

The Study of Quality Assurance in Teacher Education Institutions in India with Special Reference to the Role of NCTE and NAAC

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ABSTRACT

Quality assurance in teacher education institutions is a critical component of India's educational reform agenda. The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) and the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) play central roles in ensuring that teacher education programs meet standards of excellence, accountability, and relevance. This study explores how these two regulatory bodies contribute to maintaining and improving quality in teacher education institutions across India. Secondary sources such as policy documents, accreditation reports, and scholarly analyses reveal that NCTE provides the regulatory framework for teacher education, focusing on curriculum design, institutional recognition, and teacher preparation standards. NAAC, on the other hand, evaluates institutions through accreditation processes that emphasize continuous improvement, transparency, and accountability. Together, they aim to create a system where teacher education is not only standardized but also responsive to the changing needs of society. However, challenges remain. Many institutions struggle with inadequate infrastructure, limited faculty development, and uneven implementation of quality benchmarks. Secondary data also highlights issues of compliance, where institutions often meet minimum requirements but fail to innovate or sustain long-term quality practices. Despite these challenges, the prospects are encouraging. NCTE's revised guidelines and NAAC's emphasis on outcome-based accreditation provide opportunities for institutions to strengthen their programs, adopt innovative pedagogies, and align teacher education with global standards. This study underscores the importance of quality assurance as a continuous process. By analyzing the roles of NCTE and NAAC, it highlights that effective regulation, accreditation, and institutional commitment are essential for preparing competent teachers who can contribute to India's educational transformation.

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KEYWORDS: *Quality assurance, Teacher education institutions, NCTE, NAAC, Accreditation, Policy implementation.*

INTRODUCTION

Quality assurance in teacher education institutions has become a central concern in India's educational landscape. As the country strives to improve the overall quality of schooling, the preparation of teachers is seen as the foundation for meaningful reform. Teacher education institutions are expected to produce competent, reflective, and innovative educators who can respond to the diverse needs of learners. However, ensuring that these institutions maintain high standards requires strong regulatory and accreditation mechanisms. In India, the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) and the

National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) play crucial roles in this process. The NCTE is responsible for regulating teacher education programs by granting recognition to institutions, prescribing curriculum frameworks, and setting minimum standards for infrastructure and faculty. Its role is to ensure that teacher education remains consistent, relevant, and aligned with national priorities. NAAC, on the other hand, evaluates institutions through accreditation, focusing on parameters such as teaching-learning processes, research, governance, infrastructure, and student

outcomes. Together, these bodies provide a dual framework of regulation and evaluation that aims to strengthen accountability and promote continuous improvement in teacher education.

Despite these mechanisms, challenges persist. Many institutions struggle with inadequate infrastructure, limited faculty development, and uneven compliance with quality benchmarks. Secondary data shows that while some institutions meet minimum requirements, they often fail to innovate or sustain long-term quality practices. This raises concerns about the effectiveness of quality assurance systems and their ability to prepare teachers for the demands of modern classrooms. At the same time, there are significant prospects. Revised NCTE guidelines and NAAC's outcome-based accreditation processes encourage institutions to adopt innovative pedagogies, integrate technology, and align with global standards. These reforms provide opportunities to transform teacher education into a dynamic and responsive system. This study, based on secondary data, explores the role of NCTE and NAAC in ensuring quality assurance in teacher education institutions. It highlights both challenges and opportunities, emphasizing that effective regulation, accreditation, and institutional commitment are essential for preparing teachers who can contribute to India's educational transformation.

