

**TQM PHILOSOPHY FOR FUTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION****Sandip D. Gadekar***Ph.D. Scholar Dept. of Edu. Ext. SPPU Pune**Scholarly Research Journal's is licensed Based on a work at www.srjis.com***Introduction**

The quality of higher education is everybody's concern today. Various studies and commission reports at official level has recognized the same and given recommendations for its improvement. Government and other constitutional agencies are taking necessary measures. A challenge of foreign institutions entering the Indian higher education is going to pose the threat of even survival of poor performing institutions. Many organizations have achieved excellence and competitive lead by putting into practice TQM policy. Most of the principles of TQM can be implemented in the area of education and training. This paper highlights the essence of TQM and explains how higher education institutions can improve the quality by implementing TQM Philosophy, principles & techniques.

Defining Quality

"The totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bears on its ability to satisfy the stated or implied needs" (BSI, 1991). Green and Harvey (1993) identified five different approaches to defining quality:

1. In terms of exceptional (Exceeding high standards and passing required standards);
2. In terms of consistency (exhibited through "Zero defects" and "getting right the first time", making quality a culture);
3. As fitness for purpose (meaning the product or service meets the stated purpose, customer specifications and satisfaction)
4. As value for money (through efficiency and effectiveness)
5. As transformative (in terms of qualitative change)

Various definitions of quality into five major groups:

(1) **Transcendent definitions:** These definitions are subjective and personal. They are eternal but go beyond measurement and logical description

(2) **Product-based definitions:** Quality is seen as measurable variable. The basis for measurement is objective of the product.

(3) **User-based definitions:** Quality is a means for customer satisfaction. This makes these definitions individual and partly subjective.

(4) **Manufacturing-based definitions:** Quality is seen as conformance to requirements and specifications.

(5) **Value-based definitions:** These definitions define quality in relation to costs. Quality is seen as providing good value for costs

Quality has a few central ideas around which the whole concept revolves: Quality as absolute, Quality as relative, Quality as a process, and Quality as culture. When we consider quality as absolute, it is given and considered as the highest possible standard.

TQM in education

The globalization of education, student's migration from one country to another are causes for concerns to educationists. The use of new teaching and learning methodologies, changing patterns of education delivery, course content, the concept of quality has become an essential component of the educational process for its success. Continuous improvement and self-evaluation among stake holders such as top management, students, faculty etc. is required and development and encouragement of leadership among the stake holders in the organization should be made as an on-going process as well as a system.

TQM Philosophy

Three authorities on Total Quality Management, namely, W. Edward Deming, J. M. Juran, and Kaoru Ishikawa share the same view on the primary purpose of an organization, which is to remain in business so that it can aid community stability, offer useful products and services that meet customer needs, and foster the work satisfaction and growth of organization members. Although there are differences on a number of points, they provide a reasonable basis for identifying the assumptions underlying the TQM philosophy. These assumptions are the following:

- **Quality Is Less Costly Than Poor Workmanship**

A basic assumption of TQM is that the costs of poor quality such as inspection, rework, high scrap rates, lost customers and related factors greatly exceed the costs of producing high quality products and services

- **Employees Will Naturally Try To Improve Quality As Long As They Have Appropriate Support**

A second assumption of TQM is that employees will willingly stake quality improvements as long as they are given the tools and training necessary to do so. A related prerequisite is that management needs to be willing to learn to the idea of employees.

- **Serious Quality Improvement Requires Cross-Functional Effort**

A third assumption of TQM is that most quality problems do not fit neatly within functional areas. For example, to produce high-quality products efficiently, design specialists need to confer closely with manufacturing specialists during the design phase itself.

- **Quality Improvement Requires the Strong Commitment of Top Management**

The reasoning behind this fourth assumption of TQM is that upper-level managers ultimately are responsible for the organizational systems within which products and services are designed and produced. Employees' ability to perform high-quality work, therefore, is a direct function of the quality of the systems that managers create

Principles of TQM

1. **Executive Management** – Top management should act as the main driver for TQM and create an environment that ensures its success.

2. **Training** – Employees should receive regular training on the methods and concepts of quality.
3. **Customer Focus** – Improvements in quality should improve customer satisfaction.
4. **Decision Making** – Quality decisions should be made based on measurements.
5. **Methodology and Tools** – Use of appropriate methodology and tools ensures that non-conformances are identified, measured and responded to consistently.
6. **Continuous Improvement** – Companies should continuously work towards improving manufacturing and quality procedures.
7. **Company Culture** – The culture of the company should aim at developing employees ability to work together to improve quality.
8. **Employee Involvement** – Employees should be encouraged to be pro-active in identifying and addressing quality related problems.

