



# NETAJI SUBHAS OPEN UNIVERSITY

Centre for Internal Quality Assurance  
(CIQA)

## Academic-Administrative Audit Report (AAA Report) 2018-19



DD-26, Sector-I, Salt Lake  
Kolkata-700064  
Website: [wbnsou.ac.in](http://wbnsou.ac.in)

# Academic-Administrative Audit Report

## Introduction

Netaji Subhas Open University (NSOU) being the sole State Open University of West Bengal runs nearly 30-U.G. and P.G. Degree Courses through Open and Distance Learning (ODL) mode wherein nowadays the Information Communication Technology (ICT) is increasingly playing very significant role. With the new mode of delivery of courses, open and distance learning system is expanding very fast and gaining popularity among the aspirants of higher education. The contribution of the ODL system to the country's GER is also very significant. Presently, the University provides various student support services through ICT to reach the learners directly. Following the ODL approach, the university caters to the development of vulnerable and deprived groups like schedule tribes, women, and those who have been left out of mainstream education. At the same time, the University has evolved considerably and has been successful in reaching out to the unreached.

The vision of the NSOU is mentioned as “the only State Open University in West Bengal, delivers a quality human resource base of the State, and along with other Open Universities of the country moves towards the improvement of the quality of open distance education. It also intends to promote and develop appropriate ambience to develop a distance education system of international standard in our country, keeping in view the demands for education of the learners in conformity with the international standard requirements of the twenty-first century.”

## NSOU-Quality Assurance System (NSOU-QAS)

NSOU developed a system of quality assurance (QAS). The application of this system will be beneficial in four areas: improved readiness for accreditation, accountability, competitiveness, and effectiveness. QA is not only an effort to produce quality but also to improve quality comprehensively and systematically. QA is not a way to set goals nor a procedure to reach the goals but is an effort for systematic and sustainable improvement. QA emphasizes more on the notion that quality can always be developed and improved. The procedure to be developed should ensure that staff would continuously look into the quality of process and services and should continuously make an effort to improve it.

NSOU-QAS contains various Quality policies in the form of statements of best practice, and it is used as the basis for implementation of all planning at academic and administrative levels of activities at NSOU. NSOU-QAS is a continuous step for NSOU to implement a QA system in a systematic and comprehensive way. This framework is divided into seven components which at the same time inspire NSOU as an Open and Distance Learning Institution. The seven criteria as prescribed by National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) for assessment of quality have been taken into consideration in the following seven components for the purpose of Academic-Administrative Audit (AAA) of the University:

1. Curricular Aspects
2. Teaching-Learning and Evaluation
3. Research, Innovations and Extension
4. Infrastructure and Learning Resources
5. Learner Support and Progression
6. Governance, Leadership and Management
7. Institutional Values and Best Practices

This classification is based on the idea that reflects the need for comprehensive implementation of distance education. Management is an important element in the implementation of distance education due to its logistic implication and its mass characteristic. A distance education

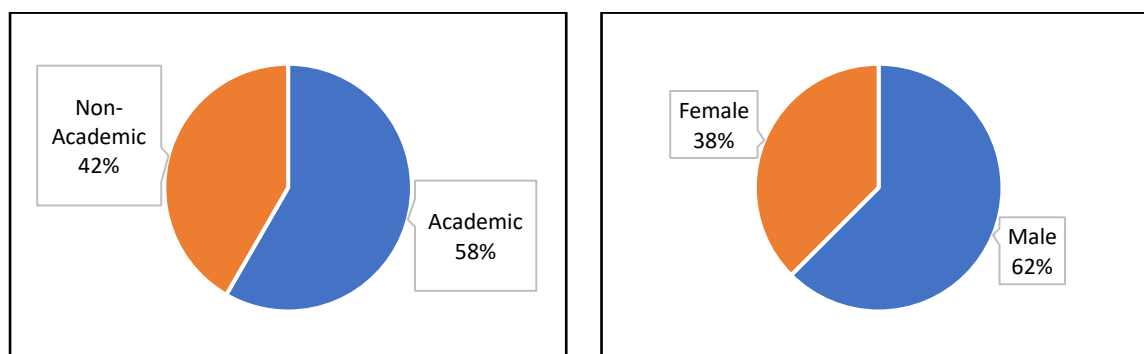
institution requires high quality human resources with a variety of competence and different functions such as curriculum designers, course writers/ editors, media developers, academic counsellors, administrative staff, and other supporting staff. Programs, courses and academic contents are NSOU's products whose quality should be guaranteed with adequate assistance, media utilization, and consistent application of students assessment and academic transparency. In addition, the quality of research should also be improved so the results can be used to improve the quality of education offered.

For the purpose of NAAC assessment and accreditation, seven criteria have been identified (as have been included in the NAAC-SSR) which contain performance indicators relevant to them. Thus a total of 75 performance indicators have been included in the questionnaire which comprehensively cover numerous aspects of quality and its assurance in an ODL institution. The NSOU-QAS intends to assess the academic- administrative activities to prepare the audit report for a particular academic period.

The objective of the present report is to use the NSOU-QAS to examine and review the quality of the University in terms of various criteria covered in the QAS. It shall pave the way to the university to work better in days to come and take valuable initiatives for the overall development of the teaching-learning system.

### Profile of the Respondents

The questionnaire was distributed among the members of NAAC Advisory Committee and Steering Committee to know their views on different quality parameters under seven criteria as identified by NAAC. Both the Advisory Committee and Steering Committee were constituted for the purpose of preparation of NAAC-Self Study Report. The academic and non-academic staff responded to this QAS-questionnaire on the basis of which the report has been prepared. Among 24 respondents, Academic staff and Non-academic staff were 14 and 10 respectively and No. of Male and Female respondents were 15 and 9 respectively. The academic staff includes Professor, Associate Professor and Assistant Professor and non-academic staff includes Registrar, Controller of Examinations, Dy. Registrar, Assistant Registrar. Therefore, the employees from senior academician to middle level management were involved to assess the quality of the service of the university in different domain of teaching-learning system.



Demographic profile of Respondents

### Overall Response

Table 1 shows the overall response on the quality parameters of the NSOU-QAS. As discussed before, there are seven key criteria for improving and assuring quality of teaching and learning system of the university. These criteria are Curricular Aspects, Teaching-Learning and Evaluation, Research, Innovations and Extension, Infrastructure and Learning Resources,

Learner Support and Progression, Governance, Leadership and Management, Institutional Values and Best Practices.

As all the Performance Indicators are in the form of positive statements about quality parameters, it can be construed that higher the score of university on this scale better the quality of its service etc. The four point scale was used to rate the Quality Parameters of the university as stated in NSOU-QAS (Always =3, Sometimes=2, Rarely=1, Never =0)

No.	Criteria	Average Score	Max. Score
1.	Curricular Aspects	19.25	30
2.	Teaching-Learning and Evaluation	46.625	54
3.	Research, Innovations and Extension	12.00	21
4.	Infrastructure and Learning Resources	27.625	30
5.	Learner Support and Progression	26.75	45
6.	Governance, Leadership and Management	23.875	30
7.	Institutional Values and Best Practices	11.125	15
	Total	167.275(74.34%)	225

Table 1

From the above table, it is evident that in respect of the criteria 2, criteria 4, and criteria 6, the university is in a better position compared to the other criteria. In these criteria the mean score is more than 80%. The curricula aspect (criteria 1) is the most important area of an educational institution. Here the mean score is 19.25 being 64% which is much below the total expected course (30). So far as research, innovation and extension (criteria 3) is concerned, the response is very poor. One of the reasons may be that the OUs were not allowed to offer research programme by the UGC during this period. Apart from the research programme, the university may encourage its faculty members to undertake projects and mobilize the funds from the external agencies. The faculty members may also be encouraged in consultancy services and extension activities. The criteria 5 is the most important factor for any open university where the OU needs a sound student support service. But here the mean score is 59%. Lot of improvement is needed under this criteria. The detailed analysis of this criteria will help identify the specific weak areas which need special attention. Criteria 7 is the institutional values and best practices. This criterion deals with the institutional values like social responsibilities, green practices, gender sensitivity, provision for disabled friendly amenities etc. In this criterion the mean score is 74%. In-depth analysis may help identify the weak areas (having low score) under this criterion. If we consider all the criteria together, the aggregate mean score would be 74.34% that means there are many areas where the university can take necessary initiatives to improve the overall performances/ services.

The detailed criteria wise analysis is given below which may throw a light on each quality parameter of the respective criteria. The low scored performance indicators will naturally draw special attention for improvement.

## 1. Curricula Aspects

Curricular Aspects are the most important aspect of any academic institution. The instructional design is an important component of curricular planning. It is pertinent that the curricula of an OU is in tune with its mandate and with the emerging national and global trends and are also relevant to the local needs. In view of this ten quality parameters have been identified keeping in line with the NAAC-SSR which include the processes for curricular planning, design, development, evaluation and revision and implementation. There are 10 performance indicators in this criterion having a range of minimum score zero to maximum possible score

30. The mean score of the university in this criterion is 19.25 being 64%. Let us see the detailed analysis to identify the weak areas under this criterion.

1.1. *Need identification and assessment exercise has taken place before launch any new programme (Fig.1.1).*

1.2. *The programme is capable of meeting the needs of learners to gain knowledge, develop skills and make them better citizens (Fig.1.2).*

The responses on these two quality parameters are quite satisfactory as most of the respondents agreed that the university meets both the quality parameters. There was no responses as “rarely” or “never”.

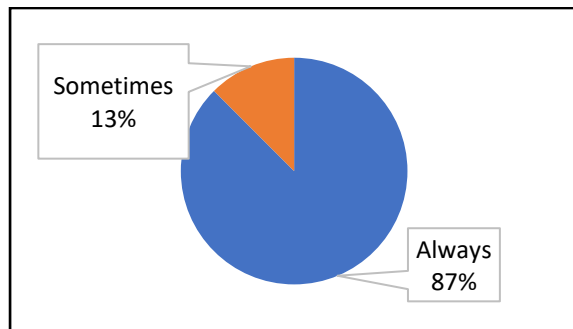


Fig.1.1

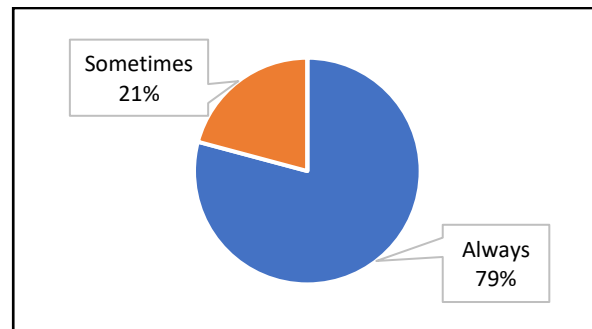


Fig.1.2

1.3. *Services of external experts are utilized for Material Development(Fig.1.3).*

1.4. *Programme/Course objectives, outcome, activities and assignments are properly articulated and well aligned with each other (Fig.1.4).*

In respect of quality parameter 3, most of the respondents opined that services of external experts are utilized for development self learning materials and only 16% opined that sometimes their services are hired. Reason behind this scarcity of inhouse faculty. Due to workload of the internal faculties, the university has to depend on the services of external experts for materials development. However, the internal faculty members may be more involved in the materials development. So far as programme / course objectives, outcome and assignments, is concerned, the university meet the criteria satisfactorily. There were no responses as “rarely” or “never” in both the cases.

