

Need of Quality in Development of Academic Excellence through Core Competence

Dr. Yashodhan Mithare
 Professor & Associate Dean,
 Faculty of Commerce & Management,
 Savitribai Phule Pune University,

Dr. G.S. Gugale
 Associate Professor & Head,
 Department of Chemistry,
 Haribhai V. Desai college,

Abstract:- Today, education is very much considered as a part of business world globally including India whereby competition is getting together day by day. In the present competitive scenario, Quality is in higher educational institutes is just as complex and challenging as it is in any other business organization. Quality and Excellence are of great significance to both the providers of Higher Education and the receivers of education and in the process builds a solid foundation of Higher Education System. This paper aims at highlighting the Quality in the Indian higher education system and puts special emphasis on the fact educational quality and the quality education is the foundation of societal.

Keywords:- Higher Education, Quality, Service Sector, Educational Institutions.

I. INTRODUCTION

Quality is a very important concept of modern day. Not only in other areas but also in education field; the kind of education provided, the kind of quality services, maintaining of standard and satisfaction of users cannot be denied. Quality is not something which is depends on external, but it is largely related with kind of culture with the institutions develops. In the educational institution quality of service matters the most. No educational institutions can survive if they are not maintaining the minimum desired quality standards. Quality is not something which is just accepting a particular set of standard & implementing them to achieve it. On the contrary quality is value based approach to resolve the problems.

The concept of quality culture has its roots in developing a system, philosophy and practice of improving approach towards functioning. From this point of view it becomes essential that quality should be considered as an inherent aspect of philosophy and system for academic institutions. Academic institutions demand a high quality service culture in ordered to grow build an institutional image and improve the performance in a consistent manner. Best academic institutions are known not because of infrastructure but due to the kind of quality they cultivate and maintain. From this point of view it is essential that in a competitive environment academic institution should developed a right quality culture.

➤ Objectives:-

1. To understand the importance of quality in higher education.
2. To identify the barriers in developing quality culture.
3. To develop a model for cultivating quality culture in the educational institutions.

Service quality usually deals with six different phases. This are:

- a) Contents
- b) Alignment
- c) Personal Aspects
- d) Procedural Aspects
- e) Caring For Customer Expectations
- f) The Welcome Approach

On the part of institution towards users and different stakeholders, how an academic institution developed this kind of service culture and what are the issues they considered for cultivating a right kind of service culture and what kind of factors they considered for developing a right kind of service culture is the focus of the present paper. Hence, the title of the present paper is ‘**Importance of quality culture in Higher Education**’.

➤ Quality Define:

The term quality has different meanings for different people in different context. Naturally, there cannot be a uniform uni-dimensional definition of term quality. If one considered the major definition by different experts; one can easily understand the meaning of the term quality for different perspective. It will be appropriate to understand views and opinion of experts from the different angles.

➤ Definitions of Quality:

1.Customer – Based	Fitness for use, meeting customer expectations
2.Manufacturing- Based	Conforming to design, specifications, or requirements. Having no defects.
3.Product-Based	The product has something that other similar products do not that adds value.
4.Value-Based	The product is the best combination of price and features.
5.Transcendent	It is not clear what it is, but it is something good.

➤ *User Based Definition:*

Quality consists of the capacity to satisfy wants.

- (C. D. Edwards, "The Meaning of Quality," Quality Progress, October 1968 Pg.37) Quality is the degree to which a specific product satisfies the wants of a specific consumer."
- (H. L. Gilmore, "Product Conformance Cost" Quality Progress, June 1974, Pg. 16) Quality is any aspect of a product, including the services included in the contract of sales which influences the demand curve.
- (R. Dortman and P.O. Steiner, "Optimal Advertising, and Optimal Quality", American Economic Review, December 1954, Pg. 831)

➤ *Manufacturing Based Definition:*

"Quality means conformance to requirements."

- (P. B. Crosby, Quality is Free, Pg. 15)
"Quality is the degree to which a specific product conforms to a design or specification."
- (Gilmore, June 1974, Pg. 16)

➤ *Value- Based Definition:*

"Quality is the degree of excellence at an acceptable price and the control of variability at an acceptable cost."

