QUALITY MANAGEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract

Total Quality Management means to continuously strive to fulfill or exceed the needs and expectations of external and internal customers in all processes in which everyone is committed to their continuous improvement. TQM brings together the best aspects of organizational excellence by driving out fear, offering customer- driven services, doing it right the first time by eliminating error, and maintaining inventory control without waste. TQM was only articulated as a means of achieving a target, which has been set at strategic level. The paper outlines both the theoretical basis and the practical implementation of the approach. In last decade an increasing No. of higher education institutions have applied TQM concept for effective change and sustained competitive advantage. TQM is continual organizational improvement, small and large, is always possible and is necessary for long-term survival. Opportunities for improvement are recognized primarily by continuing re-examination of all existing constrains on the way that work is done. This paper focuses the advantages of TQM and how TQM can be effectively and efficiently applied in higher education institutions (Higher education institutions). Here, the roots of TQM are examined.

Keywords: higher education, total quality management, institutions

Introduction

Total Quality Management as 'a way of managing to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, cohesiveness, flexibility, and competitiveness of a business as a whole.' They further offered a list of principles required for successful TQM implementation, including leadership, commitment, total customer satisfaction, continuous improvement, total involvement, training and education, ownership of problems, reward and recognition, error prevention and teamwork.

As a modern management approach, TQM can be used successfully in education sector that are mainly focused on increasing the customer satisfaction (Munoz, 1999). Recent researches on TQM have brought a widely updated plan for educational reforms and modernization of educational organizations (Mutlu, 2001). The TQM principles have broad applications in educational organizations and have produced desirable outcomes. With these applications, educational institution's improvement has become a continual process. There is a considerable proximity between the principles of TQM and the principles of effective schools. The practice of TQM at schools has provided with a perspective to look at the handicaps facing effective schools and with a tool to remove the obstacles in the way of effective schools. In this aspect, the principles of TQM are appropriate for educational settings. "Rapid economic growth, global competition, downsizing, privatization, corporate mergers and the liberalization of global education have caused a surge in demand for TQM implementation in Indian higher learning institutions". It has become the most prestigious quality indicator for measuring the overall quality of an educational institution.

Value of money

Return on investment. If the same outcome can be achieved at a lower cost, or a better outcome can be achieved at the same cost, then the customer has a quality product or service. The growing tendency for governments to require accountability from higher education reflects a value– for–money approach. Increasingly students require value–for–money for the increasing cost to them of higher education. The demand for higher education is also influenced by the ability of the customers in terms of their ability to pay.

Transformation

It is the process of changing from one qualitative state to another. In educational terms, it refers to the enhancement and empowerment of students or the development of new knowledge.

Excellence

The degree of excellence of the entire educational experience. The quality of student's life; the adequacy of university or college finances; the breadth and modes of learning offered; and student access to tenured faculty.

Process control and improvement

Higher education institutions are service organizations in which many processes are operative at a time that may require a multidimensional organizational structure to govern and monitor these processes. For this purpose, at every step process control and later on improvement are needed to reduce the tension on quality improvement system .

Program design

It is vital to review the Higher education institutions stakeholder needs before designing any academic program. In response to any internal or external force to change the designed programs are required to be regularly reviewed. There are two approaches which can be applied to follow TQM .

Quality system improvement: According (ISO) it is vital to establish and review periodically the quality systems in any organization. It was evident in Higher education institutions that there are two recommended tools which can be used to enhance the consistency of the quality systems.

Employee involvement

To generate a quality culture, the employees must be involved at every step regarding their work places, environment, process, products, and management practice. The TQM practices emphasize teamwork and cross functional relationships that provide many opportunities for social interaction and social reinforcement. Quality of the educational organization can be optimized by developing a sense of cooperation and collaboration among the members of the institutional groups.

Quality councils

Regular meetings of the heads of the schools and the quality consultants be over there. The members of this council will share ideas and experiences with each other's in the meetings. Meetings of the professionals and the heads will help to solve the problems and designs the ways how to create the quality culture in the educational institutes. These councils are the best source of information on the status of programs and ideas for action. They also bring the professionals together on a regular basis .

Recognition and reward

A regular and transparent procedure to evaluate the performance level of employees and selection criteria for reward is needed. Thus, it is recommended to make sure that the criteria of recognition and reward system were set to consider the Higher

education institutions staff involvement in this process to create and enhance the staff level of organizational commitment.