Need and Significance of the Study

Teacher education institutions are the backbone of any education system because they prepare future teachers who directly shape the learning experiences of students. In India, ensuring quality in these institutions has become increasingly important as the country strives to improve the overall standard of

school education. The need for this study arises from the growing recognition that quality assurance is not just about meeting minimum requirements but about creating institutions that are innovative, accountable, and capable of producing competent teachers. The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) and the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) play vital roles in this process. NCTE provides the regulatory framework by setting standards for curriculum, infrastructure, and faculty, while NAAC evaluates institutions through accreditation, focusing on continuous improvement and accountability. Together, they form the foundation of India's quality assurance system in teacher education. However, secondary data shows that many institutions struggle with compliance, inadequate infrastructure, and limited faculty development. This highlights the urgent need to examine how these bodies can strengthen their role and ensure that quality assurance is not just a formality but a meaningful process.

The significance of this study lies in its potential to provide insights into both challenges and opportunities. By analyzing secondary data, the study emphasizes how effective regulation and accreditation can transform teacher education institutions into centers of excellence. It also highlights the importance of aligning teacher education with global standards while remaining sensitive to local needs. Ultimately, this study is significant because it underscores that quality assurance is essential for preparing teachers who can contribute to India's educational transformation and democratic vision of equitable learning for all.

Table 1: Need and Significance of the Study on Quality Assurance in Teacher Education Institutions

Aspect	Description
Need for the Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher education institutions are central to preparing competent and innovative teachers. - Quality assurance is essential to move beyond minimum compliance and ensure meaningful standards. - Many institutions face challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, limited faculty development, and uneven implementation of benchmarks. - There is an urgent need to examine how NCTE and NAAC can strengthen their roles in ensuring accountability and excellence.
Significance of the Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides insights into both challenges and opportunities in teacher education quality assurance. - Highlights how effective regulation and accreditation can transform institutions into centers of excellence. - Emphasizes the importance of aligning teacher education with global standards while remaining sensitive to local needs. - Reinforces that quality assurance is vital for preparing teachers who can contribute to India's educational transformation and democratic vision of equitable learning.

Literature Review

Quality assurance in teacher education institutions has been widely discussed in recent years, especially in the context of India's efforts to strengthen its education system. Scholars and policymakers agree that preparing competent teachers is central to improving learning outcomes, and this requires strong regulatory and accreditation mechanisms. The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) and the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) are the two main bodies responsible for ensuring standards in teacher education. Several studies highlight the role of NCTE as a regulatory authority. It provides recognition to teacher education institutions, prescribes curriculum frameworks, and sets minimum standards for infrastructure and faculty. Researchers such as Chaudhary (2024) and Jena & Das (2024) argue that NCTE has helped establish uniformity in teacher education programs across India. However, they also point out that many institutions meet only the minimum requirements, often neglecting innovation and long-term quality practices. This suggests that regulation alone is not sufficient; institutions must also be motivated to pursue excellence.

NAAC's role has been studied in terms of accreditation and continuous improvement. Rangarajan, Sharma, and Grové (2023) emphasize that NAAC's evaluation framework encourages institutions to focus on teaching-learning processes, governance, research, and student outcomes. Accreditation is seen not just as a compliance exercise but as a way to promote accountability and transparency. Yet, secondary data shows that many institutions struggle with accreditation due to inadequate infrastructure, poor faculty development, and lack of research culture. The literature also highlights challenges in implementation. Rudresh (2025) and Kumar (2025) note that rural teacher education institutions often face severe resource constraints, making it difficult to meet quality benchmarks. Urban institutions, while better resourced, grapple with overcrowding and the need to adapt to diverse socio-economic contexts. Studies on the digital divide, such as those by Chakrabarti, Sarkar, and Rai (2025), further reveal that ICT integration in teacher education remains uneven, limiting opportunities for innovation.

Despite these challenges, the literature points to significant prospects. Revised NCTE guidelines and NAAC's outcome-based accreditation processes encourage institutions to adopt innovative pedagogies, integrate technology, and align with global standards. Scholars argue that if these reforms are implemented effectively, they can transform teacher education into a dynamic and responsive system. So, the literature converges on the idea that quality assurance in teacher education institutions is essential but complex. NCTE and NAAC provide the necessary framework, yet their effectiveness depends on institutional commitment, resource availability, and continuous monitoring. The reviewed studies highlight that quality assurance must be seen as an ongoing process, one that requires collaboration between regulatory bodies, institutions, and communities to prepare teachers capable of leading India's educational transformation.

