

Institutional Quality Assurance Duties and Their Influence on Faculty Professional Identity and Teaching Effectiveness in Select Autonomous Engineering Institutions

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Abstract:

Quality assurance (QA) mechanisms have become integral to higher education institutions in ensuring academic standards, accountability, and institutional credibility. However, the expanding scope of QA-related responsibilities has significantly altered faculty work patterns, particularly in autonomous institutions. This study examines the influence of institutional quality assurance workload on faculty professional identity and teaching effectiveness in select autonomous engineering institutions in Hyderabad City. Adopting a quantitative research design, data were collected from 151 faculty members using a structured questionnaire measuring quality assurance workload, faculty professional identity, and teaching effectiveness. Descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, Pearson's correlation, and multiple regression techniques were employed to analyze the data. The findings reveal that faculty perceive quality assurance activities—such as accreditation documentation, reporting, and frequent reviews—as a substantial addition to their regular workload. Inferential results indicate that quality assurance workload significantly influences faculty professional identity and teaching effectiveness. Increased QA demands are associated with reduced professional autonomy, weaker connection to core teaching roles, and constraints on instructional preparation, innovation, and student mentoring. The study also establishes a significant positive relationship between faculty professional identity and teaching effectiveness, highlighting the importance of professional self-concept in sustaining instructional quality. Overall, the findings suggest that while quality assurance systems are essential for institutional improvement, excessive and compliance-driven QA workloads may adversely affect faculty roles and teaching outcomes. The study underscores the need for balanced, faculty-centered quality assurance practices that align accountability requirements with effective teaching and faculty well-being to achieve sustainable academic excellence.

Keywords: Quality Assurance Workload; Faculty Professional Identity; Teaching Effectiveness; Autonomous Engineering Institutions; Higher Education Quality; Faculty Workload Management

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

In recent decades, higher education institutions have seen a notable growth in quality assurance (QA) mechanisms aimed at improving academic standards, accountability, and global competitiveness. Processes like accreditation, audits, outcome-based education frameworks, and thorough documentation have become essential to how institutions operate. While these mechanisms aim to encourage transparency and ongoing improvement, they have also led to a significant rise in faculty workload, especially in administrative and compliance-related tasks (Harvey & Williams, 2018; NAAC, 2020). Faculty members must now engage not only in teaching and research but also in extensive quality documentation, reporting, and monitoring activities.

The increasing QA workload has raised concerns about its effect on faculty professional identity and teaching effectiveness. Studies indicate that excessive administrative demands can lead to role overload, stress, and a gradual change in faculty identity—from educators and scholars to compliance-focused administrators (Henkel, 2005; Teelken, 2012). Additionally, the time and mental effort spent on QA-related tasks may decrease faculty involvement in teaching preparation, student interaction, and innovative teaching methods, thus affecting teaching quality (Kenny, 2018). In this context, the purpose of this study is to examine the extent of the quality assurance workload and its effects on faculty professional identity and teaching effectiveness in higher education institutions, with a specific focus on autonomous engineering colleges.

1.2 Scope and Significance of the Research

The scope of the study is confined to faculty members working in autonomous engineering colleges in Hyderabad City. The research focuses on quality assurance workload, faculty professional identity, and teaching effectiveness. The findings of this study will be significant for institutional leaders, policymakers, and accreditation agencies by highlighting the faculty-level consequences of QA practices. The study will contribute to higher education literature by offering empirical evidence to support balanced QA policies that enhance institutional quality without compromising faculty effectiveness and well-being.

2. Literature Review

The literature on quality assurance in higher education largely emphasizes its role in improving institutional performance, accountability, and standardization. Numerous studies report that QA systems involving accreditation processes, internal quality audits, and continuous documentation have substantially increased faculty workload (Harvey, 2014; Cardoso et al., 2016). Faculty members often experience role overload as they are expected to manage teaching, research, administrative duties, and QA responsibilities simultaneously. While QA initiatives aim to enhance quality, researchers note that excessive compliance requirements may lead to work intensification and reduced job satisfaction among faculty.

