Research Paper

Libraries as Catalysts of Educational Growth: RUSA and NAAC Roadmap to Viksit Bharat 2047

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ABSTRACT: This research paper investigates the transformative role of the Rastriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) and the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) in modernising libraries within Indian higher education institutions (HEIs) as part of the national vision for Viksit Bharat 2047. It explores how RUSA's funding for infrastructure, digital resources, and capacity building, combined with NAAC's quality benchmark, has elevated libraries from traditional repositories to dynamic, technology-driven knowledge ecosystems. The study analyses case examples, identifies challenges, and aligns these initiatives with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. Special attention is given to technological integration, inclusive access, and sustainable practices. The findings emphasise that RUSA and NAAC not only enhance research capabilities and academic excellence but also position libraries as central pillars of knowledge empowerment. The report concludes with policy recommendations and outlines a future-oriented roadmap for achieving global standards in Indian academic library development.

KEYWORDS: RUSA, NAAC, Library Modernisation, Library Transformation, Viksit Bharat 2047

I. INTRODUCTION

India's vision of Viksit Bharat 2047 places higher education and knowledge accessibility at the core of national development. Academic libraries, once passive repositories, are evolving into interactive, technology-driven knowledge hubs. Government initiatives such as the Rastriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) and the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) have been instrumental in driving this transformation through infrastructure upgrades, digital integration, and quality benchmarks. These reforms align with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, emphasising innovation, inclusivity, and sustainability. This study examines the impact of RUSA and NAAC in redefining library ecosystems to enhance academic excellence and research competitiveness.

II. OBJECTIVES

❖   To assess the impact of RUSA and NAAC on library modernisation in Indian HEIs.
❖   To examine how these frameworks enhance research and academic excellence.
❖   To align library transformations with Viksit Bharat 2047 and NEP 2020 goals.
❖   To propose strategies for sustainable and inclusive library development.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Jange (2024) affirms accreditation ensure quality in higher education and highlights librarians' expanding roles in NAAC processes, yet remains largely descriptive, lacking empirical evidence, critical depth, and analysis of practical challenges.

Pandey, Manisha & Maharana, Bulu (2024) emphasizes RUSA grants' role in modernising Indian academic libraries, enhancing digital resources and learning environment, while noting challenges in affective utilisation and the need for strategic planning for sustained impact.

Saha, Manas &Mridha, Shibananda (2023) highlights library webpages as essential for resource dissemination, yet studies reveal most are static, incomplete, and user-unfriendly, emphasizing the need for improved design, comprehensive content, and enhanced accessibility.

Mehta, Dr. Jaydeep & Vyas, Dr. Meghna (2021) studies libraries play important role in the NAAC accreditation process by contributing to institutional quality indicators, SSR preparation, and SWOC analysis. Studies highlights their impact on enhancing accreditation outcomes and academic excellence.

Patil (2021) examined libraries' role in NAAC accreditation, emphasizing the important of digital adoption, automation, and service quality for improving institutional rankings.

C L, Naveen &Kannappannavar, B U (2020) emphasises libraries' essential role in higher education, showing post-NAAC accreditation improvements in infrastructure and facilities, yet call for further research on sustainable development, impact assessment, and strategic enhancement.

IV. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a descriptive and analytical design, utilising secondary data from NAAC reports, RUSA guidelines, institutional documents, and scholarly literature published between 2020 to 2025. Six diverse higher education institutions were purposively selected for case study analysis based on notable library modernisation initiatives. Data were cross-verified through triangulation of official records, websites, and publications. Thematic analysis identifies patterns, innovations, and challenges, providing evidence-based insights to guide future policies and sustainable library development.

V. THE ROLE OF NAAC IN LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT

1. NAAC's Accreditation Criteria and Libraries

NAAC evaluates HEIs based on multiple criteria, including infrastructure and learning resources. Libraries are assessed on the following parameters:

❖ **Collection and Resources:** Availability of books, journals, e-resources, and research materials, ensuring both physical and digital engines.

❖ **Library Automation:** Use of technology for cataloguing, issuing, and accessing resources, with emphasis on AI-based search engines.

❖ **User Services:** Accessibility, digital literacy programs, and research support, ensuring inclusivity and efficiency.

❖ **Infrastructure and Ambience:** Reading space, IT facilities, and accessibility for differently-abled users, with a focus on ergonomics and sustainability.

