Adopting Quality Culture in Educational Institutes – A Case Study

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Abstract : This case study reveals the importance of every educational institution adopting a quality culture as to bring a positive change into its organisation because after all every educational institution desires to give quality education to its students. Change is evitable but a good change leads to positive impact on life of students studying in the educational institution. Sometimes resistance to change is observed due to many factors which needs to be analysed and removed so the change which is brought gives those fruitful results for which it was implemented in the educational institution. Quality culture brings improvement in an organisation and to sustain this new improvement employees need to drive themselves towards continuous improvement while their work life in educational institution.

IndexTerms – **Quality, Culture, Resistance to Change, Continuous Improvement**
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I. INTRODUCTION

Quality Culture in an educational institution refers to inculcating the quality in an educational institution which converts the usual environment to constructive, positive and progressive internal environment and satisfied student community. A transformed approach at all levels of organization is the basic expected outcome after incorporating quality culture. Route of instigating quality culture begins with faculties that realize the value of the systems view and also believe in its implications. This is attained moreover through self-realization of top authorities of educational institutions or through workshops, seminars and trainings or following the stipulations laid down by the benchmark organisations. Quality Culture differs from organisation to organisation. In some educational institutions it is very rudimentary but in some institutions the system is very well developed.

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II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Researchers [1] in their work found how some organisations can build a culture so that the people working there "live" quality 24X7 in which ever task the perform and so they are zealous about quality as an ethic to be exercised rather than compulsorily following an act imposed upon by top management. Researchers [2] have given a new definition to a "true culture of quality" which is a sort of an atmosphere wherein staff, keep in their mind, guidelines related to quality and observe how employees take actions which has main focus in and around the word "Quality" ; listen to their co-employees discussing about quality, and have a feeling of culture totally embedded with quality surrounding them.

Researchers went on for questionnaire and one on one interaction with leaders of institutions who strictly use quality behavior and such personnel coming from different organisations were grilled with several questions that provided a glimpse of academic research. They observed that there are certain people who are living "quality" day in and day out in the atmosphere of quality which left them with a huge surprise. The most interesting things found about such people was certain strategies which they had incorporated to upsurge quality which were providing financial and non-financial incentives which made an considerable impact. Researchers could understand the functioning of organisations where they had undertaken approach to drastically build and develop a culture embedded with quality which also provided fruitful results such as employees made lesser mistakes and the organisations had to bear less losses in terms of money to correct those mistakes.

III. CASE STUDY

Forming an academic quality culture is a huge challenge for academic institutions seeking benefits of total quality management. An institute's existence may rest on how it becomes accustomed to drastically changing academic world and to those changing demands of its industries expecting it from the students. Every academic institution must focus on the characteristics of quality culture and think on the ways in which they can embed and involve the concept of total quality management in it. Silver oak Group of institutes went on to rectify the exact meaning of - "what is exactly is this term named quality academic culture"? "What is meant by TQM academic culture?" Different academic institutions are observing different academic cultures due to wide range of employees with different nature working with them. If we compare with the educational institutions abroad then the British academic culture differs from the France, Germany, Japanese or American educational cultures. Educational institutions like Indian Institute of Technology, National Institute of Technology, and several other leading academic engineering institutions have distinctive academic cultures. The Top management of all these educational institutions including India and in many different countries, have a similar sort of approach and thought process. These educational institutes have created cultures of their own. In late 90's famous Roger Harrison coined organizational culture as: "The deep set – values, beliefs, ideologies that prevail amongst all educational institutions must be clearly rectified and the remedy to install quality culture must be thought upon". During 90's

one more personality Mr. Handy resonated the concept thrown by Harrison and further gave a brief description of the academic quality culture as: "Deep-set beliefs about the manner in which the efforts towards doing work should be organised, the way authority should be exercised, employees be rewarded, employees guided and controlled. How much arrangements and predefined plan is required? Whether how much obedience and ownership is expected from the working employees? Are there quality policy, plans and procedures required or only results are expected? These are all measures of the quality culture which any organisation observes."

Identifying Quality Culture is deeply rooted in organizations. Below are some five expressions of an Institutes' academic culture:

1. Regular ways of Working Fashion: In most academic institutions it is observed that faculty conduct teaching learning activity and finish daily work by conducting lectures. They are supposed to simply finish the syllabus.

2. Core values embraced by academic institutions: A value is an intensely held conjecture, which guides attitudes and actions. Most of the academic institutions claim themselves that they have excelled in imparting quality education and have policies claiming 'we do it right the first time".

3. Viewpoint that figures an organization's policies with regards to its faculties or students: Educational institutions claim that their policies will result in education with a difference. There is nothing new in such policies as every institution wants to deliver education with a difference but how many institutes really do what they claim.

