opportunities to the teaching staff for updating their knowledge base and qualification in their respective domains by access to a reasonable well stocked library and also by allowing them to attend refresher courses, seminars, symposia, guest lectures etc. But their access to computer and internet facilities appears to be rather inadequate. The performance of teachers is monitored by obtaining self-appraisal reports from them, which are submitted for scrutiny to a committee consisting of experts from other universities. The performance of faculty is also evaluated by asking them to give seminars on their ongoing research projects and also by submitting their reports for expert opinion. A modality of evaluation by students may also be introduced at some point.

As for faculty development, one notable event during the year 2001-20 is the organization by the University (in collaboration with teachers' association) of a workshop on research methodology. As many as 50 faculty members participated in this workshop. This may be done every now and then, to keep up with the developments in the area. The University gives further incentive to the faculty to improve their qualification by granting study leave and also sabbatical leave.

Criterion III: Research, Consultancy and Extension

This is one sphere of academic activity in which the Kannada University has done extremely well. Notwithstanding that this University is a very young institution, the faculty of various departments have so far carried out about 300 research projects. Of these 60 projects are ongoing. Out of the remaining 240 projects more than 200 projects have been carried out and completed by the faculty themselves and the remaining 40 projects have been done so by external scholars.

One is also quite impressed by the wide range of topics covered by these research projects. These include archaeological monuments, inscriptions, ancient tanks, various aspects of Kannada language, literature, Karnataka history, folklore, development studies including water filtration projects in villages, Folk agriculture terms, Manuscriptology, various items pertaining to tribal and women studies, art education etc. The range of topics covered by the external scholars is also quite impressive. In addition to these projects, the University has published Encyclopaedias of Language, Handicrafts, Religion and History. Several encyclopaedias have already been published and some are under preparation.

Noteworthy also are the various series of publications brought out on Temples, Epigraphs and Folk and Tribal studies, which are extremely helpful to research scholars.

Particularly commendable in this regard is the enormous volume of documentation that the various departments have built up as part of their research activities. These databases, it should once again be emphasized, relate to under-researched areas, and hence are rarely available or accessible elsewhere. Proper preservation and consolidation of these information bases; providing open access to them to bona fide researchers; long term research programmes based on these rare data bases, we believe, should be the priority areas for the University in the coming years. It should also be noted that this voluminous output in the form of projects and the related data bases has already resulted in substantial quality research. That a number

of research publications of the University have been selected for coveted awards by the Kannada Sahitya Academy and others testify to this achievement.

This research record of the University is all the more creditable, considering the fact the University did not receive any specific research grant from the State Government. The faculty had to depend entirely upon a small development grant from the University and whatever resources that could be mobilized from other organizations.

The most striking aspect of the research programme of the University is perhaps that their results are not only meant for higher academic purposes, but also oriented towards benefiting and enlightening the society in general. Concerted efforts have been made by the University to publish the findings in the form of reports and monographs and popular dissemination of the finding through the Press is done on an extensive scale.

The publication wing of the university called Prasaranga deserves a very special mention in this respect. It has emerged as one of the major publishing houses Karnataka, publishing a book a week. In addition to monographs and project reports, Prasaranga publishes number journals devoted to Kannada studies, folklore, Karnataka studies and Dravidian studies. The Peer Team notes with satisfaction that the University is planning to bring out a journal in English very soon entitle Journal of Karnataka Studies. The Publication unit also brings out two or three periodicals and has also taken up publication of textbooks for the benefit of University students. The Term found that all the volumes published by Prasaranga are tastefully and artistically produced maintaining good publication standard, which shows that much care and efforts have gone behind their preparation. Such a vigorous and highly motivated publication unit has hardly any parallel in other Universities, and the Peer Term offers its unqualified praise for its members.

Another positive aspect of extension activity concerns publication of more than 100 books for the newly literate persons in Kannada. These books, prepared by the teaching and other staff of the University, were purchases by the State Government for distribution under the Adult Education Scheme.

A University of this nature has only limited possibilities for activities like consultancy, extension services etc. All the same the University has made some useful beginning in these areas. Consultancy services offered in various areas such as assessment of quality of translation, training of members of Gram Panchayat and Zilla Parishads, implementation of developmental activities at grass root levels, documentation of heritage sites, folk and tribal culture forms and language use and teaching, and Distance Education started in 2001 are the notable features of the University in this regard.

Criterion IV: Infrastructure and Learning Resources

The University has a sprawling campus of about 680 acres at Hampi and a satellite campus 15 acres at the well-known historical site of Badami located about 125 Kms away from Hampi. The special feature of the Hampi campus is that it is located on a valley setting with fairly thick vegetation preserving many of the indigenous tree, shrub and grass species. Propping up from this valley setting are a number of small and low rocky ridges and table lands. The University authorities have very thoughtfully selected these ridges for constructing various buildings. The architecture of some of these buildings is also noteworthy, as it has taken many elements from the Vijayanagara diction of

architecture. Some of the buildings are named after key personalities of the medieval empire. It is also to be noted that the buildings of the Tribal Studies Department are constructed keeping in view the tribal housing structures. In short the campus has several unique features of its own, adopted from the natural and historic-cultural heritage of the region. It has wide scope for further expansion of the physical infrastructure.

