

Role of NAAC in Maintenance of Quality for Teacher Education

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The teacher education system in the country is extremely vast and diverse, covering so many institutions at different levels of elementary, secondary and post-graduate programmes. The Parliament appreciated the role of quality teacher education in providing quality teachers for quality school education and passed an Act in 1993 for setting up of the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) as a statutory body. It was also felt that a system of rating by an independent autonomous body recognizing teacher education institutions will bring credibility in functioning of the institutions and the quality of the programme. Teaching being a profession and teacher being a professional, the system of assessment and accreditation of teacher education institutions by an independent body such as National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) is being made an effective instrument for raising of quality of teacher education programmes and for enabling institutions in using their physical and instructional infrastructure optimally and professionally. The scheme of assessment and accreditation will help institutions to carry out their strength, weakness, opportunity and threat analysis, and in making their programmes more attractive to the students and to their potential employers.

The accreditation will promote the culture of self-appraisal and self-evaluation of performance by institutions, determined pursuit of standards of excellence set by themselves and mutual sharing of institutional experiences. It will also play a leadership role in the creation of a climate conducive for healthy competition among teacher education institutions to pursue quality and excellence and influence one another with their good practices. Accreditation process initiates institution into innovative and modern methods of pedagogy. It gives the institution a new sense of direction and identity. It provides the society with reliable information on the quality of education offered by the institution.

Role of NAAC in Maintenance of Quality for Teacher Education:

The teacher education system in the country is extremely vast and diverse, covering so many institutions at different levels of elementary, secondary and post-graduate programmes. The system is managed by several agencies like Government departments, Universities and other autonomous establishments specifically created for the purpose. The momentous developments and rapid advances in the field of education and training of teachers and the revolutionary changes in the modes of imparting and receiving instructions pose multitudes of challenges for the teacher educators and institutions. Resistance to move with time and technology from various quarters and the lack of systematic awareness of the national and global challenges have created a lot of imbalance on facilities, standards and quality of teacher education institutions, just as in any other sectors of education. It is in this background that the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) was established as a statutory body under the provision of the NCTE Act 1993 in 1995 with the main objectives of achieving planned and co-ordinated development of the teacher education system throughout the country, for the regulation and proper maintenance of norms and standards in the teacher education system and for matters connected therewith.

It was also felt that a system of rating by an independent autonomous body recognizing teacher education institutions will bring credibility in functioning of the institutions and the quality of the programme. Teaching being a profession and teacher being a professional, the system of assessment and accreditation of teacher education institutions by an independent body such as National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) is being made an effective instrument for raising of quality of teacher education programmes and for enabling institutions in using their physical and instructional infrastructure optimally and professionally. The concept of accreditation of educational institutions is relatively new phenomenon in the country. Accreditation assures the educational community, the general public, and other agencies or organizations that an institution or program (a) has clearly defined and educationally objectives, (b) maintains conditions under which their achievement can reasonably or expected (c) is in fact accomplishing them substantially, and (d) can be expected to continue to do so. Accreditation in teacher education is primarily concerned with ensuring the quality of teachers trained from institutions and their fitness or suitability to serve the purpose expected from them. The purpose of accreditation is to find out

how far an institution is performing beyond the minimum stipulations for achieving quality and excellence. It is a process for improving the quality of education and ensuring the suitability and quality of the products of the educational process to fulfill the purposes expected of them. It is a quality certification given by the accreditation agency to an institution, a course or a programme. Accreditation is an assurance of quality of both the institutional processes and outputs. Accreditation ensures accountability and efficiency with reference to the intrinsic and extrinsic functions of the institutions. It enables the society to find out the extent to which society expectations from the educational system are met and imparts credibility to the system. It safeguards by ensuring quality and standards of the trained individuals from the educational institutions. This is done after carrying out appropriate criteria-based evaluation. The NAAC has identified the following seven criteria to serve as the basis for its assessment procedures:

Curricular Aspects
Teaching-Learning and Evaluation
Research, Consultancy and Extension
Infrastructure and Learning Resources
Student Support and Progression
Governance and leadership
Innovative practices

Therefore the question arises automatically-

What is the Role of NAAC in Maintenance of Quality for Teacher Education?

