

Total Quality Management in Higher Educational Institutions: A Study

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Abstract-

The quality of higher education is a area of concern for everybody at present situation. Different commission reports and studies has recognized the concern areas and recommended for its improvement.Both central as well as state government and many constitutional agencies are taking proper steps.But these steps and measures alone will not be so effective unless educational institutions and faculty take active steps and measures.Modernization and Globalization taking Indian higher education infront of a serious situation where poor performing institutions are facing a threat of survival.The importance of TQM(Total Quality Management) have been acknowledged by various national and international agencies around the world.Total Quality Management in educational institution of India is the need of hour.Serious efforts are needed by the management and administration of higher educational institution to meet the standards and norms of international education.Many institutions achieved excellence by following and practicing TQM policy.This paper shows the positive impact of TQM and explains how educational institution can improve by TQM,the need of continuous quality improvement,components of TQM,challenges of TQM.

Key Words: Total Quality Management, Higher Education, Globalization, International Education, Standards.

Introduction:

Higher education plays an important role in the economic and cultural development of the nation.Over the last few years, many innovative ideas were put into practice to enhance the performance of academic and educational standards.The aim is to continuous development.If institutions really want to enhance the quality of higher education system then it is utmost necessary for them to focus on the concept of Total Quality Management.

several factors like performance indicators, programme, assessment and audits, imported models have contributed to raising public concerns over higher educational quality for past few decades.Some applicability of quality management principles, methodologies and tools to the Higher Education Institutions(HEI) was under the questions as many thought that, those management theories derived from industry and had nothing to do with Higher Education ethos.The over all condition of Higher Education in India not matches to some extent with global quality standards.

Modernization, Globalization, growing students' number, mass enrollment rates, changing social conditions, job descriptions are related with quality educational programme in higher education.TQM is the process of changing the culture of an institution and redirecting it towards superior product or service quality (Gaither 1996).According to Witcher(1989),TQM is composed of three terms,Total:meaning that every person is involved including customer and suppliers,Quality: implying that customer requirements are met exactly and Management:indicating that senior executives are committed.

Higher Education :

Higher education imparts in-depth knowledge and understanding so as to advance the students to new frontiers of knowledge in different walks of life. It broadens the intellectual powers of the individual. According to Ronald Barnett (1992) there are four predominant concepts of higher education.

- 1) Higher education as the production of qualified human resources.
- 2) Higher education as training for a research career.
- 3) Higher education as the efficient management of teaching profession.
- 4) Higher education as a matter of extending life chances.

All the four mentioned concepts of higher education are not exclusive; rather they are integrated and give an overall picture of higher education.

In 1988 at Mt. Edgecomb High School in Sitka, Alaska, David Langford the school's technology teacher/coordinator, applied total quality concepts in his classes. TQM has become increasingly popular in education, as evidenced by the plethora of books and journal articles since 1990.

Quality and Total Quality Management:

At first we have to understand what is quality, before defining the term TQM. Quality is directly related to customer. It is a dynamic state related with products, people, process, services, environment and the needs and desires of customers. TQM is related with services to others (De Jager H.J., Nieuwenhuis F.J., 2005)

The concept of TQM is developed by W. Edwards Deming to improve the quality of goods and services. It encourages overall development and continuous development. TQM is not a single process or one-time process but a journey that never ends. TQM is a way to survive and succeed (Charantimath, P.M., 2009)

Total Quality Management can be described as:

Total = Made up of the whole

Quality = Degree of excellence a product or service provides

Management = Act, art or manner of handling, controlling, directing etc (Basterfield, D.H., Michna, C.B., & et al., 2008).

Objective of the study:

These are the following objectives of my study –

- 1) To study the strategies adopted by various educational institutions for proper implementation of TQM.
- 2) To study the components of TQM, challenges of TQM in higher education system, need of quality improvement.
- 3) To study the importance of quality management in higher education.
- 4) To understand the principles of TQM for quality improvement.

Methodology:

The study has been conducted by consulting existing literature through historical, analytical and empirical approaches.

The present work is mainly based on secondary information collected from various sources like journals, articles, books, websites, etc. Qualitative analysis method was used for the present study.