• **TQM Techniques**

In the implementation of change principles, various TQM advocates use various techniques. Some of the important techniques are discussed here.

1. Cost of Quality Analysis

Cost of quality analysis issued to evaluate the potential cost savings associated with doing the work right for the first time. This analysis involves quantifying the costs associated with maintaining quality at the desired level, such as cost of preventing quality problems, against the costs of poor quality.

2. Quality Improvement Teams

Quality improvement teams are small groups of employees who work on solving specific problems related to quality and productivity, often with stated targets for improvement.

3. Training

Training is also an important intervention technique used in implementing TQM. This technique is in accordance with the TQM emphasis on developing the competence of employees to produce goods and services with high quality levels.

4. Benchmarking

Benchmarking is a tool toward the attainment of effectiveness in operations.

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 develops the student ability to question and seek truth and makes him/her competent to critique on contemporary issues. It broadens the intellectual powers of the individual within a narrow specialization, but also gives him/her a wider perspective of the world around.

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

ii) **Higher education as training for a research career:** In this view, higher education is preparation for qualified scientists and researchers who would continuously develop the frontiers of knowledge. Quality within this view point is more about research publications and transmission of academic rigour to do quality research.

iii) **Higher education as the efficient management of teaching profession:** Many strongly believe that teaching is the core of educational institutions. Thus, higher education institutions focus on efficient management of teaching-learning provisions by improving the quality of teaching, enabling a higher completion rate among the students.

iv) **Higher education as a matter of extending life chances:** In this view, higher education is seen as an opportunity to participate in the development process of individual through flexible, continuing education mode. Interestingly, all these four concepts of higher education are not exclusive; rather they are integrated and give an overall picture of higher education. If we look at the activities of colleges and universities, we will realize that teaching, research and extension form the three main functions of higher education.

As teachers, principals, heads of the department and policy makers in education we should worry about quality of teaching, programmes, and institution because of the reasons

1. **Competition:** We are entering a new regime, where competition among educational institutions for students and funds will be highly significant. With globalization and GATS (Global Agreement on Trade in Services), the educational environment will be seized by increased competition. In order to survive in such situation, educational institutions need to worry about their quality

2. **Customer satisfaction:** Students, parents or sponsoring agencies as customers of the educational institutions are now highly conscious of their rights or getting value for their money and time spent. They are now demanding good quality teaching and receiving employable skill set and thus we should constantly worry about the relevance of our courses and programmes to the needs of the market.

3. **Maintaining standards:** As educational institutions, we should always concern about setting our own standard and maintaining it continuously year after year. In order to maintain the standard, we should continuously make efforts to improve quality of educational facilities

4. **Accountability:** Every institution is accountable to its own stake holder in terms of the funds (public or private) used on it. Concern for quality will ensure accountability of funds utilized and inform the stake holders about taking appropriate decisions. Thus quality can be considered as a monitoring mechanism.

5. **Improve employee morale and motivation:** Concern for quality as an institution will improve the morale and motivation of the staff in performing their duties and responsibilities. If quality system is in place, the internal process would be systematic making every department complementing each other's service domain and helping in developing internal customer satisfaction leading to high morale and motivation.

6. **Credibility, prestige and status:** If institutions are concerned about quality, continuously and not once in a while. It will bring credibility to institutions and individuals because of consistency leading to practice, status and brand value.

7. **Image and visibility:** Quality institutions have the capacity to attract better stake holder support, like getting merit students from far and near, increased donation / grants from funding agencies and higher employer interest for easy placement of graduates.

Role of higher education

Higher education is generally understood to cover teaching, research and extension.

- □To seek and cultivate new knowledge, to engage vigorously and fearlessly in the pursuit of truth, and to interpret old knowledge and beliefs in the light of new deeds and discoveries.
- □To provide the right kind of leadership in all walks of life, to identify gifted youth and help them develop their potential full by cultivating physical fitness, developing the powers of the mind and cultivating right interests, attitudes and moral and intellectual values.
- □To provide the society with competent men and women trained in agriculture, arts, medicine, science and technology and various other professions, who will also be cultivated individuals, imbued with a sense of social purpose.
- □To strive to promote quality and social justice, and to reduce social cultural differences through diffusion of education.
- □To foster in the teachers and students and through them in the society generally, the attitudes and values needed for developing the “good life” in individuals and society.

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