

## INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE CELL IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

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### ABSTRACT

*Globalisation of higher education services has become an area of key focus for many countries in post-World Trade Organisations Scenario. Total quality management is a management philosophy which makes effective use of materials and human resources of an organization. In order to fuel the socio - economic development of the country, higher education is playing a more active role in our country and this required a paradigm shift in terms of governance & services delivery. Higher educational institutions must become more innovative leading to quality institution of knowledge production and dissemination. Realizing the importance of higher education a lot of innovative experiments are being done to improve the performance of this sector. Application of TQM concept is one of such measures, which will go a long way in revolutionizing the higher education system. The paper attempts to theoretically conceptualise TQM in higher education.*

### INTRODUCTION

Total quality management is a topic of great consequences in Businesses and academic circles. The philosophy of TQM was developed by W. Edward Deming to improve the efficiency of flexible work terms in U.S industry before the Second World War. Edward Deming, the father of quality management, held that 'quality comes only from ongoing process of reviews and ends with design and ends validating customers satisfaction. Thus it is internally driven with an objective of achieving customers delight. T PLAN - DO - CHECK - ACT Deming cycle is the simplest model that can be applied to higher education. PLAN means plan for changing to bring your improvement.

CHECK means to see if changes are working and to investigate selected processes.

Further Kwan (1996) notes that Deming notes 14 Principles of quality are relevant in higher education.

1. Create constancy of purpose.
2. Adopt new philosophy of quality.
3. Cease dependence on final inspection.
4. Consider total cost, no just initial price.
5. Find problem, improve constantly.
6. Institute on the training.

7. Institute leader across the organisation.
8. Drive out fear.
9. Breakdown communication barriers between units.
10. Eliminates slogans, targets, exhortations for workers.
11. Eliminates numerical goals.
12. Encourage pride of workmanship.
13. Encourage education and self-employment.
14. Take action needed to make transformation.

It is however argued that the above principles cannot be applied to a university environment without adapting it to specific cultural and organizational Context of higher Education Institutions. Some of the principles like Eliminate slogans, targets, exhortations of workers are superfluous. We can say that total quality management is inevitably common factors that will shape the strategies of higher education institutions in their attempt to satisfy stakeholders including students, parents industry and society as whole. In a society full of miscellany, thought and beliefs, higher education means diverse things to dissimilar people.

The pluralism of view is quite unavoidable and some would opine it should be like that only. According to Barnett (1992 there

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are four predominant concept of higher education):

Higher Education as the production of qualified human resources. In the view, higher education is seen as a process in which students are counted as ' products ' absorbed in labour market. Thus higher becomes input to the growth and development of business and industry.

Higher Education as training for research career. In this view, higher education is preparation for qualified scientists and researchers who would continuously develop the frontier of knowledge. Quality with in this view point is more about research publications and transmission of the academic rigor to do quality research.

Higher education as a matter of extending opportunities. In this view, Higher education is seen as an opportunities to participate in the development process of the individual through a flexible, continuing education mode.

Higher education as the efficient management of teaching provisions. Many strongly believe that teaching is a core of Educational institutions. Thus, Higher education institutions focus on efficient management of teaching, enabling the higher completion rate among the students.

The issue of quality in higher education has been on the agenda for at least sixteen year in the USA. One well known example of this was an open letter published in an issue of the Harvard Business Review. The letter was signed by the top executive of the Ford Motor Company, IBM, American Express, Xerox, Motorola and Procter and Gambler. The letter challenges universities to work with industry to develop research and education programme on total quality management. Total Quality Management is a way of managing a business. The broad goal of TQM is continuous improvement by the improving effectiveness, efficiency, cohesiveness, flexibility and competitiveness. TQM is an evolving concept and methods are developed, so there are many definition of TQM. Stick-land and wither give the most compre-

hensive definition. Stick-land defines it as:

TQM is both philosophy and set of guiding principles that lays the foundation of continuously improving organisation. TQM is the application of quantitative method and human resources to improve the materializing services supplies, to an organization, all the process in an organization, and the degree to which the needs of the consumer are met, now and in future.

### OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

The quality and social relevance of higher education imparted in developing nations remain quite low.

Total quality management features should be unavoidable common factors that will shape the strategies of higher educational institutions in a same manner.