Implement innovative ideas

Adopt new philosophy of finding facts through data. Clinch new management ideas; awaken the leadership for their responsibilities and challenges for change. For the new economic age, management needs to take leadership for change into a learning organization. New methods like participation and discussion method, problem solving method, project method, and experimental work is used in teaching at all levels .

Education and training

Higher education institutions should make the necessary arrangement concerning the training and education of their staff to gain the implementation of the quality assurance programs. They should be trained and have the awareness of all the regarding fields and the compulsory financial arrangement should be available in this effort . Members of the management should be trained for implementing their role for the quality enhancement program . Conduct an orientation program formally before implementing the quality steps in the organization. All managers must understand each step well enough to explain it to their people. The proof of understanding is the ability to explain it. Eventually all supervisors will be tuned into the program and realize its value for themselves. Then they will concentrate their actions on the program .

Student focus

It is recommended to consider the students' needs, listen to students complains, establish a feedback system to the students complains, support student's social activities, and to establish alumni club.

Other stakeholders' focus

For any HEI there are different stakeholders such as employees, students, society, governing bodies, etc. Accordingly, it is recommended to be aware about the needs of these different categories of stakeholders and to work hard to achieve these needs. In addition, identifying the stakeholders' needs should be reviewed and updated in regular bases whenever there is a force of change which may cause any change in the stakeholders' needs or expectations .

Curricular aspects

Which includes goal orientation, curriculum development, programs options, academic flexibility and feedback mechanism. Curriculum in teacher education consists of two major components – theory and the practicum. Though teacher education is mostly a skill based program but conceptual understanding of those skills oriented activities might be a major concern of a teacher (teacher trainee). Therefore, theory and practicum should have a justified proportion in the curriculum. Historical, Philosophical, Psychological, and Sociological aspects of

education are four essential theoretical components. In addition, various contemporary No.s and challenges emerging in the field of modern education should also be included there. Teacher education program in India should be designed also with due concern to Indian traditional value system, as well.

Teaching, learning and evaluation

Which includes admission process, catering to diverse needs, teaching-learning process, teacher quality, evaluation of teaching, evaluation of learning, and examination reforms. Evaluation of student teachers at this stage need to be comprehensive and continuous. Due importance should be given to the opinions of supervisors and school teachers who will maintain the record of the progress of student teachers. The capacity to organize thoughts and express them coherently, taking notes from reading materials and using teaching aids and ICT carefully at the appropriate moment need to be the major concerns of evaluation. Latest evaluation techniques as peer group evaluation of trainee teachers, self-assessment, evaluation in terms of teacher educators' opinion using rating scale etc. may be introduced. Formative as well as summative mode of evaluation both are essential.

Infrastructure

The components of infrastructure which support quality of education are well equipped classrooms, health facility, water facility, guidance and counselling cell and ombudsman cell. The infrastructure in the form of well-equipped libraries, laboratories, playgrounds, well ventilated, well-furnished and well facilitated classrooms, reading rooms, internet facility, availability of scientific equipment's, drinking water facility etc. should be in an institution to fulfil quality criteria. The critical roles of infrastructure in establishing and enforcing standards, supporting quality, and ensuring quality and accountability. Progress in developing the mechanisms and systems to support and ensure quality in several states is assessed, and the perils of expanding early childhood programs in the absence of such systems are examined. Also discussed are strategies for building capacity and strengthening the various functions of infrastructure in order to successfully support the expansion of universal pre-kindergarten and other early care and education initiatives. The article emphasizes the importance of being able to demonstrate that these initiatives truly benefit the children who participate in them.