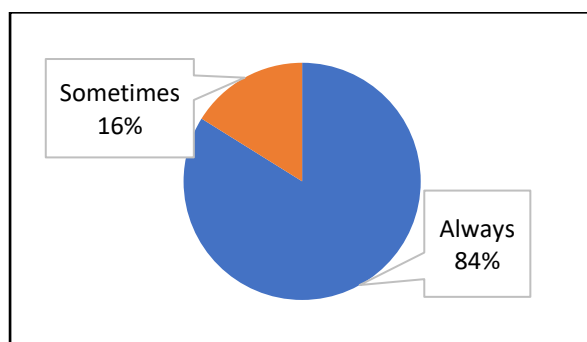


Fig.1.3

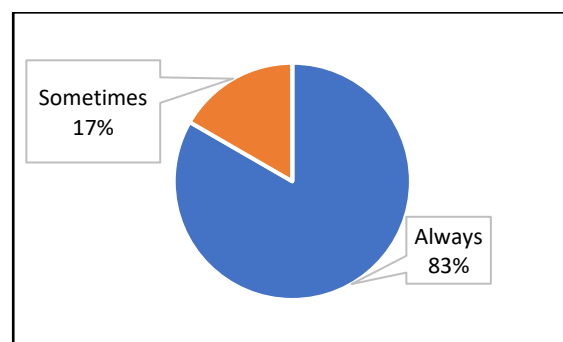


Fig.1.4

1.5. *The programme/ courses are periodically updated to keep pace with dynamically changing Environment (Fig.1.5).*

1.6. *The material development guideline is strictly followed by the experts (Fig.1.6).*

This is the major concern of any HEI to revise and update the curriculum to match the dynamically changing environment. In this university, the response is not encouraging. The Fig.1.5 shows that 54% says that the courses are updates “sometimes”. So, special attention may be given to revise/ update the syllabus periodically. Fig.1.6 shows the university follows the material development guidelines as prescribed by UGC-DEB.

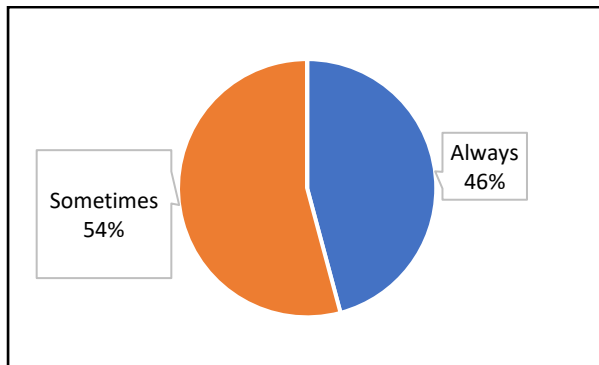


Fig.1.5

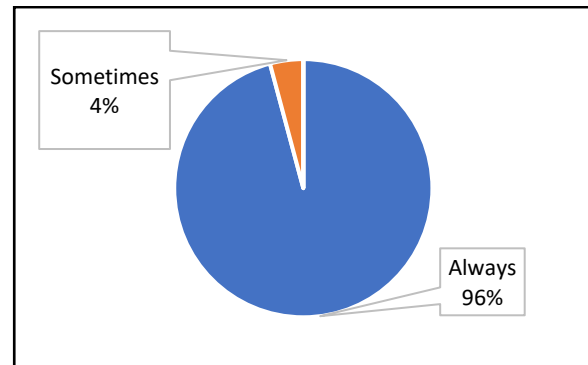


Fig.1.6

1.7. *Quality of SLMs is properly reviewed before delivering it to the learner by the content, format and language editor (Fig.1.7).*

1.8. *Anti-Plagiarism test on the material is carried out before printing the SLM (Fig.1.8).*

All respondents opined that the SLMs are properly edited and reviewed before delivering it to the learners. On the recommendation of the Board of Studies, the editors/ reviewers go through the SLMs and ensure the presentation and content of course materials. There is a mixed response in respect of antiplagiarism check of the course materials. 71% respondents say “sometimes”, 16% says “always” and 6% and 7% say “rarely” and “never” respectively. The university may ensure that all the SLMs should be checked by anti-plagiarism software before final printing. This step will increase the authenticity, originality and quality of the course materials.

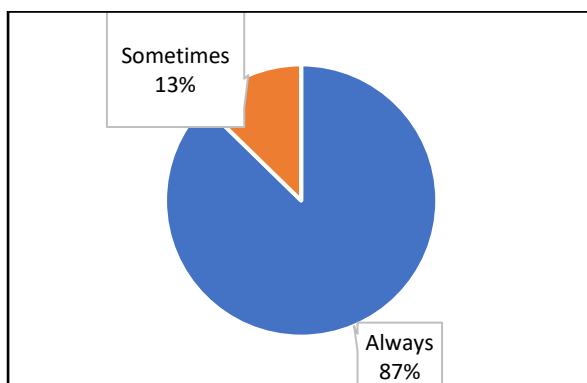


Fig.1.7

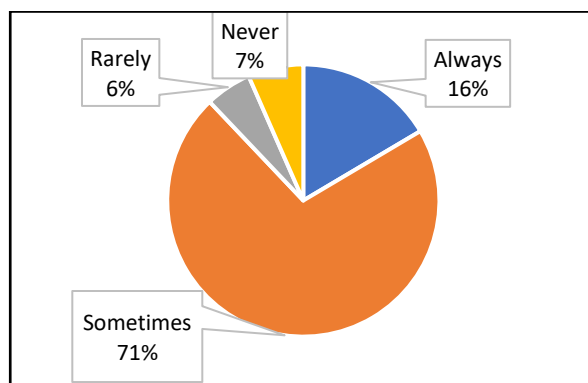


Fig.1.8

1.9. *The Institution has digitized the course material which is available on its website (Fig.1.9).*

1.10. *OER and/ or MOOC are properly integrated in Courseware/ SLMs and learners are encouraged to use the same (Fig.1.10).*

As per responses, the most the course materials are digitized and uploaded on the website of the university. Only 8% of the respondents say that course materials are “rarely” digitized. At NSOU, learners are encouraged to use OERs. The digitized SLMs are released under CC license through NSOU OER repository. Any learner can access this repository at any

time as per their convenience. Fig.1.10 shows, majority of the respondents opine that course materials are released as OER. There was no response as “never”.

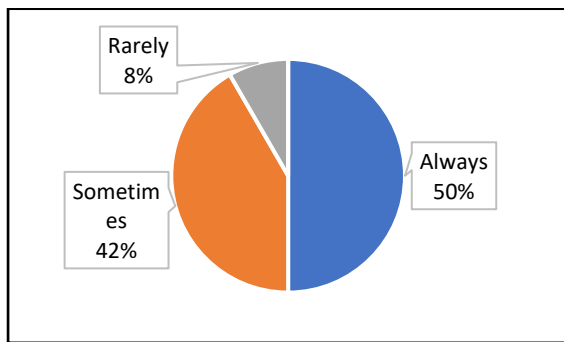


Fig.1.9

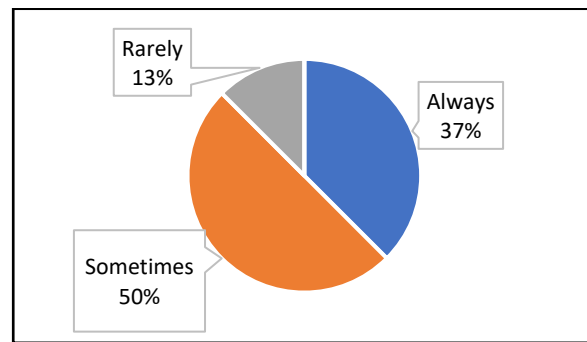


Fig.1.10

## 2. Teaching-Learning and Evaluation

In line with the philosophy of ODL, Criterion 2 pertains to the efforts of an OU to reach out to large segments of the society and serve the learners of different backgrounds and abilities, through effective teaching-learning experiences. In today’s world where ICT has penetrated into every aspect of teaching learning, the instructional design adopted by the institution for transaction of curricula, is a suitable mix of interactive media components. The criterion also probes into the adequacy, competence as well as the continuous professional development of the human resource that handles the programmes of study, i.e. the teachers and other academics. The efficiency of the techniques used to continuously evaluate the performance of teachers, other academics and learners is also a major concern of this Criterion. There are 18 performance indicators in this criterion having a range of minimum score zero to maximum possible score 54. The mean score of the university in this criterion is 46.625 being 86%. Let us see the detailed analysis to identify the areas which need attention for further improvement.

2.1. *Promotional activities are undertaken by the institution to reach the target groups (Fig.2.1).*

2.2. *Information about the programmes offered is provided to the prospective group of learners (Fig.2.2).*

Fig 2.1 and Fig.2.2 show that the university undertakes adequate initiatives to reach its target groups. Promotional activities include advertisement in the newspapers/ website, information brochures, pre-admission counselling etc. prior to the admission, the university publishes both hardcopy and soft copy of the prospectus which describes the eligibility, duration of the course, course fees, course outline etc.

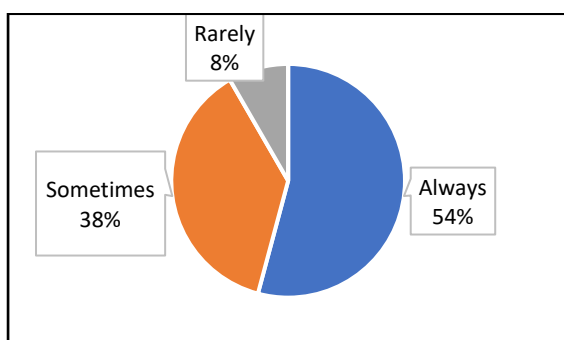


Fig.2.1

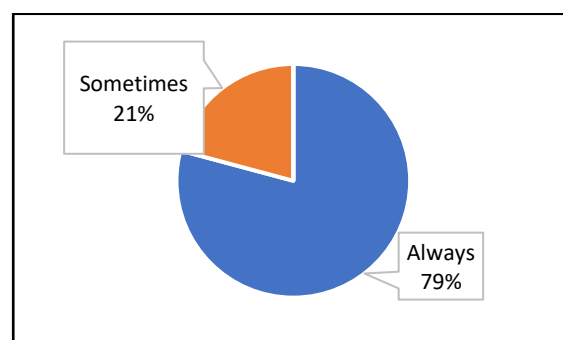


Fig.2.2

2.3. Full objectivity and transparency in students' admission which is guided by Quality Policy (Fig.2.3)

2.4 The Institution has provision for Online admission/ Lateral Entry/ Vertical mobility/ Flexibility in choice of courses (Fig.2.4).

The university maintains two portals for admission in to BDP and PG programme. The admission process is fully automated. The students can submit the admission form and pay fees through the admission portal. The feedback received from the respondents also support that the university maintains objectivity and transparency in admission process (Fig.2.3) and the students can also choose courses according to their choices through the online portal(Fig.2.4).