- (R. A. Brohm, managing Quality for Higher Profits, 1982, Pg. 3)

Quality means best for certain customer conditions. These conditions are (a)the actual use and (b)the selling price of the product."

- (A. V. Feigenbaum, Total Quality Control, Pg. 1)

From all the above definitions, we can find that in single thing which comes out as the common parameter is '**Customer satisfaction**'. We will move forward assuming that customer satisfaction is ultimately in quality.

The above definitions thus explain clearly how the term quality changes in different context. For the educational institutions the term quality is closely related with values based aspects and user based definitions. The focus of the term quality is mainly to satisfy the customers satisfaction and to enhance a particular service-education.

➤ *Quality in service sector:*

The concept of service quality though initially was applicable however now it is rightly taken as a concept widely applicable to every services that is available in the market. Education is a very important and essential service which influences not only the society but at individuals level in life. And therefore, service quality in education acquires prime importance. Service quality is a concept that is difficult to define; however few important definitions by different experts are presented here.

Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988) proposed that the firms can categorize their customers into several perceived quality segments based on their individual SERVQUAL scores which further could be analyzed on the basis of:

- Demographic, psychographic and other parameters
- Relative importance of the five dimensions influencing service quality perceptions
- The reason behind the perception reported

There are a number of different definitions as to what is meant by service quality.

One that is commonly used defines service quality as the extent to which a service meets customers' needs or expectations (Lewis and Mitchell, 1990; Dotchin and Oakland, 1994a; Wisniewski and Donnelly, 1996).

Service quality can thus be defined as the difference between customer expectations of service and perceived service. If expectations are greater than performance, then perceived quality is less than satisfactory and hence customer dissatisfaction occurs (Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry 1985; Lewis and Mitchell, 1990).

The interest of the researchers in service quality has been directed towards service quality measurement (Lewis and Booms 1983; Bitner 1990; Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry 1985, 1988; Zeithaml, Berry and Parasuraman 1988, 1993; Bolton and Drew 1991a, 1991b; Parasuraman, Berry and Zeithaml 1991b, 1993) work has led to the identification of five dimensions of service quality: *reliability, responsiveness, assurance, tangibles and empathy*, which are frequently used in service industry. Of these dimensions, *Reliability* refers to perform the promised service dependably and accurately. *Responsiveness* refers to the willingness to help customers. *Assurance* is the knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence. *Empathy* is the caring, individualized attention provided to the customers and tangibles are the appearance of physical facilities, personnel, tools and communication materials. SERVQUAL instrument has been developed on the basis of these dimensions to measure customer perceptions of service quality.

➤ *Rationalizations of the paper:*

The present paper is written to understand the importance of service quality in educational sectors. The rational of the paper can be justified as follows:

1. The education is an essential service that influences the quality of the society.
2. The quality of education is great extent to decide the utility and importance.
3. Educational quality decides success and acceptance of a particular institution.
4. Enhance the quality of educational indicates growing standards of the society.
5. Unless and until focus efforts are made quality, education cannot be enhance and therefore it is necessary that a quality culture shall be develop and nurtured in society.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Few experts are already studied in this concept. In the context of different educational institutions observations are presented here

- (a) Gerald F Smit (2002) identified the seven underlying principles of TQM with a focus on quality in everything, customer, process, continuous quality improvement, involvement and team work.
- (b) Saraph et al. (1989) identified eight critical factors of quality management underlying the importance of management leadership and quality policy, the role of the quality department, training, product/service design, supplier quality management, process management, quality data and reporting and employee relations.
- (c) Flynn et al. (1994) identified and accentuated seven key dimensions of quality management that included top management support, quality information, process management, product design, workforce management and supplier and customer involvement.
- (d) Suresh Chandar et al., (2001) identified the 12 critical dimensions of TQS for the institution of a TQM environment in service organizations: Top management commitment and visionary Leadership, Human Resource Management, Technical System, Information and Analysis System, Benchmarking, Continuous Improvement, Customer Focus, Employee Satisfaction, Union Intervention, Social Responsibility, Services capes and Service Culture.