The campus has a helipad bed of its own and it is used for receiving high dignitaries. Except in three or four cases all Departments have independent buildings. Adequate provision is made for teaching and administrative staff within each Department. The other major buildings include the Administrative office, Library and Museum building, Guest House, Publication Building, all of which display a uniform architectural style. A new library building for Kannada books is under construction. The campus has also a provision for some faculty quarters that are temporarily used as hostels for students. A separate ladies hostel is under construction. There is also a small sports center on the campus with facilities available for indoor and outdoor games for both students and staff. There is no health center on the campus but the University has obtained a sum Rs.6.25laksh from the Bellary Zilla Parishad to build a health center. Each Department has a small library of its own consisting of one or two shelves of books. The main Library of the University is located on the first floor of large building while the ground floor is occupied by the museum. The Peer Team is fully satisfied with the facilities that these two units are providing to the staff and students in promoting the interests of various teaching and research programmes.

The library is well maintained and has a total collection of about 45,000books. It subscribes to 37 journals in English and 31 journals in Kannada. An Advisory Committee helps the library staff in various administrative matters. The computerization of books and periodicals is in progress. It is to be noted that there are no facilities for interlibrary loan or lending of books. The library has also a good section for manuscripts including an audio-video section.

The University museum is also a large one. It has on display both archaeological materials collected from various places in north Karnataka and also a folk section containing fishing and hunting items of some of the surviving simple communities. More judicious planning of its sections remains an imperative. The main administrative building of the University has a computer unit operating with ten computers. A few Departments are also provided with a computer each. The University has also an Information Centre which provides information not only about Kannada University but also about various places and people of Karnataka. The Peer Team is highly satisfied with the University which has adequate infrastructural and learning resources of various kinds nothing also these are being fully utilized.

The Sculpture Park, when fully developed will be a prize piece of the University to show to the outsiders. The open-air auditorium, Navaranga is also an important part of the mission that this University carries on its shoulder. As it does not have too many departments than it can manage, separate buildings for each of them should be on the cards.

Criterion V: Student Support and Progression

Though the students are enrolled from the same state, for a healthy interaction University must encourage and reserve some seats for the students from other states. Here of course the monolingual programme may prove a barrier. Further, there is a need of strengthening students welfare scheme specially in the form of financial assistance for the under privileged

.Also sine new courses like Design, Fabric Printing etc. can create better opportunities for the students seeking jobs. Department of visual Art can provide hobby classes that will strengthen intra departmental activities.

Criterion VI: Organization and Management

The University is managed by various statutory bodies such as Board of Studies, Faculties, Finance Committee, Executive Council and Governing Council of Syndicate. Besides, there are some non-statutory bodies such as Dean's Committee, Publication Advisory Committee, Library advisory committee, Academic Audit Committee, Grievance redressal committee, Purchase Committee, Disciplinary committee etc.

The University received grants mainly from the state Government, except for a small assistance from the central government. The research projects are taken up with an assistance of funding agencies such as UGC, ICSSR, ICHR, Central and State Sahitya Academy, Kannada development Authority, IGNCA and such others. The University has set up a permanent fund with the donations from NRIs, which will be used for research, development, Publication and spread of knowledge. The University makes some allocation of funds to each department for research and holding seminars/workshops. There is an internal pre-audit mechanism followed by an local fund audit.

Criterion VII: Healthy Practice

Teachers in Every department meet once in a week and discuss important research findings with PEER group and exchange ideas. Students and teachers also interact with each other on every Friday through Study Circle meeting in each Department. Teachers submit annual self-appraisal reports, which help in realizing their academic performance. An Academic Audit committee monitors the performance of each teacher, department and University annually. Redressal of grievances is attended by a committee. The University has adopted a school in the neighbourhood with an aim of developing the local communities. One must also appreciate the efforts being made by the University to give counselling to Grama Panchayats and Zilla Panchayats as part of its extension activity. Regular interdisciplinary seminars are providing exposure for teachers and students to emerging knowledge areas.

The University holds special seminars at the time of annual convocation.

The Department of Sculpture and Painting organizes sculptors and painters camps at National and International levels. This provides a good occasion to staff and students to keep abreast of the latest developments in the contemporary art scene. Traditional artists are also involved in regular teaching work and this enable the students to be come familiar with traditional techniques of the area. Another notable aspect of the Department concerns equal emphasis placed on practical theoretical knowledge. Both teachers and students are exhibiting their works at state and national levels and have won several awards in painting and sculpture. Alongside with this, research activity has been given full importance. The topics covered include prehistoric to classical traditions of the area.

The professional competence of students has enabled them to become good freelance artists and sustain themselves economically. The under privileged SC/ST students are given remedial coaching.