



Cover Page



THE EVOLVING ROLE OF NCTE IN REVIVING TEACHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH IN INDIA

Sarnendu Rakshit

Ph.D. Scholar. Department of Teacher Education, Central University of Haryana, Mahendergarh, India

Abstract

The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) attends as the supreme regulation body liable for planning, collaboration along with preservation of standards in teacher education in India. Established under NCTE Act, 1993, and operational since 1995, has considerably persuaded by regulatory architecture, curriculum rectification, institutional mandate and institutionalization of teacher education (NCTE, 2020). In this context of constant educational progress, global accountability frameworks, and policy amendments like National Educational Policy (NEP) 2020, the function of NCTE has been expanded over regulation regarding systematic transition and research encouragement. This study critically interrogates the evolving role of NCTE through speculative lenses of institutional theory, specialization theory along with quality assurance structures. Drawing upon a systemic retrospection of the policy documents and existential studies, this study shed light on regulatory reforms, integration of research, accreditation practices, and development of specialization mechanism with execution of challenges. The main findings of this study indicate that while NCTE has immensely evolved standardization and reduced substandard institutional proliferation, voids remain in the culture of research, outcome base assessment, inter-state cooperation and institutional choices. The study contends for a move from compliance oriented governance to research and invention oriented teacher education. Suggestions include reviving research ecosystems, rooting outcome based accreditation, encouraging collaborative networks and using data-informed policy cycles.

Keywords: NCTE, teacher education, professionalization, research integration, regulatory governance.

Introduction

Teacher education immerses a strategic position in adjusting the quality of school education system, as teachers are the most important in-school consideration of students' learning outcome (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009). In India, the addition of Teacher education institutions during the last 20th century led to professional interests related to uneven standards, commercialization along with the absence of academic rigor (Rao, 2017). These challenges necessitated the place of a statutory body for the regulation and collaboration of the teacher education at national level for the establishment of the National Council for Teacher Education, NCTE Act, 1993 (NCTE, 2020). Becoming an operational from 1995, NCTE is solely responsible for identification and recognition of the institutions for teacher education, describing minimum standards for both the academic and infrastructural, developing curriculum framework and informing government about the policy preparation of teacher (Singh & Menon, 2019). With time the role has been evolved in response to broader educational transformations, beside inclusive education authorization, digital learning directions, competency based curricula along with integrated program for teacher education (Gupta, 2018; Tripathi, 2021). The National Education Policy 2020 has beyond shifted teacher education as a multidisciplinary and research combined attempt, delegating four year combined teacher education programs and powerful institutional linkage (Government of India, 2020). Nevertheless important regulatory accomplishment, various researches disclose insistent structural weaknesses. Several studies are indicating less research output from teacher education institutions, insufficient professional development frameworks, and irregular acquiescence across states (Bose, 2018; Das, 2021). All these concerns are elevating particular question about the equilibrium between regulation and institutional autonomy, together with credibility of compliance-based accreditation models. This study mainly critically interrogates the unfolding role of NCTE in both the teacher education and research along with its theoretical framework about institutional governance and quality assurance.



Cover Page



Theoretical and conceptual framework

Institutional theory and regulatory governance: Institutional theory mainly indicates that organizations coincide to regulatory, normative and cognitive pressure to accumulate legitimacy within a field (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Function of NCTE as regulatory authority that helps to develop formal rules and standards and then to give direction to the institutions for embracing same structure and practices.

Professionalization theory: It is primarily deal with specialized knowledge along with standardized training, ethical codes and research based practices (Freidson, 2001). From the very beginning teaching has been struggling for fully professional recognition because of irregular standards and less research engagement (Zeichner, 2010). The regulatory of NCTE as in accreditation with professionalization by specifying qualifications, duration of the course, need for practicum along with research element (Chatterjee, 2021).

Quality assurance and outcome based education: The key of quality assurance frameworks deal with continuous development, accountability along with the outcome measurement (Mishra, 2019). New accreditation models are basically categorized learning outcomes and the impact of research (Chaudhary, 2022). NCTE has been presenting structured norms and the shift is dealing with outcome related (Singh, 2023).

Literature Review

Teacher education administration in India has been developed in response to expansion along with quality concern, requiring a strong regulatory authority like the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) (Rao, 2017). The purpose of NCTE establishment for assuring planned and structured development of both the teacher education beside maintenance of standards (NCTE, 2020). Research studies suggest that such regulatory frameworks are particular in system undergoing rapid institutional proliferation (Singh & Menon, 2019).

Institutional hypothesis give insight how regulatory bodies affect organizational behavior by producing normative along with coercive pressures that advertise standardization (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). In the Indian perspective, NCTE has brought institutional isomorphism across teacher education institutions by proper curriculum, norms of infrastructure and faculty expertise (Rao, 2017). While formalization enhances baseline quality, extreme uniformity might restraint contextual innovation (Mehta & Jain, 2022).