➤ *Measuring service quality-Determinants:*

In order to major service quality it becomes essential that one should understand the role of quality in educational sector. Different determinants can be used to assess quality of education and to major quality standards. However, it will be appropriate to understand what the specific determinants are which influence quality of education. Considering nature of educational institutions around specially the higher education field following considered as determinants of higher educational service quality. These are

Following are some of the aspects of service quality:

- Fitness for purpose
- Responsiveness
- Completeness
- Capacity
- Availability
- Reliability
- Accuracy
- Usability
- Flexibility
- Timeliness
- Satisfaction
- Standards
- Security
- Auditability

➤ *Problems in developing service culture in educational institutions:*

In the educational institutions often find it difficult to cultivate a particular type of service culture due to variety of barriers both visible and invisible. The invisible barriers often are most strong and pose a direct states to cultivate a desired a type of service culture in educational institutions. These barriers as enlisted as follows:

1. Mental blocks
2. Organizational philosophy
3. Myopic approach towards concept of quality
4. Focus on short term goals
5. Absence of institution building approach and desired to achieve immediate results than long term goals.

➤ *Physical barriers to develop quality culture:*

There are a few important physical barriers in developing quality culture in educational institutes. These are:

1. Lack of appropriate infrastructure
2. Low quality of teachers
3. Limitations of funds and resources
4. Growing pressure due to quantitative expansion of the institutions
5. Disparity due to increase ratio of students to teachers
6. Poor support from society
7. Lack of pragmatic government policies and low initiative in the part of educational intuitions approach of the society

➤ *Developing a model for cultivating quality culture in the educational institutions:*

The question can we developed appropriate and suitable model to cultivate quality culture in educational institutions. The answer to this question is YES. A few important aspects of SERVQUAL Model if rightly applied quality of education can be definitely enhance. Educational institutions can definitely developed a proactive affirmative culture by implementing this model at different level. Following are the essential preposition for implementation of SERVQUAL Model.

1. Service quality is not a one-time act but it is a consistence and continuous activity.
2. Removal of mental blocks and ideological barriers is essential to introduce a quality culture.
3. Quality is not top management's duty but it is the responsibility of all concerns.
4. "Users first" should be the principle factor to introduce quality culture.
5. Consistent, regular and small but definite states to enhance quality are essential.
6. Everyone knows about quality but no one implements it.
7. Quality is not near change in the structure but it is change in the attitude.
8. Establishment of systems and strong commitment to procedure to bring it desired change.

➤ *Implementing SERVQUAL Model:*

To implement SERVQUAL Model of Quality culture following essential steps should be taken by the educational institutions. These steps are divided in following three levels:

Level 1 *Steps to be taken by the management:* Education is process which is divided by in three following paths-

1. Input
 2. Process
 3. Output
- ✓ Educational quality cannot be reform by paying attention to only one aspect.
 - ✓ Management should not advice but they involved in quality enhancement. Open communication, participative decision and focused on problem solving are three essentials.
 - ✓ Giving fair opportunities to communicate solving problems by taking positive steps and establishing a positive approach. Quality culture can be easily established at the management levels.

Level 2 At the functional level KAIZEN approach needs to be implemented.

- ✓ Small regular but definite positive steps can enhance quality. And help in cultivating right attitudes towards quality.
- ✓ Quality culture is not talking about problem but resolving the problem.
- ✓ Quality is everyone responsibility and carrying no cause.
- ✓ Quality culture is total involvement of everyone at all level to solve problems of the institutions therefore it is not the resources but wheel, approach and attitude that can help in establishing quality culture.

Level 3 At the third level quality is a visible positive change therefore:

- ✓ The continuous training is the first step.
- ✓ Identification of errors, pitfalls and mistakes is the second step.
- ✓ Solving the problems and removing the mistakes is the only way to inculcate the quality culture therefore not criticisms but constructive approach alone can work to develop aright quality culture.