4. Get along well in an organisation: Attending organization's events, in most of these educational institutions is seen as a lot of commitment to the academic institution. Leaving the institute before the head of the department is thought of as pursuing a lack of serious commitment to their job.

5. Lavish Atmosphere fashioned by the physical infrastructure and beautification of an organisation: Educational institutes believe if the physical layout of their organisation is beautiful students will get attracted even though it is not understood by academic institutions that core infrastructure and facilities are to be provided to students and employees but that is not the only thing to be delivered. Infact technical labs with facilities are not even working properly in educational institutes.

Many quality gurus believed that this is not what is meant by the academic quality culture. Quality gurus also mentioned that such myths should be removed from the organisation so it will bring a change in culture and work style of institute. Silver Oak Group of institutes changed this culture of simply conducting lectures but the faculties went on one step ahead to start a culture of conduct lectures and then take weekly module tests where students are grilled through the topics they were taught in classes.

Faculties have shifted from regular teaching learning activity to video based teaching learning where they prepare their own video lectures similar to those of NPTEL. Research is inculcated amongst students through teaching case studies based on topics rather than simple classroom teaching learning. Silver Group of institutes created, discovered, or designed a team which was able to understand and to handle its difficulties that has worked well enough to sort out shortcomings which couldn't lead to impart quality education and also taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those difficulties and learn to tackle and solve them. Silver group of institutes adopted quality academic culture as a recipe for success and they inculcated quality in their academic culture through following ways:

1. A conviction in being the 'best.
2. A conviction in the importance of the imparting quality based education via inculcating research and innovation.
3. A conviction in giving importance to each employee as an individual.
4. A conviction in delivering higher quality and service.
5. A conviction that most members of the organization should be 'innovators, and its corollary, the willingness to support failure.
6. A conviction in the importance of informality to enhance communication.
7. Conviction in, and recognition of, the importance of economic growth and profits.

Silver Oak group of institutes also adopted The McKinsey 7-5 framework which improved the quality culture by inculcating the work ethics in the TQM philosphy, everything else flows from it –
   (a) systems,
   (b) strategy,
   (c) structure,
   (d) style,
   (e) skills and
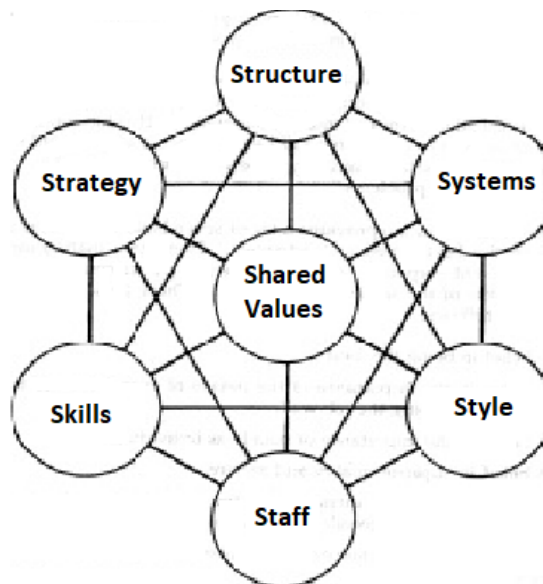   (f) staff or choice of people.

Figure 1: The McKinsey 7-S Framework

Silver Oak Group of institutes empowered and educated to its employees through several short term training programmes so employees could deal directly with problems and sort out difficulties. They were supported by top management. Silver oak Group of institutes made this cultural change embedded in its work environment. Examples of cultural changes which could be required are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Academic cultural change observed in Silver Oak Group of Institutes

From	To
Incomplete or ambiguous understanding of students problems	Understanding of students and employees grievances and problems. Application of systematic approach to understand and satisfy both employees-students through top management dedicated meetings.
Mapping of short-term objectives with the long term desirable results	The unhurried and careful balance between the long term time-consuming goals with uninterrupted short term objectives
Acceptance of a certain margin of mistakes and striving to find out mistakes which were rarely solved.	Desire for continuous improvement in mistake-free output in meeting student and employee - requirements and doing things right the first time.
Unstructured, individualistic problem solving and decision making.	Predominantly participative and disciplined problem solving and decision making using a common approach
A management style with uncertain objectives that instills fear of failure.	An open style with clear and consistent objectives which encourages problem solving and group-derived solutions

VI. CONCLUSION

Thus by inculcating quality academic culture Silver Oak Group of Institutes went on to improve and place itself amongst top Engineering institutes in and around Ahmedabad. Placements of students are now 70% with huge pass out ratio in Gujarat Technological University Gujarat. Successful prizes in SAE Baha competitions due to top management and employee teams carefully guiding students throughout.

V. REFERENCES

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