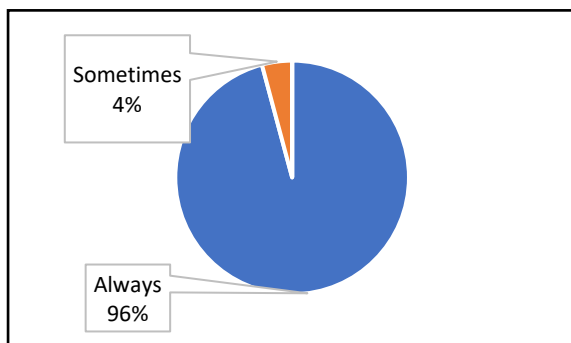


Fig.2.3

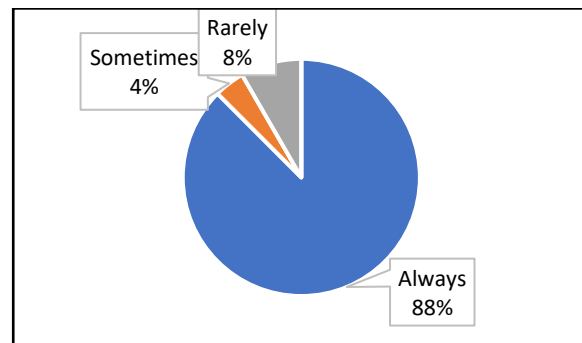


Fig.2.4

2.5. The Institution reaches out to the diversified learner groups viz. Women / Disabled / Disadvantaged/ Minority/ Jail inmates (Fig.2.5).

2.6. The institute has telecast/ webcast facilities (Fig. 2.6).

In respect of these two quality parameters, most of the respondents say that university is able to reach the diversified learner groups like women/ disabled/ minorities and jail inmates (Fig.2.5). The admission data reveals that a good percentage of minority women pursue their higher studies through this university. One of the reasons may be that they can continue their study from home without travelling. The university has webcast facility (Fig.2.6) through which it reaches huge learner base at remote areas. The feedback also supports this fact that the university has very effective webcast facility.

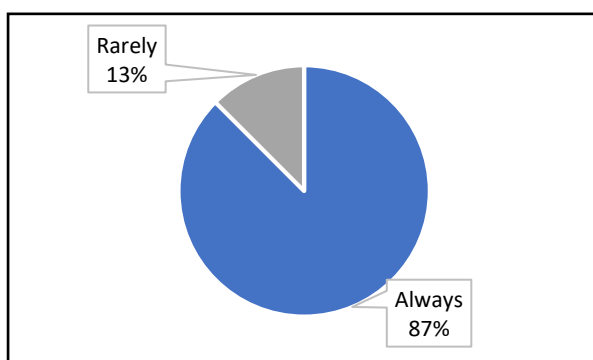


Fig.2.5

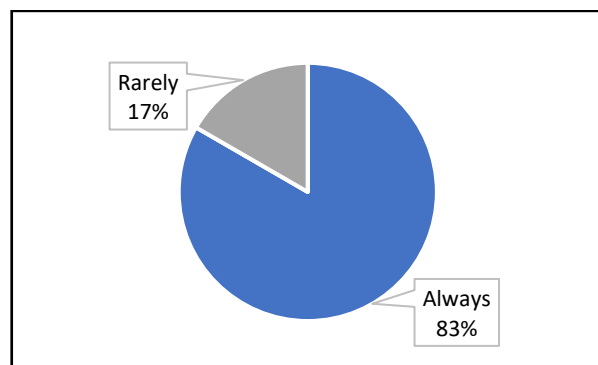


Fig. 2.6

2.7. The recruitment and selection procedures ensure that the most qualified, experienced academic and support staff members are recruited (Fig.2.7).

2.8. The staff members are recruited who are having qualification/ exposure in the field of distance education and as per qualification of UGC/ GoWB (Fig.2.8).

Being the State Open University, NSOU follows the of recruitment selection rules and regulations prescribed by the UGC and /or state govt. for recruitment of academic and non-



academic staff. The duly constituted selection committee recommends the best suitable candidate for recruitment at various levels. The results (Fig 2.7 & 2.8) show that the university strictly follow the recruitment rules for appointment of its staff.

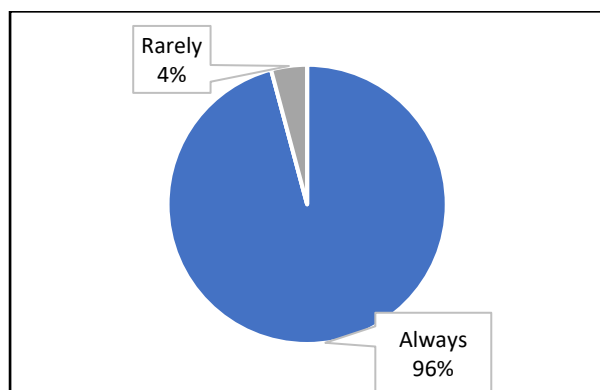


Fig.2.7

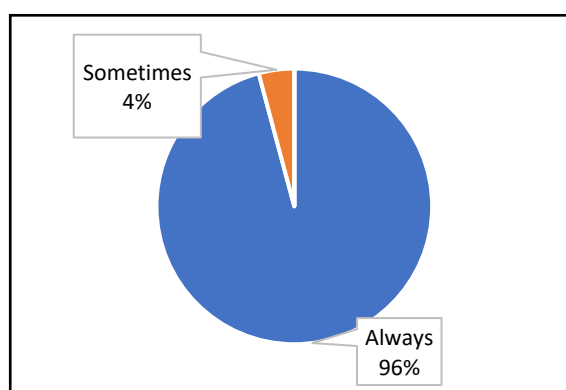


Fig.2.8

2.9. The promotion criteria for academic staff are based on a performance appraisal system, as prescribed in UGC and/or GO (Fig.2.9).

2.10. There is a proper mix of continuous assessment and Term End Exam (TEE) in the evaluation with appropriate weightage (Fig.2.10).

Fig. 2.9 shows that the university follows promotion criteria for academic staff on a performance appraisal system, as prescribed in UGC and/or GO. On ODL system, the continuous assessment of students is very important component of the examination system. Most of the respondents opine that there is proper mix of continuous assessment and term-end examination with appropriate weightage in the university (Fig.2.10).

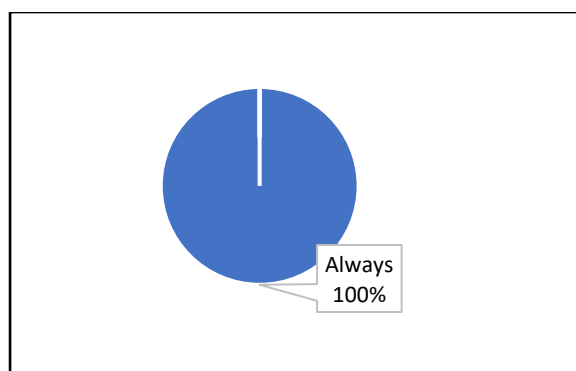


Fig.2.9

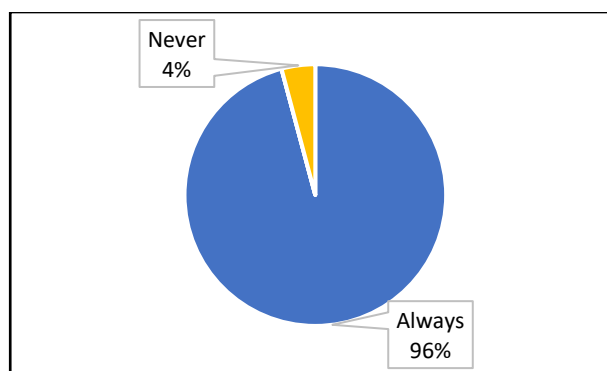


Fig.2.10

2.11. A systematic pre examination process is followed for preparation of question papers and evaluation of answer books (Fig.2.11).

2.12. The evaluation mechanism is properly developed to test the student knowledge and skills as per the programme/ course objective and intended learning outcomes (Fig.2.12).

Fig.2.11 and Fig.2.12 convey that there is sound examination system in place in the university. On the recommendation of Board of Studies (BoS) of each subject, the question papers are prepared by subject experts which are moderated by a duly constituted Board of Moderators. The approved panel of examiners are used for evaluation of answer books. The course objectives and learning outcomes are taken care of by the paper setters and moderators during the preparation of question papers of both internal assignments and term-end

examinations. There were no responses as “rarely” or “never” in both the cases of 2.11 and 2.12. It ensures the sanctity and reliability of the examination system.

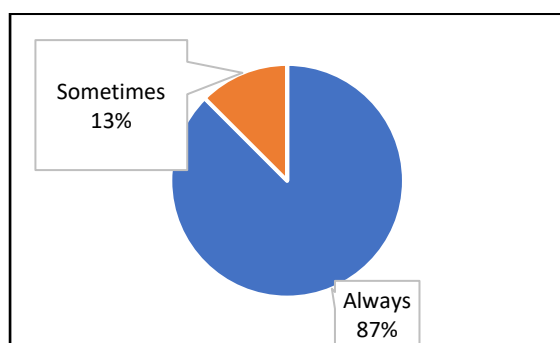


Fig. 2.11

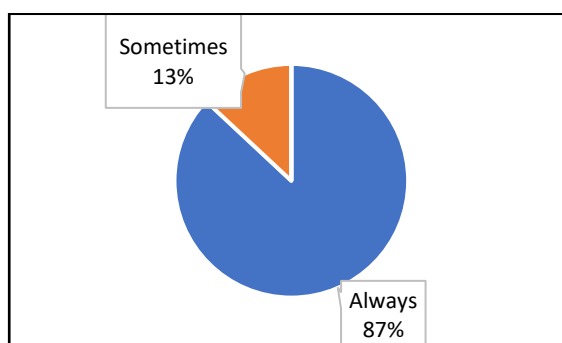


Fig.2.12

2.13. *Institution uses anti plagiarism software for project reports, dissertations etc. (Fig.2.13).*

2.14. *The evaluation is done in a timely manner and is error free i.e. the result is published within the time frame through website (Fig.2.14).*

There is a mixed response in respect of use of anti plagiarism software for project reports, dissertation etc (Fig.2.13). The respective Schools may introduce the software to check the project reports, dissertations etc. prepared by the students. It may help enhance the quality of the project report/ dissertation. There is a scope of improvement of quality of such reports. Majority the respondents believe that the error free result is published within the time frame (Fig.2.14). There were no responses as “rarely” or “never” in this parameter i.e. 2.14.