Importance and benefits of TQM in HEI:

In the modern scenario of society, HEI's are forced to implement strategies within global context. Total Quality Management (TQM) has been described as a management philosophy and a way of thinking that has helped higher education institutions move towards achieving excellence in providing education. To ensure high quality services, market needs and satisfy the needs of stakeholders TQM must be widely recognized and successfully implemented in HEI's.

Adoption of TQM will be helpful for institutions of higher education for maintaining their competitiveness. In 21st century, most higher education institutions are facing more or less same problems globally. To overcome the challenges is very important to compete, survive and achieve excellence. Through the achievement of various benefits such as improving the quality of service or product, reducing the cost, increasing the production capacity the concept of TQM can be fulfilled.

In the views Fiegenbaum (1994) TQM is a management approach that could solve the problems of rising cost and pressure to provide quality education within US higher education institutions.

Roffe (1998) considers that due to open competition, students are becoming more customers as well as consumers and expected to pay a growing share of the costs of education. This deals to competitive forces that generate different programmes for different student groups.

Sahney et al. (2004) consider education system as a transformation process comprising of inputs of students, teachers, administrative staff, physical facilities and process. Teaching, learning and administration are included in the process. Examination, results, employment, earnings and satisfaction are included as an output.

Components of TQM:

For quality work a teamwork should be created by management among employees. The involvement of employees will enhance the morale of the employees and it will also create a sense of responsibilities among employees. Schmidt (1998) discusses how the four Total Quality Management (TQM) principles: empowerment, team work, customer satisfaction, continuous improvement can help teachers and students increase their efficiency and effectiveness in the classroom. To make total quality possible every individual who is working in an organisation should practice and participate in the continuous improvement plan.

Accountability, leadership, co-operation are those dimensions of TQM without which, it can not have any effect on the organisation. For the betterment and efficient functioning, performance, quality these aspects of TQM are to be implemented. Hertzler (1996) noticed that implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) in an organisation implies a fundamental change in the way that organisation functions. There is a great potential for TQM in higher education if properly implemented and given sufficient time and this is agreed by the authorities too.

Another one of the most important indicators of TQM is infrastructure. we cannot successfully implement TQM in education if we lack in sophisticated infrastructure, modern technology. An institution should fulfil quality criteria like well equipped classroom, healthy environment, internet facility, proper electrification, water supply, drinking water, well equipped laboratories, libraries, playground etc.

Mehra and Munsung (2004) reported that to enhance the educational learning through some TQM principles, co-operative learning is a tool to enhance classroom learning and proposed to use specific TQM principles to enhance the learning process by adopting teamwork and empowerment. Promotion of a quality culture which is enabling individual actors to continuously improve their educational practice, is a need.

There are five major steps to TQM, and each are vital to have a victorious implementation (Napierala, 2012). They are

1. Commitment and understanding from employees
2. Quality improvement culture
3. Continuous improvement in process
4. Focus on customer requirements
5. Effective control.

The main objective of this study is to know TQM effectiveness in academic institutions. we should study its effectiveness on the five components of service for students namely, physical environment and resources, human resources, process and products. Adams (1993) further introduce in an article at UNICEF that quality education consists of elements like:

- a) Contents are showing in significant syllabus materials.
- b) Students are in good condition, sustained well, willing to co-operate and determined to study and backed-up well by their families and society.
- c) Methods in which skilled trainers apply child-centered training techniques and competent evaluation to promote education and lessen discrepancy.
- d) Environment is distinguished as in good condition, free from harm, keen on gender and maintain sufficient resources and facilities.
- e) Outcome which comprises intelligence, competence and philosophy that are associated to national aspiration for education and embrace positive co-operation in community.

In spite of these any educational institution which wants to implement TQM should develop its own model.

Quality, as a concept in 20th century, has its roots in the industry and management. The table below gives us a brief view of quality movement.

Pre 1900	Quality as an integral element of craftsmanship
1900 -1920	Quality control by foreman
1920 -1940	Inspection based Quality control

1940 -1960	Statistical Process Control
1960 -1980	Quality Assurance / Total Quality Control
1980 -1990	Total Quality Management
1990 - Present	TQM, The Culture of Continuous Improvement, Organization- Wide Quality management.