Objectives

1. To critically examine the role of the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) in regulating teacher education institutions in India through secondary data analysis.
2. To analyze the contribution of the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) in promoting accountability and continuous improvement in teacher education institutions.

Discussion

The study set out with two objectives: first, to critically examine the role of the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) in regulating teacher education institutions in India, and second, to analyze the contribution of the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) in promoting accountability and continuous improvement. Using secondary data such as policy documents, accreditation reports, and scholarly studies, the discussion highlights both achievements and challenges in the current system of quality assurance.

In relation to the first objective, NCTE has played a central role in establishing a regulatory framework for teacher education. It provides recognition to institutions, prescribes curriculum standards, and sets minimum requirements for infrastructure and faculty. This has helped bring uniformity to teacher education programs across the country. However, secondary data reveals that many institutions treat these standards as a checklist rather than a foundation for excellence. Compliance often remains superficial, with institutions meeting minimum requirements but failing to innovate or sustain long-term quality practices. This suggests that while NCTE has succeeded in creating a baseline, its regulatory role needs to evolve toward encouraging creativity, research culture, and continuous improvement. The second objective focuses on NAAC's contribution. NAAC evaluates institutions through accreditation, emphasizing parameters such as teaching-learning processes, governance, research, and student outcomes. Accreditation is designed to promote accountability and

transparency, encouraging institutions to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses. Secondary data shows that NAAC has been effective in pushing institutions to adopt better practices, but challenges remain. Many teacher education institutions, particularly in rural areas, struggle to meet accreditation requirements due to inadequate infrastructure, limited faculty development, and lack of resources. Urban institutions, though better equipped, often face issues of overcrowding and uneven quality across departments.

A recurring theme in the discussion is the gap between policy vision and ground realities. Both NCTE and NAAC provide strong frameworks, but their effectiveness depends on institutional commitment and resource availability. Rural institutions often lack the financial and infrastructural support needed to meet quality benchmarks, while urban institutions sometimes focus more on compliance than genuine improvement. This highlights the need for context-sensitive approaches, where quality assurance mechanisms are adapted to local challenges rather than applied uniformly. Another important aspect revealed by secondary data is the role of faculty development. Teacher educators are central to the success of quality assurance, yet many institutions struggle to provide regular training, research opportunities, and incentives. Without motivated and well-prepared faculty, even the best regulatory frameworks cannot translate into meaningful classroom practices. Both NCTE and NAAC must therefore place greater emphasis on faculty empowerment as part of their quality assurance agenda.

Despite these challenges, the prospects are encouraging. Revised NCTE guidelines and NAAC's outcome-based accreditation processes provide opportunities for institutions to adopt innovative pedagogies, integrate technology, and align with global standards. ICT integration, experiential learning, and research-based teaching are areas where teacher education institutions can grow significantly if supported by effective regulation and accreditation. So, the discussion shows that NCTE and NAAC together form the backbone of quality assurance in teacher education institutions. Their roles are complementary—NCTE provides regulation and recognition, while NAAC ensures accountability and continuous improvement. However, the success of these mechanisms depends on institutional commitment, adequate resources, and a culture of innovation. Quality assurance must be seen not as a one-time exercise but as an ongoing process that prepares teachers to meet the evolving demands of India's education system.