2. Importance of Libraries in NAAC Accreditation

Libraries significantly contribute to an institution's NAAC grade, affecting funding, reputation, and student enrolment. Accreditation requires institutions to ensure:

❖ A well-stocked, digitised, and globally networked library.

❖ Open-access and institutional repositories for knowledge sharing.

❖ Research facilities, innovation incubation centres, and AI-driven knowledge portals.

3. Best Practices Libraries in NAAC Accreditation

To enhance their NAAC scores, institutions adopt best practices such as:

❖ Establishing **e-learning centres** with cloud-based storage for academic resources.

❖ Implementing **RFID-based access systems** for seamless resource tracing.

❖ Encouraging **open-access publishing** and fostering research collaborations.

❖ Conducting **user awareness programs** on digital literacy and AI-integrated research methodologies.

VI. RUSA'S CONTRIBUTION TO LIBRARY MODERNISATION

1. Overview of RUSA's Library Enhancement Initiatives

RUSA aims to improve the quality of higher education by funding infrastructural projects, including libraries. Key areas of focus include:

❖ **Digital Libraries and E-Resources:** Subscription to online databases, open-access repositories, and digitalisation of old manuscripts.

❖ **Infrastructure Development:** Establishment of a modern library building with sustainable architecture and smart technology.

❖ **Skill Development and Capacity Building:** Training librarians in AI tools, research analytics, and academic integrity platforms.

2. RUSA Funding and Library Upgrades

RUSA provides financial assistance under various schemes, such as:

❖ **Upgradation of existing libraries** with digital resources centres and cloud-based systems.

❖ **Implementation of Learning Resources Centres (LRCs)** to facilitate interdisciplinary research.

❖ **Development of smart libraries** with AI-powered knowledge management systems and IoT-integrated security.

3. Real-World Success Stories: Libraries Thriving Under RUSA

a. Revolutionising Digital Access at the University

The university leveraged RUSA funding to undergo a complete digital transformation, ensuring seamless access to academic materials for students and researchers. Key advancements include:

❖ An **AI-powered institutional repository** enabling quick retrieval of research papers, dissertations, and patents.

❖ **Automated book circulation systems** utilising predictive analytics to recommend resources tailored to individual user preferences.

❖ **Immersive digital learning spaces** incorporating augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) technologies for interactive education.

b. College: Pioneering Research Innovation Through RUSA

Recognising the need for robust research facilities, the college utilised RUSA grants to empower its academic community through:

❖ A **cutting-edge research support centre** integrated with cloud-based collaborative tools for knowledge-sharing.

❖ **Subscription to premier digital research databases** like Scopus and Web of Science, enhancing access to globally recognised scholarly work.

❖ **Extensive digital literacy training programs** equipping faculty and students with AI-driven research methodologies and data analytics skills.

c. Creating a Smart Library Ecosystem

The assistance of the RUSA developed a future-ready library ecosystem with:

❖ **Blockchain-secured academic records** ensure the integrity and security of research publications and credentials.

❖ **Inter-Library AI-driven resource sharing**, streamlining access to knowledge across institutions.

❖ **Sustainable smart infrastructure,** featuring IoT-enabled systems for automated energy management and resource tracking.

VII. CASE STUDIES OF LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES UNDER RUSA AND NAAC

To illustrate the tangible outcomes of RUSA and NAAC interventions, selected case studies from diverse higher education institutions in India have been examined. These examples highlight how targeted funding, accreditation feedback, and policy directives have transformed library services, technology integration, inclusivity, and user experience. The institutions below represent varied geographic, academic, and infrastructural contexts, offering a comprehensive view of library modernisation in alignment with national educational goals.

Sr. No.	Institution	Initiative	Driving Factor	Key Outcomes
1.	**Central University of Gujrat**	Development of fully automated digital library with RFID, e-resources, and remote access	RUSA funding support	Increased student engagement, enhanced NAAC scorecard performance
2.	**University of Kerala**	Integration of e-learning spaces, institutional repositories, and staff digital literacy training	NAAC recommendations	Improved accessibility, higher research output, better academic ranking
3.	**Government Colleges of Arts, Science & Commerce, Goa**	Creation of assistive technology section for visually impaired students	RUSA grant & NAAC inclusivity benchmarks	Enhanced equitable access, compliance with inclusivity standards, improved student satisfaction
4.	**Banaras Hindu University (BHU)**	Expansion of e-journals subscriptions, digitisation of rare manuscripts, and implementation of plagiarism detection tools	NAAC accreditation cycle preparations	Boosted research quality, preservation of heritage resources, compliance with academic integrity norms
5.	**University of Hyderabad**	Establishment of collaborative study zones, AI-powered search systems, and cloud-based library management software	RUSA modernisation scheme	Increased collaborative learning, faster information retrieval improved resource management efficiency