Another stream of research focuses on faculty professional identity and how it is shaped by institutional policies and managerial practices. Professional identity is closely linked to autonomy, academic freedom, and meaningful engagement in teaching and research (Henkel, 2005). Several studies indicate that increased managerialism and accountability pressures can weaken faculty members' sense of professional purpose and academic self-concept (Teelken, 2012; Winter, 2009). However, most studies examine professional identity in a broad policy context, with limited focus on quality assurance workload as a distinct influencing factor. Research on teaching effectiveness predominantly concentrates on instructional strategies, learning outcomes, and student engagement (Hattie, 2009). Although some studies acknowledge that workload and stress negatively affect teaching quality, the relationship between QA workload and teaching effectiveness remains underexplored. Importantly, existing studies tend to examine QA workload, professional identity, and teaching effectiveness in isolation rather than within an integrated framework. Moreover, empirical evidence from the context

of autonomous engineering institutions in India is notably limited, indicating the need for focused investigation.

2.1 Research Gap

A critical analysis of the existing literature reveals a clear research gap. While prior studies have examined quality assurance practices, faculty workload, professional identity, and teaching effectiveness independently, there is a lack of integrated empirical research that examines the combined effect of quality assurance workload on faculty professional identity and teaching effectiveness within a single framework. Additionally, limited attention has been given to autonomous engineering colleges, where QA demands are particularly intensive. The absence of context-specific, faculty-centered studies addressing this interrelationship highlights the need for the present research.

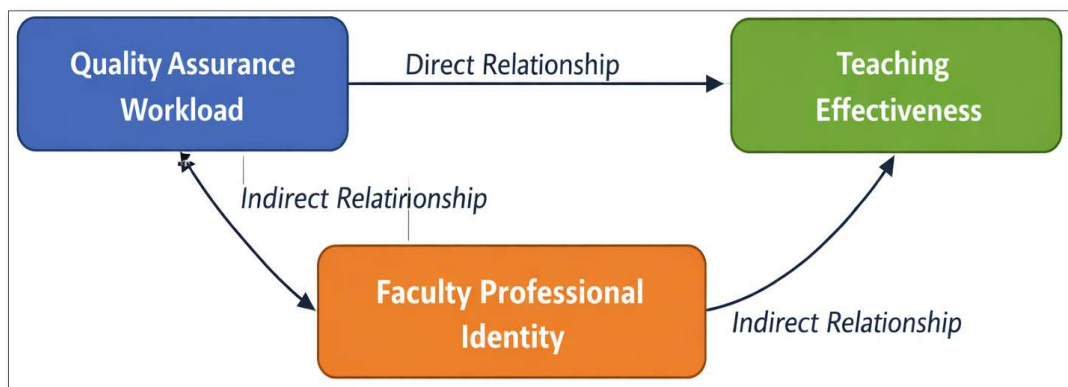
2.2 Research Objectives

1. To examine the nature and extent of quality assurance workload experienced by faculty members in autonomous engineering institutions.
2. To analyze the influence of quality assurance workload on faculty professional identity.
3. To assess the impact of quality assurance workload on teaching effectiveness among faculty members.
4. To examine the association between faculty professional identity and teaching effectiveness.
5. To provide evidence-based insights for institutional leaders to balance quality assurance responsibilities with effective teaching and faculty well-being.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of the study positions quality assurance workload as the independent variable influencing teaching effectiveness as the dependent variable, with faculty professional identity playing a critical explanatory role. Increased QA workload is expected to shape faculty professional identity, which in turn affects teaching effectiveness. The framework illustrates both direct and indirect relationships among the variables.

Conceptual Framework Diagram



3. Research Methodology

The study adopts a quantitative research design using a descriptive and analytical approach. The population consists of faculty members employed in autonomous engineering colleges in Hyderabad City. A stratified random sampling technique will be used to ensure representation across departments and academic ranks. Data will be collected through a structured questionnaire designed to measure quality assurance workload, faculty professional identity, and teaching effectiveness using Likert-scale items.

The questionnaire will be developed based on established instruments from previous studies and validated through pilot testing. Data analysis will be carried out using statistical tools such as descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis. Reliability and validity tests will be conducted to ensure the robustness of the measurement scales. These techniques are appropriate for addressing the research objectives and testing the stated hypotheses.

3.1 Research Hypotheses

1. **H₁:** Quality assurance workload has a significant negative influence on faculty professional identity.
2. **H₂:** Quality assurance workload has a significant negative impact on teaching effectiveness.
3. **H₃:** Faculty professional identity has a significant positive relationship with teaching effectiveness.