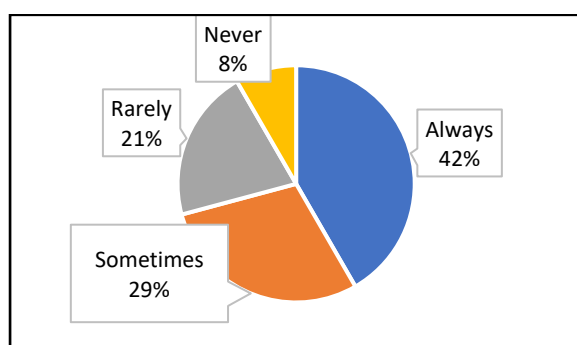


Fig.2.13

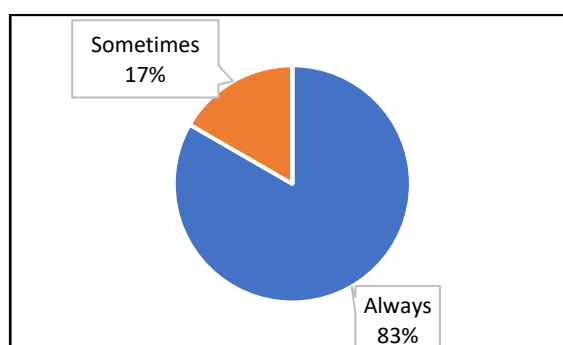


Fig.2.14

2.15. *Moderation of all forms of assessment is done by the institution with the approval of competent authority (Fig.2.15).*

2.16. *Learner is given proper feedback in terms of their internal assignments paper (Fig.2.16).*

On the recommendation of Board of Studies (BoS) of each subject, the question papers are moderated by a duly constituted Board of Moderators (Fig.2.15). The learners also get back their evaluated assignment papers from the Learner Support Centres (LSCs). Some attention is required in this parameter so that all the learners can get back their assignment papers with feedback (Fig.2.16). The university may take appropriate steps to return the evaluated assignment answer books to the learners. For this purpose the LSCs may be oriented to this

respect so that all the enrolled learners get back their answer books within the time frame. It will help the learners prepare for the term-end examinations.

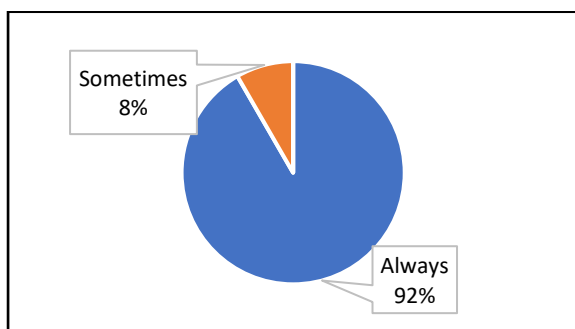


Fig.2.15

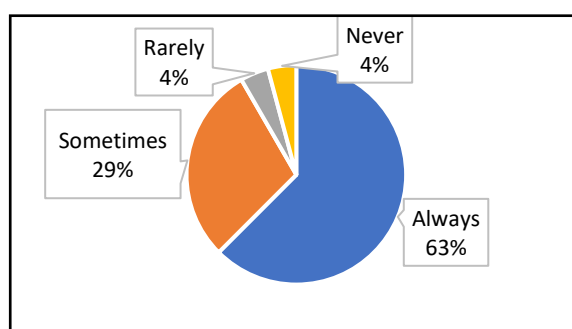


Fig.2.16

2.17. Model question papers are made available through institutional website (Fig.2.17).

2.18. The examination process is automated (Fig.2.18).

There is a mixed response in respect of parameter 2.17. The Fig.2.17 shows 88% (50+38)% of respondents believe that the model question papers are made available on the website. In respect of parameter 2.18, we received a mixed response where 42% believes that the examination system/ process is automated. 4% and 12% of the respondents believe that the examination process is not automated. Therefore, the university may identify the areas of examination system which are required to be automated for the benefit of the students.

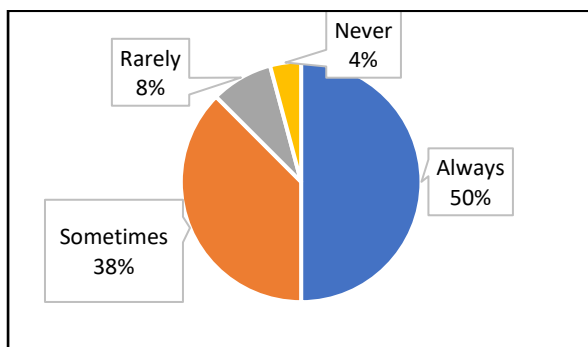


Fig.2.17

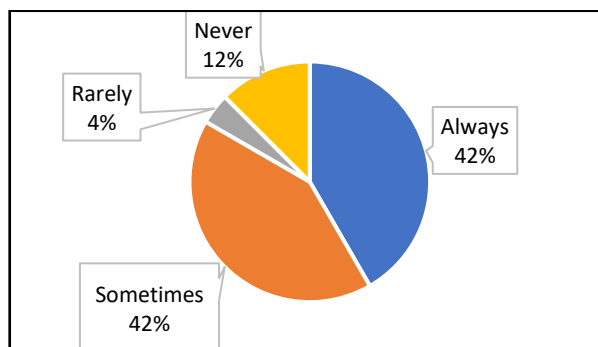


Fig.2.18

### 3. Research, Innovations and Extension

Research is an integral part of any University and contributes to its quality and recognition. In an OU the learners, teachers and other academic staff engage with the systemic research to contribute to the development of the ODL system and also in their disciplines and contribute new knowledge. The research needs to be facilitated by suitable policy framework. This Criterion indicates the policies, practices and outcomes of the institution, with reference to research, innovations and extension. It deals with the facilities provided and efforts made by the institution to promote a 'research culture'. The institution has the responsibility to enable faculty to undertake research projects useful to the society. Serving the community through extension, which is a social responsibility and a core value to be demonstrated by institutions, is also a major aspect of this Criterion. There are seven performance indicators in this criterion having a range of minimum score zero to maximum possible score 21. The mean score of the university in this criterion is 12 being 57% that means the university is very weak in the criterion like research, innovations and extension. Lot of improvement is required in this area specially in promoting culture of research and innovation. Let us see the detailed analysis to identify the areas which need special attention as there is an enormous scope of improvement.

3.1. *The institution collaborates with national and international institutions for promoting research and faculty exchange programme (Fig.3.1)*

3.2. *The institution organizes seminars/ conferences on contemporary issues like OER, MOOCs, MOODLE etc. (Fig.3.2)*

This is area where the university may work on. The university may explore the possibilities of national and international collaboration for promoting research and faculty exchange. This initiative may help the faculty members upgrade their knowledge in the respective discipline. Fig.3.1 shows according to 58% of the respondents, the university “sometimes” try to collaborate with other institutions. 17% opines that the university collaborate with other institutions ‘rarely’. As per Fig.3.2, more seminars/ workshop on contemporary issues like OER, MOOCs may be organized for the benefit of the teachers and students.

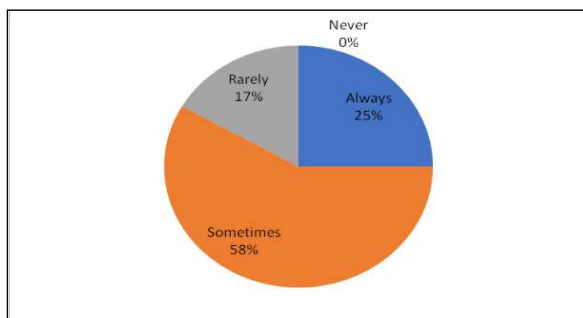


Fig.3.1

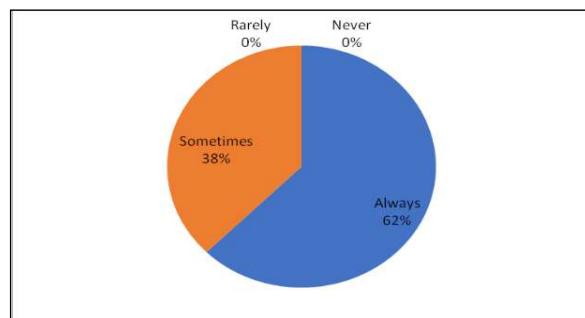


Fig.3.2

3.3. *Sufficient resources are made available for faculty members to carry out research activities (Fig.3.3).*

3.4. *Faculty members are encouraged to mobilize the resources for research through participation in sponsored research projects (Fig.3.4).*

These two quality parameters (3.3 and 3.4) are encouraging at all for the university. Only 50% respondents opine that university provides sufficient resources to the faculty to carry out research activities. Again, 54% of respondents think that university encourages its faculty to mobilize resources through sponsored research projects and 38% think that “sometimes” the faculties are encouraged by the university to mobilize the external fund for research (Fig.3.4). However, both the areas need attention to involve the faculties in more and more research work.

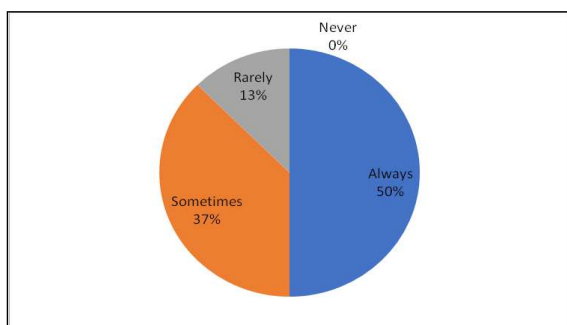


Fig.3.3

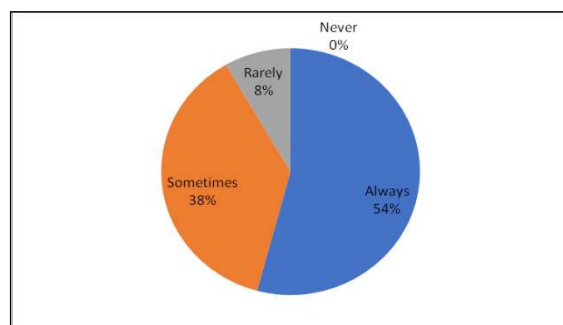


Fig.3.4

3.5. *Faculty members are encouraged to publish research papers and books having ISSN and ISBN respectively (Fig.3.5).*

3.6. *Faculty members are encouraged to undertake consultancy projects (Fig.3.6)*

It is encouraging to see that the university “always” encourages its faculty members to publish research papers in ISSN/ ISBN journal to share their research work (Fig.3.5). so far as consultancy project is concerned, we received a mixed responses as 42% say “always”, 47%

say “sometimes”, 4% say “rarely” and 12% say “never” (Fig.3.6). Therefore, this parameter draws a special attention where the university can encourage its faculty members for consultancy projects.

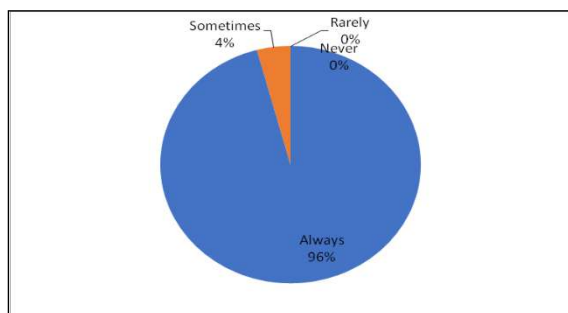


Fig.3.5

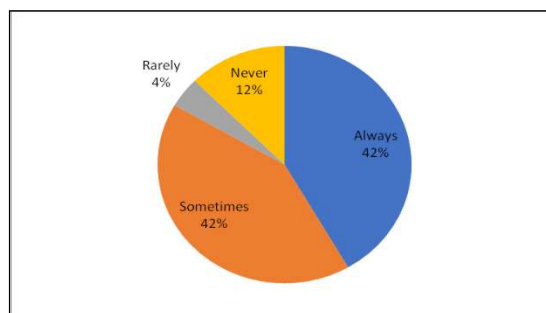


Fig.3.6

### 3.7. The university conducts extension activities at grassroots levels through skill development programme regularly (Fig.3.7)

The university has a dedicated school to conduct vocational and skill development programme. These vocational programmes are conducted the registered NGOs located at rural areas of the state. The university may increase the extension activities at grassroots levels for social development in holistic way. As per Fig.3.7, there is a scope of improvement in this particular quality parameter.