6.	**Jamia Millia Islamia University**	Upgradation of library infrastructure with 24/7 reading halls, biometric access, and student feedback integration system	NAAC peer team directives	Improved student satisfaction, enhanced safety, continuous quality monitoring for accreditation excellence

VIII. FINDINGS IN THE STUDY

❖ **Policy Awareness and Institutional Readiness:** Institutions with strong NAAC policy awareness and structured RUSA planning exhibited quicker adaptation to modernisation requirements, enhancing preparedness for accreditation and quality benchmark.

❖ **Infrastructure Transformation through RUSA Funding:** RUSA grants significantly improved library spaces, technology access, and resource diversity, although uneven implementation slowed progress in certain case study institutions.

❖ **Technology Adoption and Services Innovation:** Digital library platforms, automated circulation, and open access resources improved service quality, through integration levels varied across the studied institutions.

❖ **Sustainability and Inclusivity Challenges:** Maintaining upgraded facilities, ensuring accessibility for all users, and providing continuous staff training remain critical challenges for sustaining long-term library excellence.

VIII. CHALLENGES IN LIBRARY TRANSFORMATION

Despite RUSA and NAAC initiatives, challenges persist in library development:

❖ **Budget Constraints:** Limited funding for infrastructure, software subscriptions, and AI integration.

❖ **Lack of Skilled Personnel:** Need for trained librarians proficient in data science, AI, and digital research methodologies.

❖ **Digital Divide:** Unequal access to high-speed internet and e-resources between rural and urban institutions.

❖ **Resistance to Change:** Traditional mindsets hindering the adoption of knowledge management systems.

IX. FUTURE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

✓ **Strategic Mapping of RUSA-NAAC synergies:** Future research can focus on creating a strategic framework that maps how RUSA funding priorities and NAAC quality benchmarks jointly influence library transformation trajectories.

✓ **Resilient and Adaptive Library Infrastructure Models:** Examine how libraries can be designed to adapt to technological disruptions, evolving academic needs, and crisis scenarios while maintaining operational continuity and service quality.

✓ **Predictive Analytics for Library Service Optimisation:** Investigate the use of data analytics and machine learning to predict user needs, optimise resource allocation, and personalise academic content delivery.

✓ **Global Positioning of Indian Academic Libraries:** Assess opportunities for positioning Indian HEI libraries as global knowledge hubs through international collaborations, open-access publishing, and cross-border digital resources sharing.

X. FUTURE PERSPECTIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Integration of Emerging Technologies

❖ **Artificial Intelligence (AI):** AI-powered search engines and chatbots for academic queries.

❖ **Big Data Analytics:** Leveraging analytics to track research trends and user behaviour.

❖ **Blockchain Technology:** Securing academic credentials, research publications, and library transactions.

❖ **Augmented Reality (AR) & Virtual Reality (VR):** Enhancing learning experiences through interactive digital simulations.

2. Strengthening Library Networks

❖ Establishing **global digital consortia** for shared access to knowledge.

❖ Enhancing **inter-library loan systems** via blockchain-secured access.

❖ Promoting **collaborative research repositories** with AI-curated metadata.

❖ Expanding **Open Educational Resources (OERs)** to foster self-paced learning and accessibility.

3. Policy Recommendations

❖ **Increase RUSA funding for AI-driven library digitisation** and tech-based research support.

❖ **Revise NAAC accreditation parameters** to prioritize digital transformation and AI integration.

❖ **Train librarians in emerging technologies** such as machine learning and AI-assisted research.

❖ **Encourage institutions to integrate libraries into research, innovation incubation, and interdisciplinary studies.**

XI. CONCLUSION

The combined influence of RUSA and NAAC has significantly accelerated the transformation of academic libraries in India, aligning them with the nation's educational vision under Viksit Bharat 2047 and NEP 2020. Through targeted funding, infrastructure upgrades, digital integration, and adherence to quality benchmarks, libraries have evolved into dynamic, inclusive, and technology-driven knowledge hubs. Despite challenges such as uneven resource distribution and skill gaps, the reforms have enhanced research capacity, academic excellence, and global competitiveness. Sustained policy support, innovation, and collaborative frameworks are crucial to ensure that libraries remain pivotal in shaping India's knowledge economy and achieving long-term educational goals.

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