4. Data Analysis & interpretation

To address the objectives of the study and test the proposed hypotheses, data analysis was carried out in three systematic stages. First, descriptive statistics were used to summarize faculty perceptions regarding quality assurance (QA) workload, professional identity, and teaching effectiveness. Second, reliability analysis was conducted to examine the internal consistency of the measurement scales using Cronbach's Alpha. Finally, inferential statistical techniques such as correlation and multiple regression analysis were employed to assess the relationships and influence among the study variables.

4.1 Descriptive Statistics:

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize and present faculty perceptions regarding quality assurance workload, professional identity, and teaching effectiveness. The analysis includes the computation of mean scores and standard deviations for each item, providing an overview of the central tendency and variability of responses collected from 151 faculty members.

Descriptive Statistics(N=151)			
	Statement	Mean	S.D.
Quality Assurance Workload	Quality assurance activities such as accreditation and audits add significantly to my regular workload.	1.55	0.971
	Documentation and reporting requirements related to QA consume a large portion of my working time.	2.04	0.824
	I often have to work beyond regular hours to complete QA-related tasks.	1.57	0.997
	QA responsibilities are added to my duties without a reduction in teaching or administrative workload.	2.03	0.820
	The frequency of QA reviews and inspections increases my work pressure.	1.61	0.993
Faculty Professional Identity	I see myself more as an educator than as an administrative or compliance officer.	1.75	1.275
	Increased QA responsibilities make me feel less connected to my core-teaching role.	2.06	0.896
	QA-related tasks affect how I perceive my professional identity as a faculty member.	1.84	1.291
	I feel that my academic expertise is underutilized due to excessive compliance work.	2.10	0.870
	Administrative and QA duties reduce my sense of professional autonomy.	1.77	1.224
Teaching	QA workload limits the time I can spend on lesson preparation and course planning.	1.61	1.107

My classroom engagement is affected due to work pressure from QA responsibilities.	1.99	0.829
I find it difficult to adopt innovative teaching methods because of QA-related demands.	1.64	1.098
QA documentation reduces the time available for student mentoring and academic guidance.	2.04	0.886
Teaching quality improves when QA requirements are well structured and manageable.	1.63	1.111

The descriptive results indicate that faculty perceive quality assurance activities as a significant addition to their workload, increasing work pressure and extending working hours. Increased QA responsibilities also affect faculty professional identity by reducing autonomy, underutilizing academic expertise, and weakening engagement with core teaching roles. Furthermore, QA demands limit time for effective lesson preparation, innovative teaching, and student mentoring, though well-structured QA processes are perceived to support teaching quality.

4.2 Section-2: Reliability Analysis

Reliability analysis was conducted to assess the internal consistency of the measurement scales used in the study. Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was employed to determine the reliability of the items measuring quality assurance workload, faculty professional identity, and teaching effectiveness.

S. No.	Variable	Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
1	Quality Assurance Workload	5	0.927	Excellent
2	Faculty Professional Identity	5	0.943	Excellent
3	Teaching Effectiveness	5	0.927	Excellent

The results of the reliability analysis demonstrate that all three constructs exhibit excellent internal consistency. The Quality Assurance Workload scale recorded a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.927, Faculty Professional Identity showed a value of 0.943, and Teaching Effectiveness reported a value of 0.927. These alpha coefficients exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating that the items within each construct are highly consistent and reliable. Therefore, the measurement scales used in the study are considered robust and suitable for further inferential statistical analysis.

4.3 Section-3: Inferential Statistics

This section presents a systematic analysis and interpretation of the data collected from faculty members of autonomous engineering institutions to address the research objectives and test the proposed hypotheses. The analysis was carried out using appropriate statistical techniques in a structured sequence. Initially, descriptive statistics were employed to summarize faculty perceptions regarding quality assurance workload, professional identity, and teaching effectiveness. Subsequently, reliability analysis using Cronbach's Alpha was conducted to assess the internal consistency of the measurement scales. Finally, inferential statistical techniques, specifically Pearson's correlation and regression analysis, were applied to examine the relationships and influence among the study variables. The results are interpreted in alignment with the conceptual framework to provide meaningful insights into the impact of quality assurance workload on faculty professional identity and teaching effectiveness.