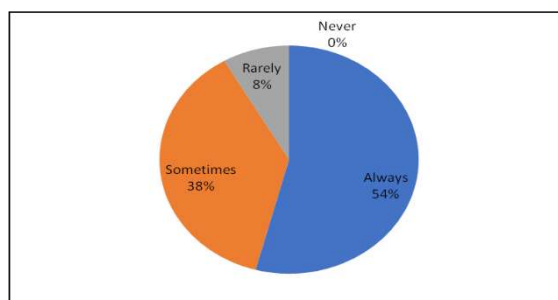


Fig.3.7

## 4. Infrastructure and Learning Resources

The effectiveness of all the aspects of the functioning of an OU depends significantly on the available physical and IT infrastructure. The adequacy and optimal use of the infrastructural facilities and learning resources available in an OU, are essential to maintain the quality of academic programmes on offer. The criterion IV attempts to measure how every constituent of the institution- learners, teachers, other academics and non- academic staff - benefit from these facilities. There are ten performance indicators in this criterion having a range of minimum score zero to maximum possible score 30. The mean score of the university in this criterion is 27.625 being 90% that means the university has performed well in this criterion i.e. infrastructure and learning resources. Let us see the detailed analysis to identify the areas which need special attention as there is an enormous scope of improvement.

4.1. The Institution has adequate and appropriate infrastructural facilities to conduct academic programme (Fig.4.1).

4.2. The institution uses appropriate technology for effective institutional functioning like learner support, examination processing and student records (Fig.4.2).

Most of the respondents opine that the university has sufficient and appropriate infrastructural facilities to conduct the academic programme (Fig. 4.1) and it has also appropriate technology for effective implementation of learner support and examination

processing and student records (Fig.4.2). There were no responses as “rarely” or “never” in these two parameters.

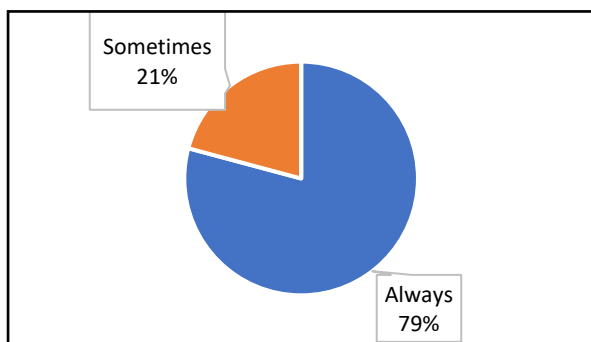


Fig.4.1

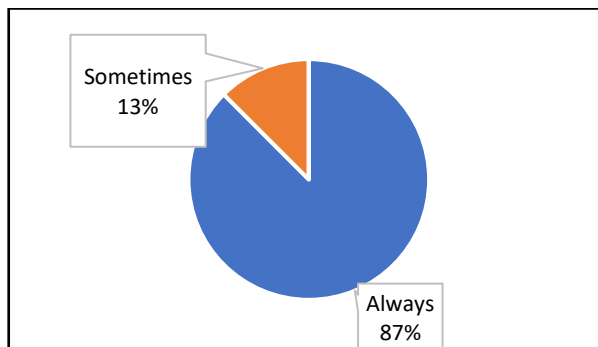


Fig.4.2

4.3. *The institution has state of art infrastructure for developing e-Contents such as recording studios, photography equipment, editing facilities etc. to enable the LMS of the Institute (Fig.4.3).*

4.4. *There is a provision of tele-conferencing and video conferencing facilities (Fig.4.4).*

The university has state of art infrastructure for developing e-contents such as recording studios, camera, editing facilities etc. At the moment the studio facilities are available at RCs including the headquarters. The 83% of the respondents opine that it has sufficient infrastructure to develop e-content (Fig.4.3). The Fig.4.4 shows that the university has the teleconferencing/ video conferencing facilities for live streaming of academic programmes. None of the respondents marked “rarely” or “never” in these two parameters.

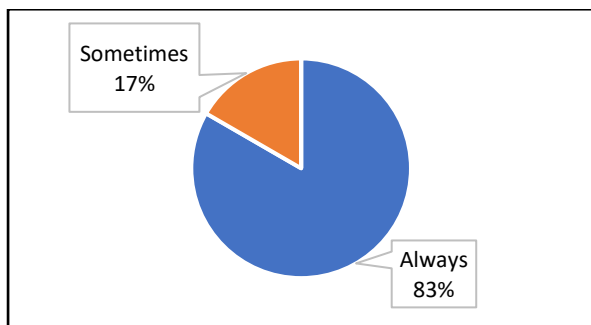


Fig.4.3

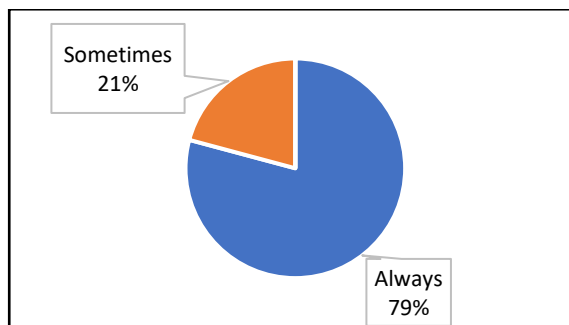


Fig.4.4

4.5. *There are proper infrastructure facilities for counselling rooms, library etc. at LSC and RCs (Fig.4.5).*

4.6. *LSCs have capacity to coordinate and monitor the rolling out of academic programmes (Fig.4.6).*

The LSCs are the backbone of the ODL system. All the services are made available to the learners through LSCs. The LSCs are established in a degree college affiliated to other state universities. So they have all the requisite infrastructure to provide the services to the learners. Both the Fig.4.5 and 4.6 support that the LSCs of the university are well equipped with physical infrastructure as well as human resources to roll out the academic programmes.

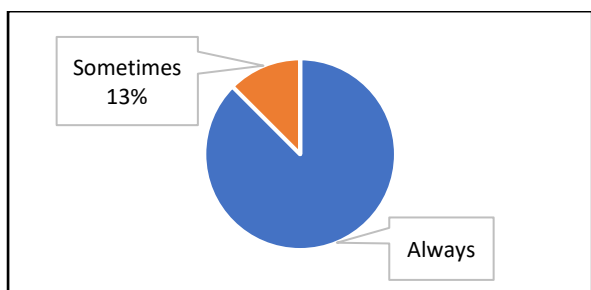


Fig.4.5

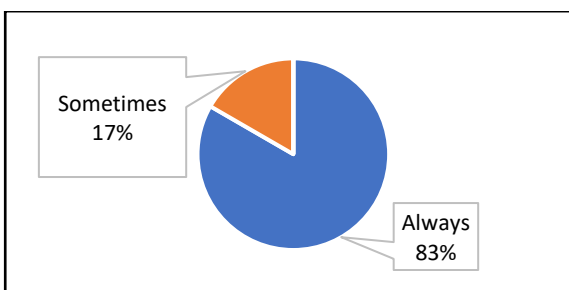


Fig.4.6

4.7. The institution has an effective system for the management and maintenance of equipment (Fig.4.7).

4.8. There is an efficient communication system between head office and LSCs/ RCs (Fig.4.8).

The Fig.4.7 and 4.8 depict the opinion of the responses on two quality parameters viz. effective system for the management and maintenance of equipment and efficient communication system between Head office and LSCs/ RCs as none of the respondents marked “rarely” or “never” in these two parameters. Still there is a scope of improvement. The university may focus on these two parameters to improve the system for maintenance of equipment as well as the communication system between Headquarters and Regional Centres (RCs)/ Learner Support Centres (LSCs).

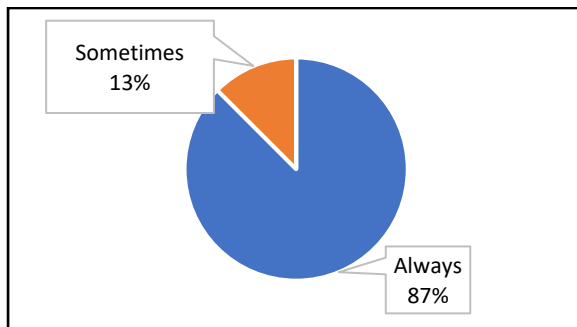


Fig.4.7

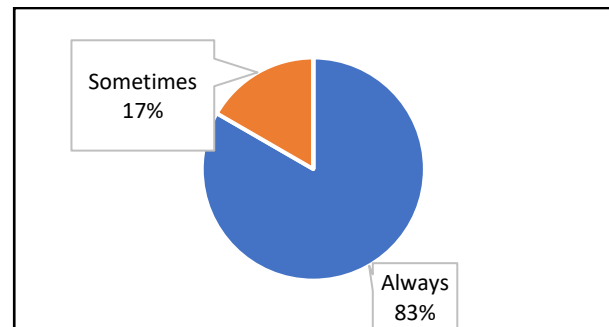


Fig.4.8

4.9. The institution has virtual library with adequate learning resource to offer access to e-Journals and e-Resources through different repositories (4.9)

4.10. University updates IT facilities as per need (Fig.4.10)

As per feedback, the university is not in a good position in respect of virtual library and accessibility of e-journals (Fig.4.9). The university may focus on this quality parameter to improve. E-journal and e-Resources may be provided to the faculties and learners through virtual library. Such e-journal may also be subscribed online to give access to the stakeholders of the university like learners and faculties etc. IT infrastructure of an educational institution specially for an ODL institution is very important. The open universities have to maintain a huge data base relating to the learners. The examination department also deals with huge number of learners as well as answer books/ results etc. Though 83% of respondents believe that the IT facilities are updated as per need (Fig.4.10), there is a scope of improvement to keep pace with the rapid changes in the software.

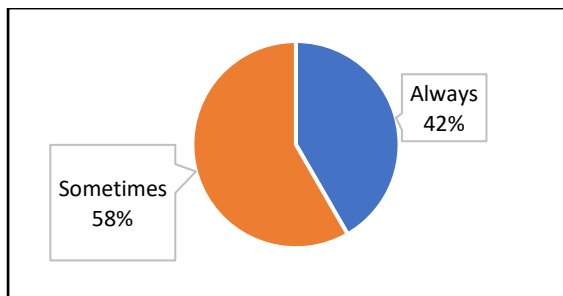


Fig.4.9

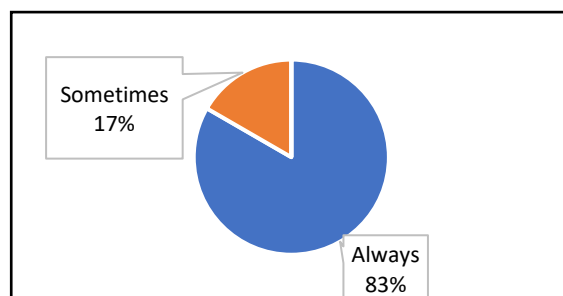


Fig.4.10

## 5. Learner Support and Progression

Good infrastructure, competent human resource, desirable processes and well designed curricula are all essential components for an institution. However, the learners transform these components into an academic institution. It is the experiences of the learner that contribute to

the success and recognition of the academic institution. The Criterion 5 intends to assess necessary support provided to the learners, to enable them to acquire meaningful experiences for learning and to facilitate their holistic development and progression. There are fifteen performance indicators/ quality parameters in this criterion having a range of minimum score zero to maximum possible score 45. The mean score of the university in this criterion is 26.75 being 59% that means the university is very weak in the criterion like learner support and progression. Lot of improvement is required in this area specially in learner support. Let us see the detailed analysis to identify the areas which need special attention as there is an enormous scope of improvement.