Source: Sallis (1996)

Some Barriers for TQM implementation in Higher Educational Institutions:

There are some factors which act as obstacles for successful implementation of TQM. Among them few important factors are like-

- 1) Poor vision and plan
- 2) Poor management
- 3) Poor co-ordination between employees
- 4) Lack of qualified professionals
- 5) Lack of interest in training/practicum
- 6) Lack of commitment and dedication
- 7) Lack of responsibility
- 8) Insufficient knowledge
- 9) Rigid structure
- 10) Back dated policies

Subrahmanya (2009) conducted a survey, and that survey suggest some important TQM barriers in Indian industry. They are : "no benchmarking of other company's practices" and "employees are resistant to change."

Quality Management Practices and Implementation: Indian Perspective-

Different models which are developed for the industries for managing quality has been adopted by the higher educational institutions on a global basis(Becket N.,Brooke's M.,2008).TQM and it's application in education sector is not too much. But now a days several universities and colleges have started using the concept of TQM. All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) is set up as a national level apex advisory body to regulate, ensure and control the quality of education in the country (Thakar C.M.,2011). India has not yet attained great results in the TQM implementation in the higher education sector.For this there is a great demand and scope for improvement to improve the quality of education in future. This paper reveals the various initiatives taken or should be taken by higher education institutions for proper implementation of TQM which are like this:

- 1) Improvement in educational departments
- 2) Improvement in curriculum
- 3) Improvement of course and methodology
- 4) Higher Education system and it's role in modern scenario.

1) Improvements in Educational Departments:

For successful implementation of TQM, essential institutions are starting their TQM practice from the grass root level. For these officials like president / chancellor/ vice chancellor of colleges universities are playing fundamental role in shaping the quality teaching, quality monitoring, quality performance.

2) improvement in curriculum:

Curriculum has been derived from Latin word 'currere' which means 'a course to be run'. It is a weapon to fight against 'competition' which requires effective and practical curriculum framework. The changing requirements for survival of the educational institution on global perspectives can be done through improving the curriculum. The process of curriculum design needs to be specified and teamwork should be there to create a need based curriculum of our customers i.e. our students (Sallis E., 2002)

3) Improvement of course and Methodology:

Modern education system has changed a lot comparing with traditional educational system. In traditional teaching the teacher was considered as the controller of the learning environment. He/She played the role of instructor and enjoyed huge power. But Indian education system improved with concept like continuous and comprehensive development. With the help of modern technologies like radio, television, computer etc open educational system becomes a reality. The concept of teachers student relationship changed a lot in modern education system comparing with traditional system of education. ICT (Information and Communication Technology) is playing a big role in current education system. Continuous development is possible with the help of modern technology.

4) Higher Education System and its Role in Modern Scenario :

Higher Education will flourish in the coming years. The vision of 12th FYP is to promote the higher education by forming new universities and increasing the intake capacity of present universities and colleges. For enhancing quality some measures in the 12th FYP are :

- . Structural and systematic reforms on a large scale, healthy policies, realistic programmes
- . Good governance
- . Generation of a new knowledge society from the learners' perspective
- . Development of new models of accreditation
- . For Quality inputs, all universities, colleges are to be supported with International Quality Assurance cell (IQAC) as a UGC - supported scheme, on regular basis with the required Information Technology (IT) infrastructure and supportive manpower (Inclusive and Qualitative Expansion of Higher Education 12th Five year plan, 2011).

Conclusion-

The TQM platform must be accepted and not pushed on the employees. Proper communication, proper education, explore TQM doctrines and programme can raise the success rate (Micheal et al., 1997) Owen (2001) shows that "Total and continuous quality development is viewed as a journey which has no real beginning or ending." It is a constant endeavour for the management to sustain a criterion in the institutions. The core theme is to make sure to have the higher management be committed and so that it will be properly practiced and implemented. If TQM techniques are well facilitated and thoroughly implemented and accepted, TQM methods will be very helpful to get the success in development and upgrading the quality of education institutions to face modern world and global standards.

The economic, social, cultural, technological changes contribute to knowledge society. The higher education system must be strengthened to attain all-round development.

Change is the only constant in the new electronic environment, and business education is not an exception to this. The long-term sustainable advantages in the business education require more attention on the issues of service, quality and cost in the market. Because of the changing environment quality of business and management education has become a major issue in the global market. Quality management is the explicit and systematic planning and control of quality products in an organisation.

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