Professionalization theory highlights the primary role of regulatory councils legitimizing teaching as profession with the codified knowledge beside research engagement (Freidson, 2001). NCTE claims about least qualification and practicum requirement that mainly fortify professional identity among educators (Chatterjee, 2021). Though professionalization needs nourished research integration which remains irregular (Zeichner, 2010).

Curriculum reformation is the sole focus of NCTE policy. Later modified frameworks incorporate inclusive education, gender perspective, ICT along with critical practices (Gupta, 2018; Tripathi, 2021). Comparative works suggesting that integrated teacher education programs corresponds India with International standards (Wilcox, 2018). Patel and Joshi (2022) stated that the reason of uneven implementation is the inability of institutional capacity difference.

Productiveness of research in teacher education institutions remains moderate compared with other academic disciplines (Kumar, 2019). Das (2021) as mentioned about limited publication output in various indexed journals, ascribing this to



excessive teaching loads and insufficient research infrastructure. Bose (2018) same way observed very weak research culture with less funding and mentorship guidance.

The debate about quality assurance in teacher education institutions remains average in comparison to other academic disciplines (Kumar, 2019). New regulations of NCTE organize infrastructural compliance, though scholars' proponent expansion of the graduate competency outcomes along with school level effect measurement (Chaudhary, 2022; Verma, 2019). Singh (2023) mentioned about the importance and role of accreditation need to be revolved towards uninterrupted improvement models instead episodic survey.

Another essential concern about professional growth is remain as same. While NCTE authorizes the essential qualification of faculty along with effective professional development programs is less in number (Mohanty, 2022). Thakur (2021) focuses on the significance of consistent research training and pedagogical renewal for the educators. International partnership can be effective enough for the exposure to global research standards (Iyer, 2022).

The Policy correlation across the central and state levels represented additional challenges. Reddy (2019) recognizes the gap of implementation because of administrative fragmentation along with irregular evaluating volume. Singh and Kumar (2021) stated that multilevel governance intensify regular application about NCTE.

The National Educational Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) has further stated about the teacher education by supporting multidisciplinary incorporation and research oriented readiness (Government of India, 2020). This policy primarily shifts expansion the authorization of NCTE from regulatory direction to transformative leadership. Yet the most successful transformation needs step by step capacity development, funding support and the autonomy of institutions (Kapoor & Singh, 2021).

Objectives

1. To understand critically about NCTE regulation and policy related to teacher education
2. To examine role in fostering research and scholarly culture
3. To assess implementation challenges and governance tensions
4. To suggest a research-driven and outcome related modification framework

Methodology

This study engages a qualitative policy inspection analysis approach suggested by organized literature review (Creswell, 2014). The primary sources are NCTE regulations along with policy document and Govt. reports (NCTE, 2020; Government of India, 2020). Secondary sources are peer-reviewed research studies based on teacher education accreditation and research productiveness (Bose, 2018; Kumar, 2019). Aside from this a thematic analysis has introduced for the identification of the patterns about the regulation, research integration along with professional growth and the quality assurance (Braun & Clarke, 2006).



Cover Page



Discussions and Findings

The dissection of policy documents and scholarly literature denotes about NCTE has considerably strengthened the main structural and regulatory foundations about teacher education in all over India. The prologue of minimum standards for developing infrastructure to faculty development and curriculum duration has significantly reduced the uncontrolled proliferation of deficient institutions that stated old decades (National Council for Teacher Education [NCTE], 2020; Singh & Menon, 2019). The entire process of institutional recognition have magnified transparency and established a uniform baseline for the support of program, contributing to greater system harmony (Rao, 2017).

The findings have disclosed that the regulatory integration is more effective at the level of acquiescence than at the level of pedagogical transition. Other studies indicate about the institutions frequently prioritize documentation and infrastructural necessity over suggestive academic invention (Mishra, 2019; Bhatt, 2018). In this compliance-oriented atmosphere it clearly reflects institutional isomorphism where harmony to prescribed norms assures legitimacy but might limit contextual attempt along with reflective practice (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

The various reforms of curriculum has started under NCTE guidelines proves alignment with concurrent educational priorities like inclusive education and ICT integration (Gupta, 2018; Tripathi, 2021). The embracement of integrated teacher education programs describes an effective step toward multidisciplinary preparation in line with world standards (Wilcox, 2018). Still implementation distinctiveness across states and institutions remain clearly evident because of variation in faculty load, infrastructure along with administrative governance (Patel & Joshi, 2022; Reddy, 2019). All these irregularities are showing gaps between regulatory purpose and institutional rehearsal.