5.1. *LSCs organize Induction Programme for its new learners (Fig.5.1).*

5.2. *The registration system is efficient and convenient for learners located in different geographic locations (Fig.5.2).*

Fig.5.1 shows that the LSCs do not organize induction meeting “always”, only 62% says that at the beginning of the session, LSCs organize the induction meeting. The university may improve this performance indicator by making it compulsory to hold the induction meeting at each LSC before commencement of counselling session in each academic year. Since, the entire process of admission is online, the learners may take admission at their own place without travelling much. Since the learners can pay online payment through payment gateway there is no need to visit the bank also. Immediately after completion of all admission formalities, the provisional enrolment certificate is generated. The responses (Fig.5.2) supports that the university has an efficient registration system.

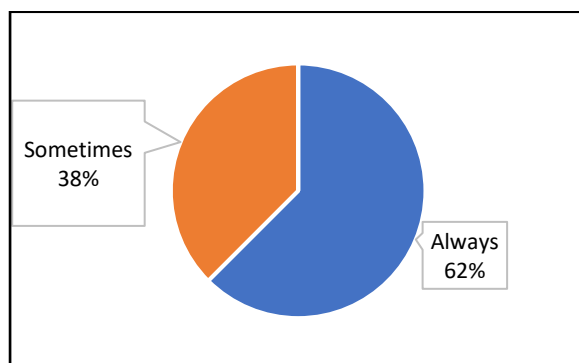


Fig.5.1

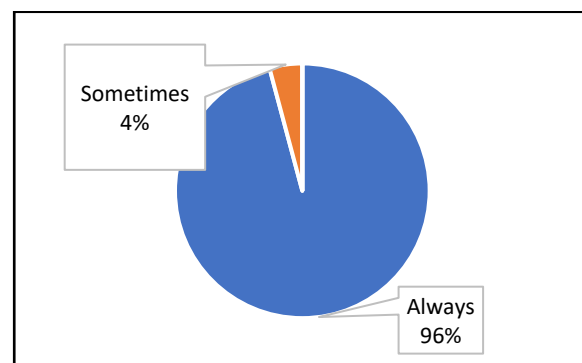


Fig.5.2

5.3. *The Institution has provisions for informing, advising & counselling for its dispersed learners (Fig.5.3)*

5.4. *Database of learners and their profile has been prepared which is used to provide appropriate support and facilitate his/her progression in the programme (Fig.5.4)*

The LSCs are the face of the University which are located at urban and rural/ remotes areas. All the information relating to teaching-learning are communicated to the learners through these LSCs. The schedule of counselling sessions are displayed on the notice board and on the university website. The learners are also contacted through SMS to inform the important notices. Fig.5.3 depicts, only 75% of respondents believe that the information reaches to the dispersed learners correctly. Therefore, this quality indicator needs special attention because, it is very important to communicate the information to the dispersed learners at right time. Fig.5.4 shows that the learner data base are well maintained to generate different types of reports which help track the learner ‘s progression. None of the respondents marked “rarely” or “never” in these two parameters. But there is scope of improvement since 25% and



13% of the respondents opine that “sometimes” the university complies with the quality parameter 4.3 and 5.4 respectively. Therefore, the university may focus on these areas.

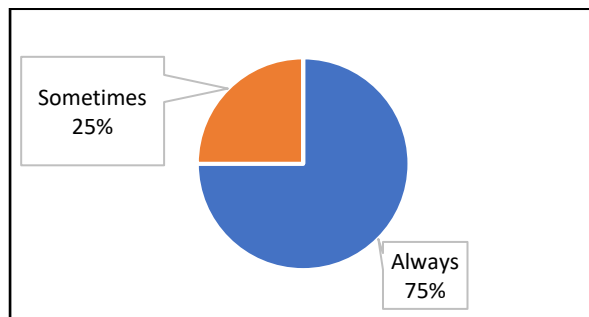


Fig.5.3

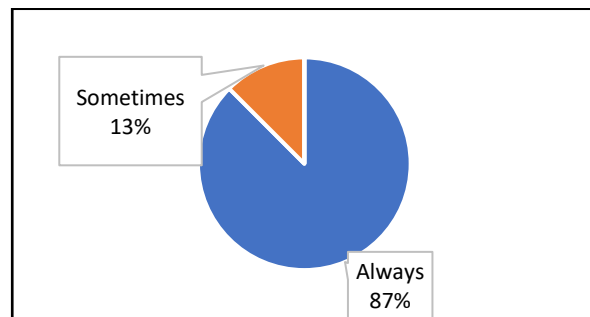


Fig.5.4

5.5. Proper communication takes place with learners regarding, academic calendar, time table, exam schedule well in time (Fig.5.5).

5.6. Student Hand Book/ Programme Guide is made available to all the enrolled learners(Fig.5.6).

The results in respect of Performance indicator as stated in 5.5 and 5.6 are quite satisfactory as shown in Fig.5.5 and 5.6 respectively. The academic calendar, time table, exam schedule are communicated through notification available at LSCs and on website. The student hand book/ prospectus are also available to all learners both in hard copy and soft copy.

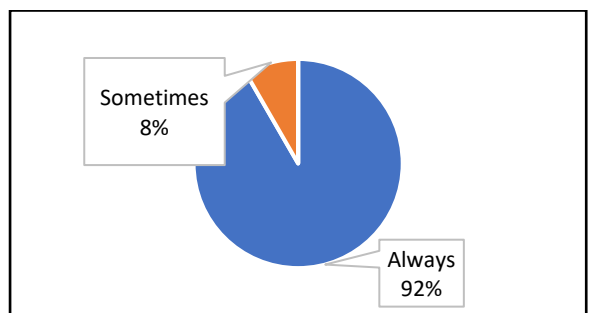


Fig.5.5

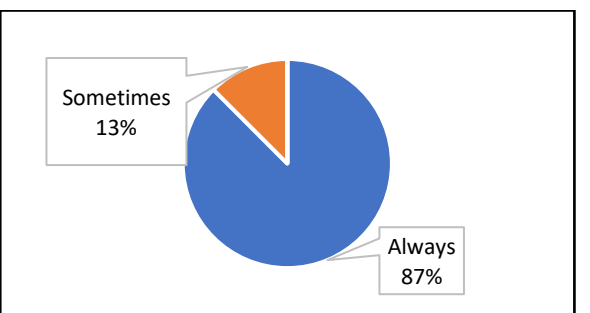


Fig.5.6

5.7. Does the library provide open access facility? (Fig.5.7)

5.8. Learner satisfaction survey is conducted on a regular basis and amendments in the system are made based on unanimous recommendations of learner /community (Fig.5.8).

There is a mixed response in respect of open access library facilities. Only 29% of the respondents opine that the university provides this facility (Fig.5.7). Response to 4.9 also supports this fact that virtual library facility/ open access library facility is limited. Therefore, this area may be explored seriously. Fig.5.8 depicts a mixed response relating to the learner satisfaction survey. The feedback mechanism for student satisfaction may be improved as most of the respondents are not in the opinion that the university has a good feedback system. Through effective feedback mechanism the entire system can be improved.

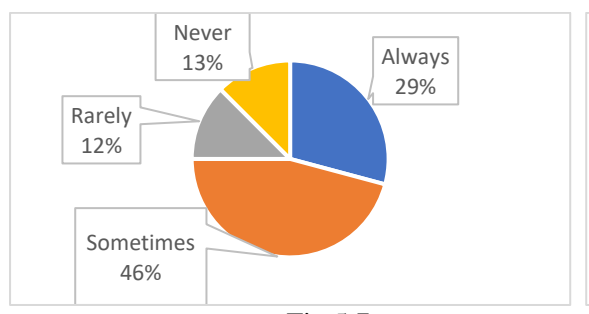


Fig.5.7

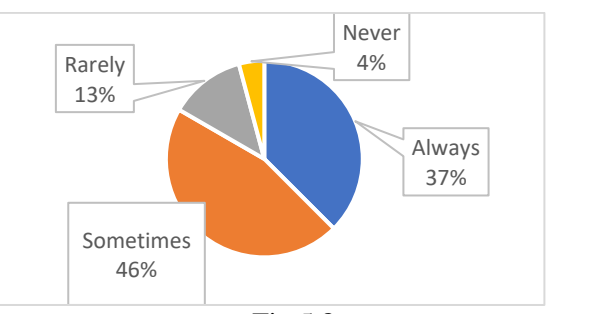


Fig.5.8

5.9. *Digital tools and techniques are used to connect with learners (MOODLE/ MOOC) and to offer helpline services to them (Fig.5.9)*

5.10. *Learner tracking system is in place to help the learner complete the course in time and also to reduce dropout rate (Fig.5.10).*

The performance indicators as stated in 5.9 and 5.10, the university has work on further. The more course content are required to be made available on LMS/MOODLE for their wide accessibility. The online helpline service is also required to be improved. Since only 63% of the respondent believe that course materials are available on LMS (Fig.5.9). This quality parameter may read with 4.3 where most of the respondents opine that the university has good infrastructure to develop e-content. So, the university may take special drive to upload the e-content on LMS. The university has huge learner data base which is required to be maintained through out the student life cycle. An effective learner tracking system help know the actual status of the enrolled learners about their progress. As per Fig.5.10, the university does not have the system to track the enrolled learners about their progress of study. Therefore it may be recommended that an effective learner tracking system may be developed immediately.

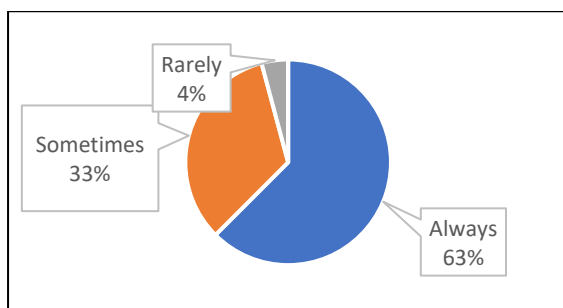


Fig.5.9

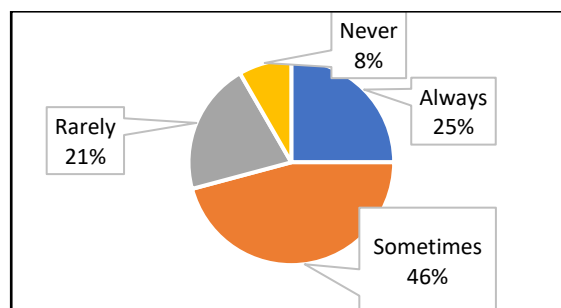


Fig.5.10

5.11. *LSC staff is given proper training to make them more proficient in learner support (Fig.5.11).*

5.12. *Learners feedback is analyzed and reported (Fig.5.12).*

The key players in the ODL system are LSC and learners. If LSC staff are not properly trained, the services cannot be delivered at desired level. Therefore it is essential to train/ orient the LSC staff for providing better services. The university is in poor status in respect of these two quality parameters viz. 5.11 and 5.12. The performance indicator 5.12 may be read with 5.8. Though the university has the learner's feedback mechanism, the report generated from such feedback has not been generated and reported to appropriate authority. Fig.5.12 shows that the learners feedback needs to be analysed and corrective measures may be recommended for further action/ improvement of the system.