Integrated model for Quality outcome of Higher Education Institutions
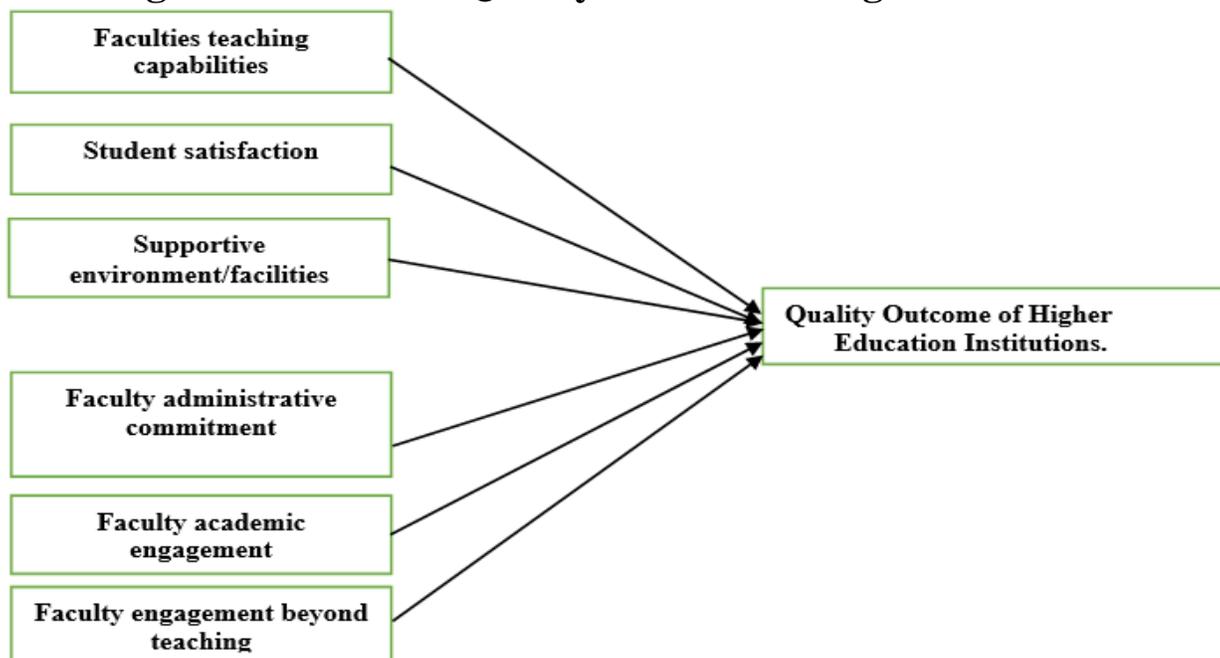
Agencies of quality assurance

Various agencies are involved for assuring in teacher education, the significant ones are as follows: - The professional accrediting agencies conduct assessment and accreditation of programmes or institutes within their respective domains Many specialized institutes that the professional accreditation agencies have accredited, have also volunteered for institutional accreditation by the NAAC. Quite a few engineering, medical, fine arts, law and management institutes, for example, have been accredited by the NAAC. Accreditation for higher learning is overseen by autonomous institutions established by the University Grants Commission:

Infrastructure and learning resources

Which includes physical facilities, maintenance of infrastructure, library as a learning resource, computers as learning resources and other facilities.

Student support and progression

Which includes students profile, student's progression, student support and student activities.

Organization and management

Which includes goal orientation and decision making, organization structure, powers and functions of functionaries, perspective planning, human power planning and recruitment, performance appraisal, staff development programmes, resources mobilization and financial management.

Healthy practices

Which includes total quality management, innovations, value based education, social responsibilities and citizenship roles, overall development and institutional ambience and initiatives.

Appointment of quality assurance cells

Teacher education institutions should have its own internal quality assurance cell to monitor various functions of the institution and suggest for the necessary.

Need for the Study

Although the No. of quality has been given considerable attention in industry/commerce, quality in higher education is underdeveloped as a concept. This project offers an explanation which may help those with an interest in the management of quality systems and the evaluation of educational programs. There is still no consensus on how best to measure and manage quality within higher education institutions, in spite of many approaches and models have been adopted, because quality is dependent process and the success of any process is dependent on how others are working well, it's more effective to judge quality through a systematic assessment. Correctly managing and implementing the TQM concepts and indicators is one of such measures, which will go a long way in revolutionizing management education in India. A lot of literature available points to a growing interest in applying TQM in education for a wide variety of reasons, Thakkar et al. (2006). Some of the reasons include pressures from industry for continuous upgrading of academic standards with changing technology; government schemes with allocation of funds, which encourage research and teaching in the field of quality; increasing competition between various private and government academic institutions and reduction in the pool of funds for research and teaching, implying that only reputable institutions will have a likely chance of giving access to various funds. According to Crosby (1984) unless strategy is focused on the quality of the teaching system and improvement, goal of TQM cannot be fulfilled. TQM in education cannot be accomplished without everyone in the organization from top to bottom being committed to achieve results a passion for quality and decisions based on performance data. Unless an organization builds a customer driven, learning organization dedicated to total customer satisfaction TQM cannot be successful.

Objectives

1. To explore the TQM tools adopted in Higher education institutions

2. To understand the influence of student perception on quality outcomes of Higher education institutions

3. To study the faculties academic and non-academic commitment towards quality improvement in higher education institutions.