Study on feasibility of different strategic for TQM in higher education.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

Traditionally, the higher educational services include the three fundamental function,

- \* Teaching
- \* Research
- \* Extension

Teaching serves to transmit knowledge and skills from the teacher to thought ones. The purpose of research is to explore the new knowledge whereas the function of extension is focus on developing the application of the developed knowledge for addressing the common problem of the society. The main functions of higher education are to seek and cultivate new knowledge, to engage vigorously and fearlessly in the pursuit of truth and to interpret the old knowledge and beliefs in the light of new needs and discoveries. Another main function is to provide the right kind of leadership in all walks of life by helping the individuals develop the potential & to strive to promote equality and social

Justice and to reduce social and cultural differences through diffusion of education. It brings the universities closer to the community through extension of knowledge and its

applications for problem solving. The British Standard Institution (1991) defines quality as 'the totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bears on ability to satisfy stated or implied needs.' Quality is an attribute which can be seen or observed when no one is watching you. What is quality education? A simple question but one that is difficult to answer. A quality education depends upon what your objectives are and what you are going to do with your education. A quality education will differ depending on whether you want to get a management position at a small business or a Ph.D in Philosophy. Defining a quality education depends upon the stake you have in the institution that provides the education, whether you are a professor, student, Administrator, or a company that hires students and graduates. The Indian Education System is in constant state of higher education, impact of technology on the impact of globalization. After careful consideration of these, National Assessment and Accreditation council has developed the following five core values which were mentioned in NAAC on guidelines for Re-Accreditation. These five core values are; contributing to national development, fostering global competencies among students, inculcating a value system in students and promoting the use of technology and quest for excellence. Brilliance in all they do will put into the overall progress of the system of higher education. The seven criteria developed by NAAC to measure excellence are in fact the main processes to develop the capabilities of an institutions. The seven criteria are: curricular aspects ;consultancy and extension ;infrastructure and learning resources ;student support and progression ;governance and leadership ;and innovative practices. Establishment of an Internal Quality Assurance Cell in each of Higher Education Institution would help develop and raise their capabilities as institutions. With an extension to monitor and improve the institution 's internal quality in all the above mentioned seven criteria given by NAAC has the task building on the benefits of self-study process. Quality Assurance is the core responsibility of everyone

in an everyone in an educational institutions, through the think tank of the institution sets the policies and priorities. Hence assuring quality should be an incessant and enduring process in delivering the best services in any higher institution. IQAC has to take up the responsibility to maintain consistency in delivery of quality educational services to the students community by frequent monitoring of all the quality dimension in higher education viz., various tangibles, competence of academic staff, attitudinal displays of all the staff in the institution, relevance of content and delivery, and reliability in every aspect.

According to the reports of UNESCO and world Bank, Social and private returns of higher education are less than that primary and secondary education. It is estimated that social return of prim education is 25% while that of higher education is only 1%. This was led to the thinking that the return of higher education are largely personal /private and therefore, subsidy on this should be reduced.

Lawrence and McCullough (2001) propose a system of guarantees designed to accommodate multiple stakeholders and the various and changing roles of students in the various and changing role of students in the educational processes. Their system of guarantees focuses on three customer groups students, instructors of advanced courses that build on prerequisite courses and thirdly organizations that employs graduates of the colleges. Sangeeta et al.(2004) considers education system as a transformation process comprising of inputs of students, teachers, administrative staff, physical facility an process. 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. Osseo-Assare and Longbottom (2002) proposes enabler criteria, which affect performance and help organizations achieve organizational excellence. These 'enabler' criterion are leadership, policy and strategy, people management, resources and partnership and

processes. They also suggest result criteria including customer satisfaction, people satisfaction, and impact on society and key performance results for measuring the effectiveness of TQM implementation.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Issues of TQM are being addressed in higher education institution, particularly as they relate to productivity and financing. These adopting TQM in higher education have varying perspective on the approach. Some see TQM as a management system with customer or student satisfaction as crucial elements. Other see TQM as a philosophy fostering change in an organization or the educational institutions. Academic institutions have used both approaches in applying TQM in higher education settings. The system approaches to education comprises of inputs, processes and outputs, all encompassed in an arbitrary boundary and environment.

Then there is feedback i.e the outputs of information about the system which, when fed back into the system as inputs, are able to modify the system while the process is in the progress, thus making system more responsive to the needs of the components in the environment and thus making the system flexible. The output so released should satisfy the components in the environment in the form of customers /stakeholders :else the inputs would cease and further transformation /production ceases too.

### CONCLUSION

Total Quality Management is general philosophy and set of tools few which allow an institution to pursue a definition of quality and a means of attaining quality being a continuous improvement ascertained by customers contentment with the services they receive. TQM can be applied to higher education, but it must be modified to fully recognized some unique aspects of higher education viz education is a service industry with no visible, tangibles 'product'.

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