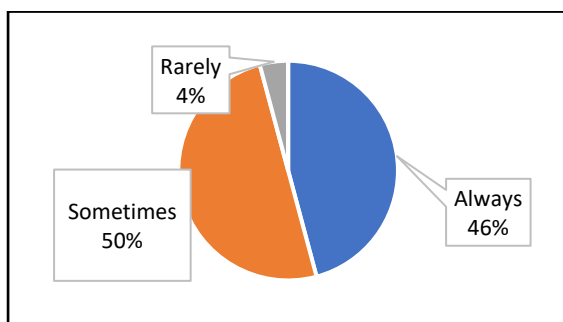


Fig.5.11

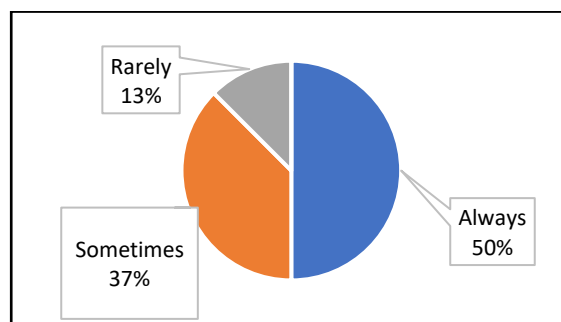


Fig.5.12

5.13. *Quality of Graduates of the institute is assessed in terms of accomplishment of expected learning outcomes (Fig.5.13).*

5.14. Job Fairs are organized to sensitize those learners who want to establish their start up projects (Fig.5.14).

The quality parameter stated in 5.13 needs to be addressed carefully. The learning objectives and learning outcome and quality of graduates are required to be assessed in more scientific way. Only 46% of the respondents believe that Quality of Graduates of the institute is assessed in terms of accomplishment of expected learning outcomes (Fig.5.13). Occasionally the job fairs are organized by the university. Only the School of Vocational Studies organize job fairs. The result as shown in Fig.5.14, the university may organize more job fairs for the benefit of the learners. In both the cases, there is scope of improvement.

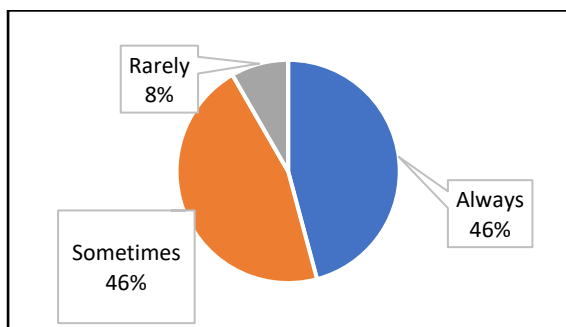


Fig.5.13

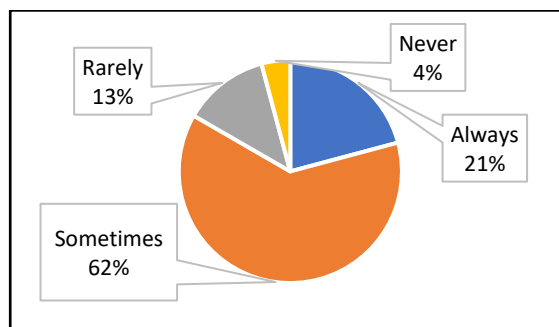


Fig.5.14

5.15. The graduates of the institution are employable & capable of meeting the expectations of the industry, society and their country(Fig.5.15).

Thousands of the learners take admission to earn the certificate together with skills and knowledge. The pass out learners get job in govt./ public/ private sector and who are already working, they get promotion at their work places. So it may be inferred that the graduates of the university can meet the expectation of the industry/ society and country as a whole. The result also supports that the graduates are employable and capable to meet the expectations (Fig.5.15).

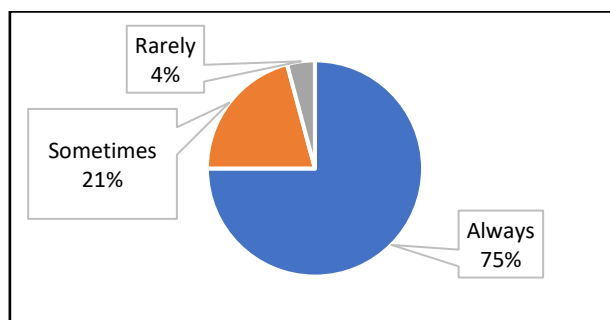


Fig.5.15

## 6. Governance, Leadership and Management

The quality of an institution is a reflection of the quality of its leadership, management and the efforts of its stakeholders. Criterion 6 pertains to effective functioning of the university that can be gauged by the policies and practices it has evolved in the areas of planning human resources, recruitment, training, incentives, avenues and mechanisms for promotion, financial management, resource mobilization and overall efforts to establish quality assurance mechanisms within the institution.

There are ten performance indicators/ quality parameters in this criterion having a range of minimum score zero to maximum possible score 30. The mean score of the university in this criterion is 23.875 being 80%. Though the score is 80%, the weak areas may be identified for

further improvement. Let us see the detailed analysis to identify the areas which need special attention for improvement.

6.1. *Top Management and Academic Bodies of the university own responsibility for quality assurance and quality improvement (Fig. 6.1).*

6.2. *Institutional goals are specifically delineated and are in conformance with vision and mission of Organization (Fig.6.2).*

All the respondents opine that the top management and academic bodies are very concerned with quality assurance and quality improvement of the entire system of the university (Fig.6.1). The institutional vision and mission are also specifically mentioned in the relevant document/ website. (Fig. 6.2).

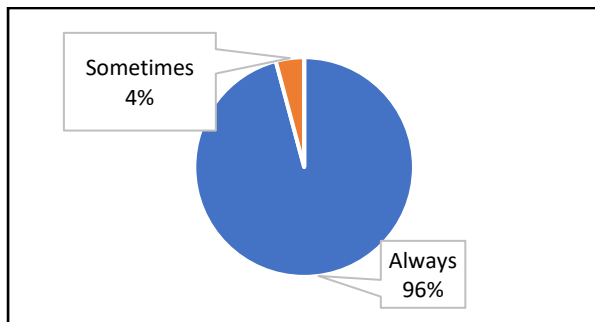


Fig.6.1

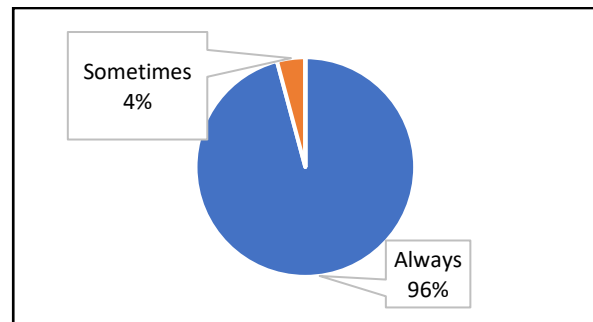


Fig.6.2

6.3. *Quality issues are integrated with the overall strategic planning of the institution (Fig.6.3).*

6.4. *Quality manual with checklist, Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) is developed and properly communicated to internal stakeholders (Fig.6.4).*

The Executive Council approves all the proposal of other statutory bodies like Academic Council, Finance Committee, Building Committee etc. Result shows (Fig.6.3) that the strategic planning of all activities are placed at the executive council meeting to check the viability and quality issues of proposal. In case of quality manual there is a mixed response. The university may communicate to all its stakeholders about the existence of the NSOU Quality assurance System (NSPOU-QAS).

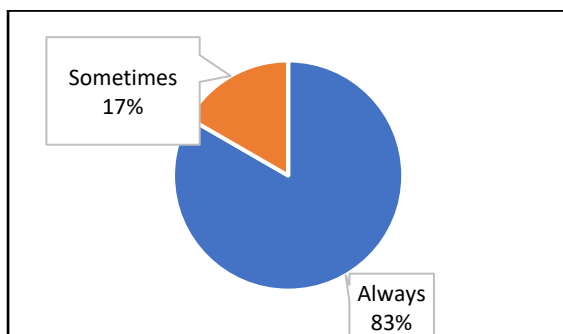


Fig.6.3

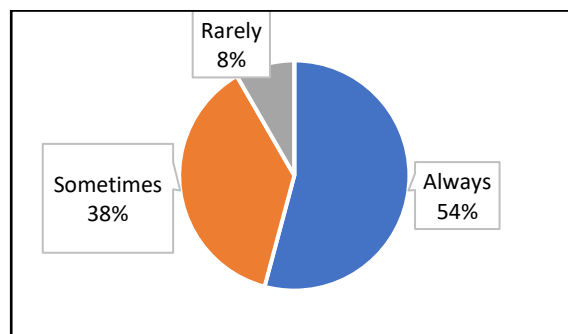


Fig.6.4

6.5. *Adequate resources (Physical and Financial) are made available for Quality Assurance and Improvement (Fig.6.5)*

6.6. *Centre for Internal Quality Assurance (CIQA) exists in the university which monitors the overall quality of operations(Fig. 6.6)*

The university has established Centre for Quality Assurance (CIQA) to look after the quality aspects of all its activities both academic and administrative. The CIQA recommends

various quality improvement strategies for overall improvement of the system. As per Fig.6.5, 75% of the respondents opine that university extends both physical and financial resources for Quality Assurance and Improvement. The result also shows that CIQA monitors the overall quality of operations (Fig.6.6).

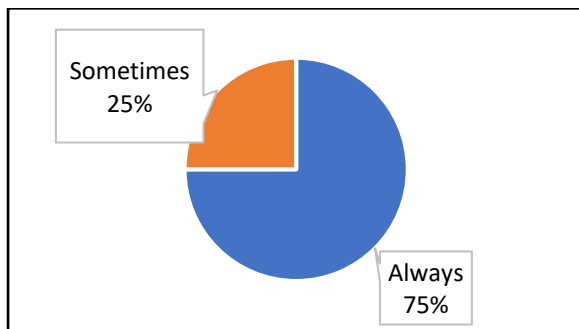


Fig.6.5

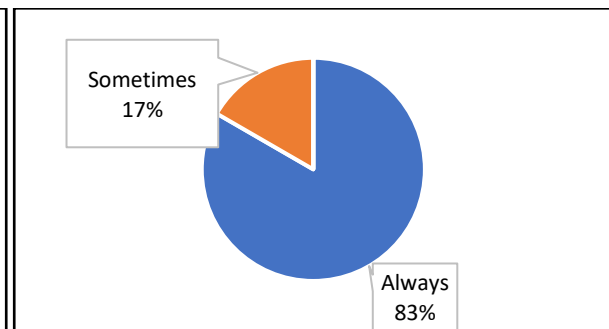


Fig.6.6

6.7. *Top management promotes quality culture in the institution and takes appropriate steps on the basis of feedback received from its stakeholders (Fig.6.7)*

6.8. *Welfare Schemes for academic and Non-academic staff are in place (Fig.6.8)*

The performance indicator 6.7 may be read with 6.1. the responses received in respect of these parameters indicate that top management is very concerned with the quality of services that the university provides (Fig.65.). Being the state university, the university extends the welfare schemes to both academic and non-academic staff as provided by the govt.