A significant finding concerns about the limited integration of research inside teacher education institutions. While the regulations of NCTE stresses faculty research activity and scholarly offering, empirical studies indicate about the modest publication output and less outward funded research projects (Kumar, 2019; Das, 2021). Lack of effective research funding limits the further extension of a solid research culture (Bose, 2018; Sharma & Rao, 2020). As a consequence, teacher education in several institutions just remain as instruction oriented instead of inquiry driven, compelling innovation and evidence based reform (Zeichner, 2010).

The apparatus of professional development is also seemed underdeveloped. While NCTE describes minimum qualifications for teacher educators, structured pathways to consistent professional development are very restricted (Mohanty, 2022). Within the initiatives of capacity building there is absence of sustained follow up along with research integration compression about long term effect (Thakur, 2021). This gap weakens the big goal about the professionalization conceived within regulatory frameworks (Freidson, 2001).

Eventually the findings reinforce governance strain within India's multilevel educational system. The challenges of coordination between state and central implementation consequence are irregular in policy application (Singh & Kumar, 2021). Monitoring tool need further strengthening for ensuring stable quality assurance and data driven appraisal (Chaudhary, 2022; Verma, 2019).

Generic the evidence indicates about the successful institutionalized regulatory transparency and quality standards, transformative effective in research integration, result related outcome and nurtured professional growth remains limited. Future reform should therefore go beyond acquiescence toward developing research oriented and innovation related ecosystem inside teacher education.



Cover Page



Recommendations

For improvement of the role of NCTE both in teacher education and research need a strategic shift from deference obsessed governance toward research aligned, outcome oriented along with creation focused reform. The following recommendations are emerging from the above stated discussion

First, NCTE must develop **national teacher education research fund** devoted to competitive research grant for the institution of teacher education. Production of research in this sector is very less because of funding constraint and lack of structural support (Kumar & Singh, 2022; Das, 2021). A centrally sponsored grant mechanism, integrated with national educational priorities, might encourage empirical studies based on pedagogy, assessment, inclusion along with digital learning. Supported funding can help to ensure institutional research cells beside interdisciplinary collaboration and reviving the knowledge base teacher education (Bose, 2018).

Second, accreditation frameworks should shift toward **outcome-based evaluation models**. Present regulatory practices largely reflecting infrastructure and documentation acquiescence (Mishra, 2019). Integrating measurable indicators like teacher skill assessments, employability, and performance feedback for school along with the output of research metrics would agree the assessment with educational effect (Verma, 2019; Chaudhary, 2022). Spontaneous monitoring system, instead of the periodic survey, can help to promote sustained quality improvement (Singh, 2023).

Third, NCTE must develop conventional **structured professional development pathways for teacher educators**. Professionalization needs ongoing scholarly engagement along with pedagogical renewal (Freidson, 2001). Compulsory annual research workshops with digital pedagogy certification courses and mentorship network are essential for improving faculty competence (Thakur, 2021; Mohanty, 2022). In case of professional development if aligned with accreditation criteria then it can assure more accountability and motivation.

Fourth, encouraging **regional research and innovation clusters** could further make improvement of collaboration across institutions. Exchange of limiting knowledge and isolate operation for teacher education institutions are another hindrance (Kapoor & Singh, 2021). NCTE can promote regional organization linking with universities, schools and center of research. This type of connectivity would enable joint projects, shared infrastructure, best practices setup with global collaborative models (Kapoor & Singh, 2021).

Fifth, improving **data clarity and digital governance mechanism** is important. A national dashboard for the publishing institutional performance indicators and research output can make further improvement of the accountability and more informed decision-making process (Rao, 2020). For improving less bureaucratic opacity and positive promotion of the stakeholder trust it needs transparent data system (Singh & Kumar, 2021).

Sixth, it is important to make balance in **central standardization with contextual flexibility**. While uniform standards assure baseline quality, strict enforcement may stifle innovation (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). NCTE needs to embrace a separate regulatory way that permits institutions with validated quality performance higher than curricular and research choice. Such measured regulation reinforces both accountability and innovation.

Seventh, incorporation of **research-based practicum model** need to be categorizes. Critical inquiry throughout school internship improves professional growth and bridges the gap in theory-practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009). NCTE can include mandate proper action research equipments within teacher education courses, supported by faculty mentoring.



Cover Page



Eight, for the long term sustainability needs **alignment with NEP 2020's multidisciplinary vision**. Four year integrated courses need to be supported by association with universities that provide diverse disciplinary proficiency (Government of India, 2020). NCTE needs to coordinate with higher education regulatory bodies for assuring unity in standards and resource appropriation.