III. DISCUSSION

Education institution required a sound and defined approach towards quality culture. Education is a basic and essential service of life. No educational institutional can survive without having right approach towards maintenance of standards and enhancement of quality. It is notice that most of the educational institutions often think of quality merely in terms of end results and performance of the learning. However, this can be termed as a narrow approach towards quality in order to establish a rational and appropriate quality system. It is necessary that a holistic approach towards quality culture and should be or after for this purpose there is need to redefine the concept of quality

in educational institutions. Quality of education is depends on following three factors.



Educational institutions have learners as inputs curriculum, infrastructure and faculty members as factor determining the process and performance of the learners, knowledge contribution and innovation as output. Unless and until high quality of standard are maintain at each level of educational activity quality culture cannot be established.

Mere focusing on inputs that is quality of learner is not adequate. Quality of learners though is a essential input however a learner is kind of raw material. Unless and until is a appropriate processing is done and the learner is provided is right, fair and appropriate opportunities to gain knowledge, acquire skills and shape his personality a real transformation is not possible. Therefore, right processing of the learner becomes essential.

In order to process the learner it is essential appropriate and right kind of infrastructure, info structure facility and amenities are made available to the learners. Similarly, the quality of the teachers, their experience, knowledge level, system of knowledge delivery and different penology adopted for decimation of knowledge decides the quality of process.

The mechanism of evaluation system of interaction and assessment of performance verity of opportunities to except and exhibit the knowledge also decide the success of the process.

The outcome of input and processing can be rightly termed as the end product or cultivated learner. How the learner positions himself in the society, how he gain and shares knowledge what kind of skills he acquire and utilizes to prove his work and help the society decides the quality of output. Hence it will be appropriate to say quality culture in academic institution is the function of all the three factors i. e. input, processing and output.

Adopting a specific philosophy is deciding the quality culture in the particular academic institution. How that academic institution looks at education whether they consider the education as a service that makes the person, to shape his personality and ideology. Or they consider education as a profit making culture is a very important question. When and educational institutions looks at academic activities as a instrument in a social economic transformation, nation building and creative mechanism to prompt healthy society the approach towards education is very broad and encompassed basic mere value.

On the contrary when an educational institutions considers academic education as able commodity for making profits. Potential learners to expand the business and generate revenue to infrastructure then the approach

become quite narrow. It is no doubt through that educational institution cannot run without financial supports however it doesn't mean that the sole purpose of educational institutions is to make money. Often a kind of philosophy adopted by educational institutions becomes a major determinant of the type of philosophy that they adopted. The philosophical foundation of educational institutions decides the values they nurture, the mission that they pursue and the vision they want to accomplish. Therefore, the true foundation of policy culture is the values nurtured by the academic institutions.

Consistency, continuity and completeness are essential aspects of quality culture. To nurture practices useful to established quality culture. In the system approach and functioning of the institutions no transformation can take place in a single state a largely forward often but not the only and complete solution for transformation of the institution. It is necessary that continuous efforts should be made to improve quality culture in educational institution. Every day a small change in the system, actually more to performance, techniques of knowledge delivery, nurturing certain values and rectification of errors and pitfalls is the way in developed. The philosophy of KIAZEN – small state forwards is the essential for a nurturing healthy quality culture in academic institutions. The staff can suggest the verity of components in the structural and the administrative system. The faculty members can improve the learning polices and academic activities. The learners can suggest how better the knowledge delivery and written. What is the appropriate system of evaluation? Other stakeholders also can suggest measures for enhancement of quality in educational institution and therefore it is necessary that quality culture in the academic institution should be consider as a main factor in process of improvement. This is the result of consistent effort and constructive approach towards education.

IV. CONCLUSION

Educational institutions cannot stand in a competitive world without having a positive approach towards quality service. A continuous upgradation of quality services becomes essential. This only can satisfy the users and the society. For this, not resources but desire results, not facility but a functional approach and not criticism but constructive mechanism alone can help.

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