THE main role of NATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND ACCREDITATION COUNCIL (NAAC) which is an autonomous body established by the University Grants Commission (UGC), is to assess and accredit institutions of higher education in the country.

ASSESSMENT AND ACCREDITATION in teacher education is justified on several counts.

In the first place, presently there exist no benchmarking standards or criteria for institutions desirous of pursuing excellence, so there is a need for some standards by which institutions can get a base. And can compare themselves with their peers or standards.

Institutions also feel the need for mutual sharing of their special and innovative features which function as a motivating factor to strive to achieve higher performance standards. It is common knowledge that the examination results by themselves do not provide a comprehensive picture of the institutional profile.

The accreditation will promote the culture of self-appraisal and self-evaluation of performance by institutions, determined pursuit of standards of excellence set by themselves and mutual sharing of institutional experiences.

It will also play a leadership role in the creation of a climate conducive for healthy competition among teacher education institutions to pursue quality and excellence and influence one another with their good practices. It will also create an environment for learning and staff development.

The accreditation process makes exacting demands on institutions in terms of institutional context and educational effectiveness.

Accreditation involves assessment and gradation of an institution with reference to different parameters and taking into account the multi-dimensional phenomenon of its functioning. The assessment process addresses both the intrinsic and extrinsic requirements of institutions, these being the functioning of the institution and relevance and utility of the output.

It seeks to assess the extent to which institutions pursue excellence in their job of imparting quality education in a culture of positive competition.

It will introduce appropriate systems and process in place as per the need.

It will recognize the efforts of staff without creating a competitive environment.

The scheme of assessment and accreditation will help institutions to carry out their strength, weakness, opportunity and threat analysis, and in making their programmes more attractive to the students and to their potential employers.

Accreditation also assists the, students, parents and employers in identifying, acknowledging and encouraging institutions and programmes, which fulfill norms and standards and make proper use of their services.

The most significant aspect of the whole process is self-appraisal by institutions themselves through self-study combined with unbiased, informed and transparent review by peers.

There are some other functions for which assessment and accreditation is important. These are-

Identification of best practices:

The identification of best practices depends on many variables such as institutional goals, pedagogic requirements, global concerns, local contexts, nature of learners,

Competencies of staff, infrastructure facilities and governance requirements. All these should be kept in mind while identifying the best practices.

Implementation of best practices:

The implementation approach focuses more on performance than on promises. Here quality is considered as attention to details. Total Quality Management is an approach of implementation which focuses on quality of all aspects of operations with the participation of everyone in the organization.

Dissemination of best practices

Many higher education institutions do not attempt certain practices due to lack of information about the feasibility and adaptability of the best practices. It is observed that the best practices are the borrowed practices. We must learn and benefit from each other's experience. The NAAC is advocating every institution to establish Internal Quality Assurance Cell, with one of the functions of recording and dissemination of best practices followed by that institution. The recording of practices is also a means of quality improvement.

Conclusion-

The entire activities of self-evaluation, peer review, assessment and accreditation have to be seen as ingredients of a development-oriented process for the teacher education institutions. It has to be viewed as a participatory process. The philosophy underlying the whole process is ameliorative and enabling rather than punitive or judgemental, so that all constituencies of the teacher education institutions are empowered to maximize their resources, opportunities and capabilities. The accreditation process helps the institution to know its strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities through an informed review; it identifies internal areas of planning and resource allocation; it enhances collegiality on the campus. The outcome of the accreditation process provides the funding agencies with objective and systematic database for performance funding. Accreditation process initiates institution into innovative and modern methods of pedagogy. It gives the institution a new sense of direction and identity. It provides the society with reliable information on the quality of education offered by the institution. As a result of the accreditation process the employers have access to information on standards in recruitment. It also promotes intra-institutional and inter-institutional interactions. Finally, it can be said that NAAC plays a very important role in improving the quality of our teacher education institutions.

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