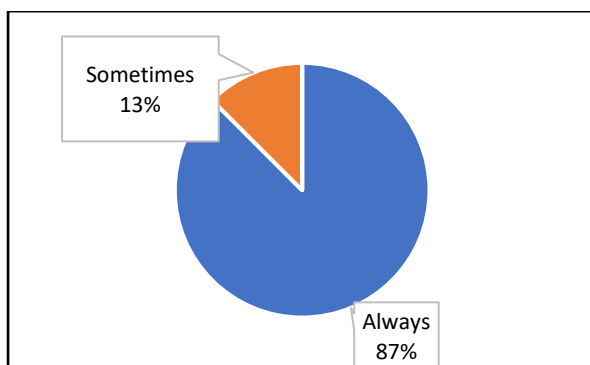


Fig.6.7

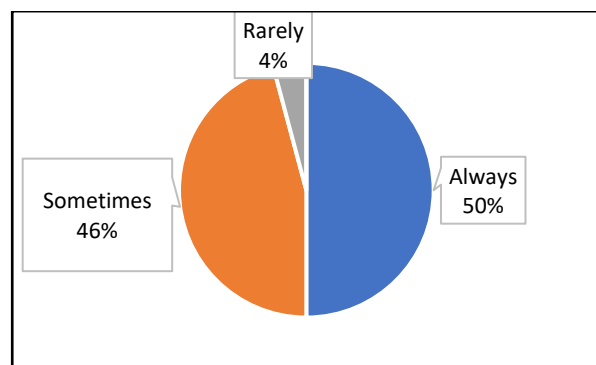


Fig.6.8

6.9. *Statutory Meetings are held regularly (Fig.6.9)*

6.10. *Annual accounts are audited regularly (Fig.6.10)*

75% of the respondents opine that statutory meetings are held regularly(Fig.6.9). Therefore, initiatives may be taken to convene the statutory meetings at regular intervals to run the university smoothly. It is very encouraging to see that all the respondents say that the annual accounts are audited regularly (Fig.6.10).

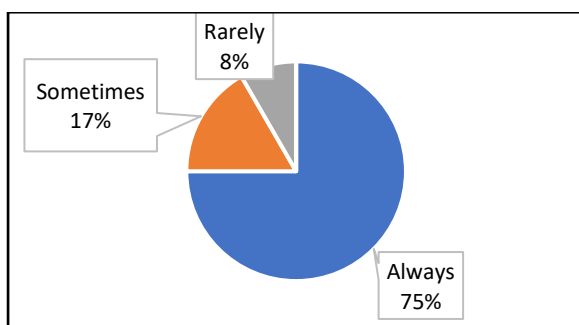


Fig.6.9

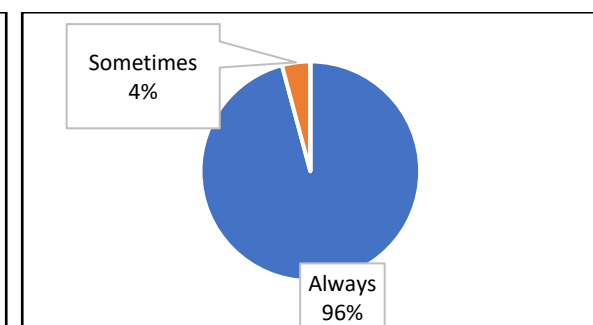


Fig.6.10

## 7. Institutional Values and Best Practices

An educational institution operates in the context of the larger education system in the country. In order to be relevant in changing national and global contexts an educational institution has to be responsive to the emerging challenges and pressing issues. It has a social responsibility to be proactive in the efforts towards development in the larger contexts. This role of the University is reflected in terms of the kinds of programmes, activities and preferences (values) like disabled friendly amenities, green practices, code of conducts of stakeholders like, students, employees etc. that it incorporates within its regular functioning. There are five performance indicators/ quality parameters in this criterion having a range of minimum score zero to maximum possible score 15. The mean score of the university in this criterion is 11.125 being 74% that means the university needs to inculcate the value system and social awareness. These performance indicators may be considered seriously for overall development of the university. Let us see the detailed analysis to identify the areas which need special attention as there is an enormous scope of improvement.

7.1 *The Institution has disabled friendly amenities in the campus (Fig.7.1)*

7.2 *The Institution takes adequate measure for GREEN practices (Fig.7.2)*

Every educational institution has the social responsibility to provide disabled friendly amenities in the campus and to promote green practices. Green practices include land scaping, paperless office, tobacco free campus, use of solar panel etc. The university may focus on these two areas as there is a scope of improvement (Fig.7.1 & 7.2).

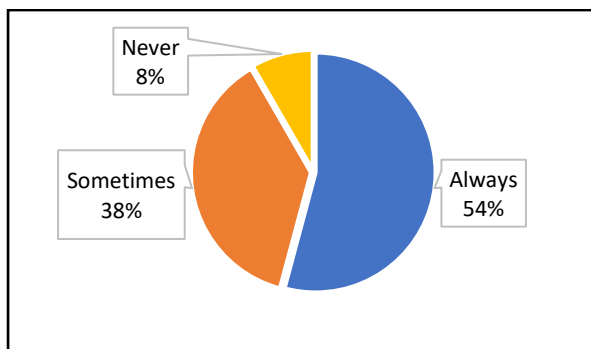


Fig. 7.1

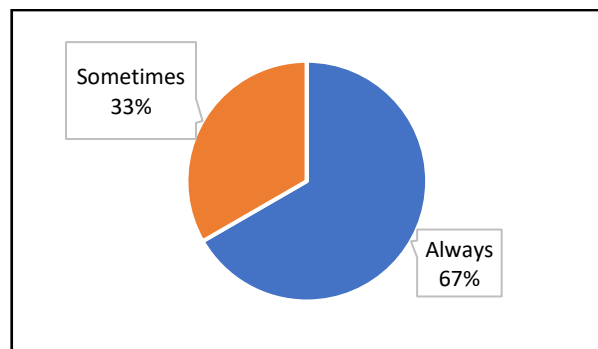


Fig.7.2

7.3. *The Institution promotes universal values through seminar/ workshop (Fig.7.3)*

7.4. *Code of Conduct for different stakeholders exists in the institution (Fig.7.4)*

The university regularly conducts seminar/ workshop to promote universal values. The birth day of National Heroes and other national Days are celebrated in befitting manner (Fig.7.3). There are separate code of conducts for students, academic and non-academic staff of the university (Fig.7.4).

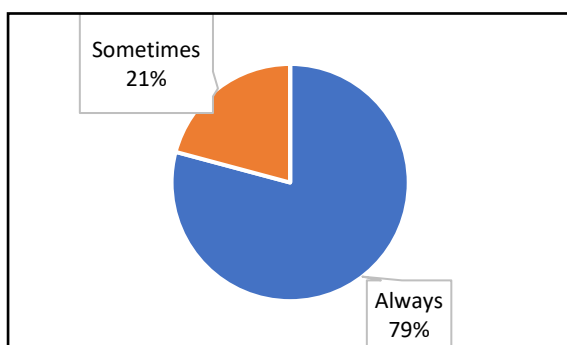


Fig.7.3

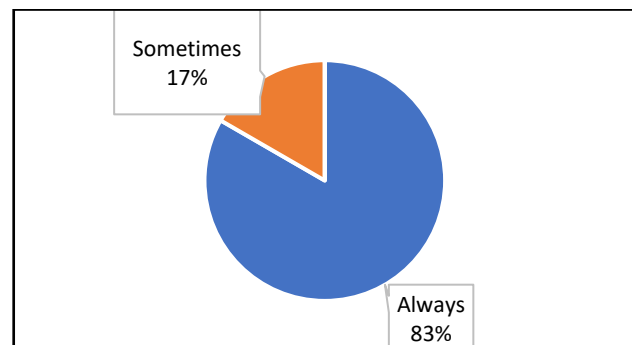


Fig.7.4

7.5 *There is an optimal mix of youth and experience in both academic and non-academic staff (Fig.7.5)*

The recruitment process for appointment in fulltime substantive post is a normal activity of the university. The selection/ standing committees recruit new employees with requisite qualification and experience for the particular post to maintain the optimal mix of youth and experience in both academic and non-academic staff (Fig.7.5).

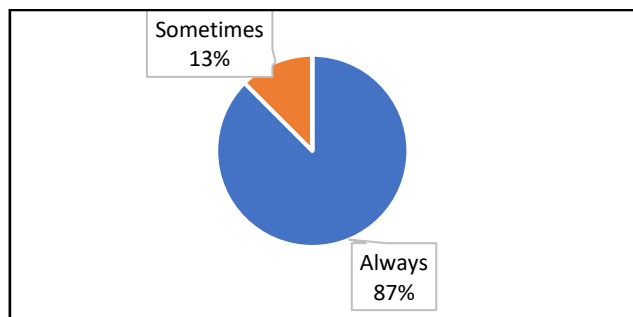


Fig.7.5

### **Conclusion**

The report has been prepared on the basis of feedback received from the employees who are involved in regular teaching-learning activities of the university. The university activities are essentially service oriented. All the activities are carried out to satisfy the need of the learners. The teachers are engaged in teaching by their profession but in ODLIs, like NSOU, senior teachers specially the Professors take additional administrative responsibilities. In the present Academic-Administrative Report, the seven criteria as prescribed by National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) for assessment of quality have been consideration:

1. Curricular Aspects
2. Teaching-Learning and Evaluation
3. Research, Innovations and Extension
4. Infrastructure and Learning Resources
5. Learner Support and Progression
6. Governance, Leadership and Management
7. Institutional Values and Best Practices

In each criterion there are certain parameters/ performance indicators to measure/ assess quality aspects of the university. The overall score is 74.34%. Therefore, it may be recommended that there is a scope of improvement in all the criteria with special focus on Criterion 1,3 and 5. Such special initiatives may improve the overall quality of the university. The NSOU-QAS is required to be circulated among all the stakeholders to make them aware about the quality assurance policies and processes of the university.

The university has the Centre for Internal Quality Assurance (CIQA). It is expected that the recommendations of CIQA will seriously be taken into consideration by the appropriate authority to ensure the quality of its services. The following are the some specific observations which can be looked into by the university authority.

- The curricula may be revised / updated inline with the industry/ society demand.
- Provision for lateral entry/ exit may be introduced.
- The university has scope for providing facilities to engage faculties in research and consultancy work.
- The university may explore the national and international collaboration.
- Internal faculties may have to be encouraged in developing course materials.
- Capacity building progarmme may be organized for academic and administrative staff of the university.

- More e-content may be developed to upload on the LMS.
- Virtual library facility may be provided.
- Antiplagiarism software may be introduced for both SLM and project work.
- The feedback mechanism may be strengthened and corrective measures may be taken on the feedback analysis report.
- Induction meeting may be conducted at each LSC prior to the commencement of academic session.
- Online resources may be provided to the faculty members for research work.
- Communication between Headquarters/ RCs and LSCs may be improved.
- Job fair may be organized at regular intervals.
- Green practices may be promoted among staff and learners of the university.
- All the academic and non-academic staff are to involved in the quality assurance and practices.



Kalyani RC, Nadia

==The End==