Table 2: Quality Assurance in Teacher Education Institutions in India with Special Reference to National Council for Teacher Education and National Assessment and Accreditation Council

Aspect	Role of the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE)	Role of the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC)
Nature of Body	Statutory regulatory authority under the Government of India	Autonomous accreditation body under UGC
Primary Function	Regulates and maintains norms and standards in teacher education	Assesses and accredits the quality of higher education institutions
Focus Area	Teacher education programmes such as D.El.Ed., B.Ed., M.Ed.	Overall institutional quality including teacher education colleges
Approval & Recognition	Grants recognition to teacher education institutions and programmes	Provides accreditation grades based on quality parameters
Standards & Norms	Prescribes minimum infrastructure, faculty qualifications, curriculum structure, and intake capacity	Develops quality benchmarks covering teaching-learning, research, infrastructure, and governance
Curriculum Role	Frame guidelines and model curriculum for teacher education courses	Evaluates the effectiveness of curriculum delivery and academic processes
Monitoring Mechanism	Conducts inspections and compliance checks	Peer team visits and periodic assessment cycles
Quality Indicators	Emphasis on regulatory compliance and professional standards	Emphasis on performance, outcomes, innovation, and best practices
Impact on Institutions	Ensures institutions meet minimum mandatory requirements	Encourages continuous quality improvement and institutional excellence
Certification Outcome	Recognition status (approved/not approved)	Accreditation grade (A++, A+, A, etc.)
Contribution to Quality	Establishes foundational standards for teacher preparation	Promotes holistic quality, culture and accountability

Conclusion

The study on quality assurance in teacher education institutions in India highlights the crucial role played by the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) and the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). Both bodies provide the foundation for regulating and evaluating teacher education programs, ensuring that institutions maintain standards of accountability, transparency, and relevance. NCTE sets the framework through recognition, curriculum guidelines, and minimum requirements, while NAAC promotes continuous improvement through accreditation processes that assess teaching-learning practices, governance, and outcomes. Secondary data analysis shows that while these mechanisms have brought uniformity and accountability, challenges remain. Many institutions, particularly in rural areas, struggle with inadequate infrastructure, limited faculty development, and uneven compliance with quality benchmarks. Urban institutions, though better resourced, often focus more on meeting minimum requirements than on innovation and long-term quality practices. These gaps highlight the need for stronger institutional commitment and context-sensitive approaches to quality assurance.

At the same time, the prospects are encouraging. Revised NCTE guidelines and NAAC's outcome-based accreditation provide opportunities for institutions to adopt innovative pedagogies, integrate technology, and align with global standards. Faculty empowerment, digital inclusion, and community participation can further strengthen teacher education and make it more responsive to the needs of society. So, quality assurance in teacher education institutions must be seen as a continuous process rather than a one-time exercise. Effective regulation, accreditation, and institutional dedication are essential for preparing competent teachers who can lead India's educational transformation and contribute to its vision of equitable and inclusive learning for all.

Recommendations

The study highlights that quality assurance in teacher education institutions in India is essential but faces several challenges. Based on the analysis of secondary data, a few practical recommendations can be made to strengthen the role of NCTE and NAAC and ensure meaningful outcomes.

First, NCTE should move beyond prescribing minimum standards and encourage innovation in teacher education. Institutions must be motivated to adopt creative pedagogies, research-based practices, and continuous improvement rather than treating recognition as a one-time compliance exercise.

Regular monitoring and supportive guidance can help institutions sustain quality over time.

Second, NAAC's accreditation process should be made more accessible and supportive, especially for rural institutions that struggle with infrastructure and resources. Instead of focusing only on compliance, accreditation should emphasize mentoring, capacity building, and outcome-based evaluation. This would allow institutions to gradually improve while still being accountable.

Third, faculty development must be prioritized. Teacher educators are central to quality assurance, and they need regular training, research opportunities, and incentives. Both NCTE and NAAC should integrate faculty empowerment into their frameworks to ensure that teachers are prepared to deliver modern, student-centered education.

Finally, quality assurance should be treated as a continuous process rather than a one-time exercise. Institutions must develop internal quality systems that align with NCTE and NAAC guidelines while remaining sensitive to local needs. Collaboration between policymakers, institutions, and communities can make teacher education more inclusive, innovative, and globally relevant. So, strengthening regulation, accreditation, faculty development, and institutional commitment will ensure that teacher education institutions truly prepare competent teachers who can contribute to India's educational transformation.

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