Conclusion

The dissection of the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) shows that it involves a central and integral position in shaping the path of both the teacher education and research in India. After statutory establishment beneath the National council for teacher Education Act, 1993, NCTE has started working as main regulatory authority accountable for preserving norms, standards, and responsible apparatus in teacher development programs (NCTE, 2020). Its regulatory interventions have positively developed structural uniformity, abridged the development of sustained institutions along with robust formal detection criteria across the country (Rao, 2017; Singh & Menon, 2019). In this context, NCTE has delivered institutionalizing minimum quality standards within a historically fragmented system. Simultaneously the study discloses that regulatory unification has not impulsively translated into pedagogical depth or superiority in research. While acquiescence with infrastructural and documentation standards is advanced, but still transformative academic innovation stays irregular (Mishra, 2019; Bhatt, 2018). The supremacy of compliance-oriented practices indicates that regulation, although important, is lack to foster reflective and the inquiry driven teacher education. This detection strengthens institutional theory perspectives which argue that institutions often follow to regulatory belief for legitimacy instead substantive refinement (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Curricular reforms advancement by NCTE, specifically highlight the integration of teacher education course and continuity with NEP 2020, denotes progressive shift regarding multidisciplinary and hand on experience oriented preparation (Government of India, 2020; Tripathi, 2021). All these changes lineup Indian teacher education with global context on professionalization along with critical practice and evidence based pedagogy (Zeichner, 2010; Wilcox, 2018). Though, distinctiveness in implementation across states and institutions emphasize structural unevenness in faculty development, infrastructure and research foundation system (Patel & Joshi, 2022; Reddy, 2019). A reflective concern arises from the above discussion about relatively less research culture practice inside teacher education institutions. Notwithstanding policy provisions promising scholarly activeness, research output remains modest because of massive teaching responsibilities and limited funding and inadequate mentoring system (Kumar, 2019; Sharma & Rao, 2020). This gap is limiting the true potential of teacher education institutions to play the role of centers of innovation and creation of knowledge. Building up research integration is consequently important to make alignment between regulatory oversight and academic progress.

References

1. Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101.
2. Chatterjee, M. (2021). Teacher educators' professional development. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 18(2), 78–92.
3. Chaudhary, L. (2022). Quality assurance in teacher education. *Indian Journal of Educational Research*, 16(1), 50–68.
4. Cochran-Smith, M., & Lytle, S. L. (2009). *Inquiry as stance*. Teachers College Press.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research designs* (4th ed.). Sage.



5. Das, A. (2021). Publication trends in teacher education. *Journal of Academic Research*, 7(3), 99–115.
6. DiMaggio, P., & Powell, W. (1983). The iron cage revisited. *American Sociological Review*, 48(2), 147–160.
7. Freidson, E. (2001). *Professionalism: The third logic*. University of Chicago Press.
Government of India. (2020). *National Education Policy 2020*.
8. Gupta, N. (2018). Curriculum frameworks and teacher preparation. *Education Today*, 13(4), 55–74.
9. Iyer, R. (2022). Global partnerships in teacher education. *International Journal of Teacher Development*, 10(1), 34–52.
10. Kumar, P. (2019). Research output in teacher education. *Journal of Educational Study*, 22(1), 44–60.
11. Kumar, P., & Singh, A. (2022). Research in teacher education and policy. *Policy Perspectives in Education*, 9(2), 100–123.
12. Mehta, D., & Jain, R. (2022). Teacher educators' views of regulatory policies. *Education Insights*, 19(1), 82–98.
13. Mishra, A. (2019). Accreditation and quality assurance. *Journal of Teacher Quality*, 10(4), 30–47.
14. Mohanty, S. (2022). Continuous professional development. *Professional Development Journal*, 12(2), 71–85.
15. National Council for Teacher Education. (2020). *NCTE regulations and guidelines*.
16. National Council for Teacher Education. (2021). *Quality indicators report*.
17. Patel, R., & Joshi, L. (2022). Implementation challenges. *Journal of Education Policy*, 14(1), 120–140.
18. Rao, S. (2017). Institutional roles in teacher education. *International Journal of Education*, 20(3), 31–52.
19. Rao, V. (2020). Outcome-based evaluation. *Education Outcomes Journal*, 8(1), 13–27.
20. Reddy, G. (2019). State-level challenges. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 25(2), 58–77.
21. Sharma, P. (2019). Policy shifts. *Teacher Education Review*, 11(3), 77–98.
22. Sharma, P., & Rao, S. (2020). Research trends. *Indian Journal of Teacher Education*, 9(2), 95–110.
23. Singh, D. (2023). Quality assurance indicators. *Journal of Teacher Education Quality*, 3(1), 1–25.
24. Singh, M., & Menon, J. (2019). Standardisation in teacher education. *Teacher Education Journal*, 8(4), 40–62.
25. Singh, S., & Kumar, N. (2021). Policy coherence. *Educational Policy Studies*, 13(2), 103–124.