4.3.1 H₁: Quality assurance workload has a significant negative influence on faculty professional identity.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics and Correlation between Quality Assurance Workload and Faculty Professional Identity (N = 151)					
			Correlation		
Variable	Mean	S.D.	FPI	QAW	
FPI	1.90	1.02	1		
QAW	1.76	0.81	0.256**	1	
<i>Note: **p < 0.01 (one-tailed, FPI - Faculty Professional Identity, QAW - Quality Assurance Workload</i>					
Table 2: Regression Analysis – Effect of Quality Assurance Workload on Faculty Professional Identity					
Model Statistics	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F-value	Sig. (p)
Value	0.26	0.07	0.059	10.414	0.002
Predictor	B	S.E	β	t	p
Constant	1.34	0.19	—	6.984	0
QAW	0.32	0.10	0.256	3.227	0.002
<i>Dependent Variable: Faculty Professional Identity(FPI)</i>					
<i>FPI - Faculty Professional Identity, QAW - Quality Assurance Workload</i>					

The results of the correlation and regression analyses indicate a statistically significant relationship between quality assurance workload and faculty professional identity. The Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = 0.256$, $p < 0.01$) suggests a moderate association between the two variables. The regression model is statistically significant ($F = 10.414$, $p = 0.002$), confirming that quality assurance workload is a significant predictor of faculty professional identity. The R^2 value of 0.065 indicates that quality assurance workload explains 6.5% of the variance in faculty professional identity. The standardized beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.256$, $p < 0.01$) demonstrates that changes in quality assurance workload significantly influence how faculty perceive their professional identity. These findings support the acceptance of H_1 , indicating that quality assurance workload plays a meaningful role in shaping faculty professional identity in autonomous engineering institutions.

4.3.2 H₂: Quality assurance workload has a significant negative impact on teaching effectiveness.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics and Correlation between Quality Assurance Workload and Teaching Effectiveness (N = 151)				
Variable	Mean	S.D.	Correlation	
			TE	QAW
TE	1.78	0.89	1	
QAW	1.76	0.81	0.472**	1
<i>Note: **p < 0.01 (one-tailed, TE - Teaching Effectiveness, QAW - Quality Assurance Workload</i>				

Table 4: Regression Analysis – Effect of Quality Assurance Workload on Teaching Effectiveness					
Model Statistics	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F-value	Sig. (p)
Value	0.472	0.223	0.218	42.759	0.000
Predictor	B	S.E	β	t	p
Constant	0.869	0.154	—	5.660	0.000
QAW	0.518	0.079	0.472	6.359	0.000
<i>Dependent Variable: Faculty Professional Identity(FPI)</i>					
<i>TE - Teaching Effectiveness, QAW - Quality Assurance Workload</i>					

The results of the correlation and regression analyses reveal a strong and statistically significant relationship between quality assurance workload and teaching effectiveness. The Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = 0.472$, $p < 0.001$) indicates a substantial association between the two variables. The regression model is statistically significant ($F = 42.759$, $p < 0.001$), confirming that quality assurance workload is a strong predictor of teaching effectiveness. The R^2 value of 0.223 suggests that approximately 22.3% of the variance in teaching effectiveness is explained by quality assurance workload. Furthermore, the standardized beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.472$, $p < 0.001$) demonstrates that changes in quality assurance workload significantly influence teaching effectiveness. These findings provide empirical support for the acceptance of H₂, indicating that quality assurance workload has a significant impact on teaching effectiveness among faculty members in autonomous engineering institutions.

4.3.3 H₃: Faculty professional identity has a significant positive relationship with teaching effectiveness.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics and Correlation between Faculty Professional Identity and Teaching Effectiveness (N = 151)					
Variable	Mean	S.D.	Correlation		
			TE	FPI	
TE	1.78	0.89	1		
FPI	1.90	1.02	0.257**	1	
<i>Note: **p < 0.01 (one-tailed, FPI – Faculty Professional Identity, TE - Teaching Effectiveness</i>					
Table 6: Regression Analysis – Effect of Quality Assurance Workload on Teaching Effectiveness					
Model Statistics	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F-value	Sig. (p)
Value	0.257	0.066	0.060	10.526	0.001
Predictor	B	S.E	β	t	p
Constant	1.352	0.150	—	9.028	0.000
FPI	0.225	0.069	0.257	3.244	0.001
<i>Dependent Variable: Teaching Effectiveness (TE)</i>					
<i>FPI – Faculty Professional Identity</i>					