Hypothesis

H1: Faculties teaching capabilities influences the quality outcome of the higher education institutions.

H1(0): Faculties teaching capabilities are not influences the quality outcome of the higher education institutions.

H2: Student satisfaction to quality outcome of higher education institutions.

H2 (0): Student satisfaction leading to quality outcome of higher education institutions.

H3: Supportive environment/facilities impact on quality outcome of higher education institutions.

H3 (0): Supportive environment/facilities are not impact on quality outcome of higher education institutions.

Research methodology

The research objective of the article and the relative paucity of previous empirical research suggest that a partly exploratory and a partly descriptive research design is best suited to the project. This study was conducted on a random sampling of 50 faculty members working at various government as well as private higher learning institutions of Karnataka and also 50 students of JNTUH and Karnataka. Total 100 (for both students and faculties) questionnaires were distributed out of which all questionnaires were returned which were valid and usable for further analysis. The rate of return was quite impressive (100%). The content validity in this study was assessed by thoroughly reviewing the available literature on TQM.

Data collection technique

Surveys is carried out (Questionnaire for College Students) in technical-education courses at JNTUH and telephonic survey with Karnataka students who are studying in higher education institutions. The participants were informed about the research purpose and process by one to one interaction in the study.

Sources data

Primary Data

The data to understand the quality outcome in higher education institutions is collected in a primary quantitative survey by means of questionnaire investigation. The survey was carried out among students and academic staff. The student dataset comprised in total 50 students and 50 teachers.

Limitations of the study

The current study has collected the data from one JNTUH only due to financial and time constraints. It is recommended that the future researchers collect data from more than one Higher Education Institute for such studies. It will be helpful in doing comparative study. In addition, the present study has followed the cross sectional as a time horizon. So, it is recommended that future studies be carried out

as longitudinal studies. It will be helpful in understanding the organizations to show the patterns of a variable over time. The current study has collected the data from one HEI only due to financial and time constraints. It is recommended that the future
researchers collect data from more than one Higher Education Institute for such studies. It will be helpful in doing comparative study. In addition, the present study has followed the cross sectional as a time horizon. So, it is recommended that future studies be carried out as longitudinal studies. It will be helpful in understanding the organizations to show the patterns of a variable over time. Duration of the project is too short. Respondent in some department gave biased respondent.

Findings

Faculties teaching capabilities in the point of student perspective influences the quality outcome, which means, adherence to course objectives and trustworthiness of faculties, keeping promises and match academic goals are the significant variable contributing to the quality outcome of the higher education institutions. Student satisfaction to quality outcome, which means, inculcating value system in students, friendly and caring atmosphere and promoting us to use technology in learning; indicating good predictive power of the model. Supportive environment/facilities impact on quality outcome which means, effect of Auditorium with sophisticated audio video facility, Health center, computer center and it support, Cafeteria, Guest house/hostel facility, Appropriate classrooms, indicating good predictive power of the model. Faculty administrative commitment leads to quality outcome, which means, effect of value added courses/short term courses influences the quality outcome, which means, qualified and rich experienced faculty team, staff and student consultation are indicating good predictive power of the model. Faculty engagement beyond teaching having direct influence quality outcome, which means effect of Product and process improvement, Faculties membership in editorial board indicating good predictive power of the model.

Suggestions

▪ Increasing the budgetary allocation for education, at least to 6 per cent of the DGP.

▪ Improving the basic infrastructural facilities in colleges and universities

▪ Improving the standards of school education

▪ Academic audit of the institutions of higher education

▪ Revising and updating the syllabus in all subjects

Conclusions

Effective teaching matters as quality teaching produces quality learning that creates quality students and makes customers satisfied. As such, Total quality management is one of the useful tools in the teaching and learning used in the school / college even though it was developed initially for the manufacturing industries. For any continuous improvement effort to be effective, quality and reliable feedback information is essential and important in the evaluation procedure of learning with the output clearly defined and measured. TQM model adopt a view that quality in education actively involves interaction and the satisfaction of the stakeholders that can make a significant difference in academic environment. Also, the model adopts specific TQM principles to enhance the academic quality that allows one to follow clear aims and objectives, to make continuous improvement in teaching, learning and assessment methods, and to be willing to be judged by others. TQM is a strategy that is very useful in the higher educational institutes because it involved all the stakeholders and brings out the best in them and enhances the quality of education.

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