The correlation and regression results demonstrate a statistically significant positive relationship between faculty professional identity and teaching effectiveness. The Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = 0.257$, $p < 0.01$) indicates a moderate association between the two variables. The regression model is statistically significant ($F = 10.526$, $p = 0.001$), confirming that faculty professional identity is a meaningful predictor of teaching effectiveness. The R^2 value of 0.066 suggests that faculty professional identity explains 6.6% of the variance in teaching effectiveness. Furthermore, the standardized beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.257$, $p = 0.001$) indicates that stronger faculty professional identity is associated with higher teaching effectiveness. These findings support the acceptance of H₃, highlighting the importance of professional identity in enhancing teaching effectiveness in autonomous engineering institutions.

5. Research Findings

The study effectively achieves all the stated research objectives through systematic descriptive and inferential analysis. The descriptive results address the first objective by establishing that faculty in autonomous engineering institutions experience a substantial quality assurance workload, particularly from accreditation-related documentation, reporting, and review processes, which significantly increase work pressure and extend working hours.

The second objective is achieved through correlation and regression analysis, which demonstrate that quality assurance workload significantly influences faculty professional identity. Increased QA responsibilities are associated with reduced professional autonomy, weakened connection to core teaching roles, and a perceived underutilization of academic expertise. These findings indicate that compliance-oriented QA practices reshape faculty professional identity.

The third objective is supported by regression results showing that quality assurance workload has a significant impact on teaching effectiveness. Excessive QA demands restrict time for lesson preparation, innovative pedagogy, and student mentoring, thereby affecting instructional quality. Finally, the fourth objective is met through evidence of a significant positive relationship between faculty professional identity and teaching effectiveness, highlighting the role of professional self-concept in sustaining effective teaching. Overall, the findings validate the conceptual framework and support all proposed hypotheses.

5.1 Research Implications and Future Scope of Research

The findings underscore the need for higher education institutions to adopt balanced and faculty-centered quality assurance practices. Institutional leaders should streamline QA processes, ensure equitable workload distribution, and provide administrative support to reduce faculty burden and protect teaching effectiveness. Strengthening faculty professional identity through autonomy and recognition can further enhance instructional quality. For accreditation agencies, the study highlights the importance of flexible and outcome-oriented QA models that prioritize academic development over procedural compliance. Future research may adopt longitudinal or qualitative approaches to explore the long-term effects of QA workload and to examine moderating factors such as institutional culture, leadership support, and digital readiness.

5.2 Research Ethics

The study was conducted in accordance with established ethical guidelines. Participation was voluntary, informed consent was obtained, and respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. Data were used solely for academic purposes and analyzed in aggregate form. The researcher maintained objectivity and transparency throughout the research process.

6. Conclusion

This study comprehensively examined the influence of institutional quality assurance workload on faculty professional identity and teaching effectiveness in autonomous engineering institutions, integrating descriptive and inferential evidence within a unified analytical framework. The findings reveal that while quality assurance mechanisms are essential for maintaining academic standards, accountability, and institutional credibility, their increasing compliance-oriented demands significantly add to faculty workload and reshape academic roles. Excessive quality assurance responsibilities were found to influence faculty professional identity by reducing autonomy, weakening engagement with core teaching functions, and limiting the effective use of academic expertise. The study further demonstrates that heightened quality assurance workload adversely affects teaching effectiveness by constraining time for lesson preparation, pedagogical innovation, classroom engagement, and student mentoring. Importantly, the positive relationship between faculty professional identity and teaching effectiveness underscores that a strong sense of academic purpose and professional self-concept is critical for sustaining high-quality instruction. Collectively, the results confirm that unbalanced quality assurance practices can undermine both faculty well-being and instructional quality, even as they aim to enhance institutional performance. The study concludes that achieving sustainable academic excellence in autonomous engineering institutions requires the strategic alignment of quality assurance mechanisms with balanced workload management, faculty autonomy, and supportive institutional practices that prioritize teaching effectiveness alongside accountability.

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