AFFECTING QUALITY IMPROVEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

This study is related with the overall scenario of Higher Education in India does not match with the global quality standards. India has entered the global employment market place with a self-imposed handicap of an acute shortage of quality institutions of Higher Education. Although there are still a few pockets of excellence, the average quality of India's Higher Education has been falling steadily behind the world average. Basically this chapter discuss the concepts of quality in Higher Education expectations from educational institutions, implementing quality assessment, consider different perceptions, role of faculty and administrator. It reflects total picture of the implementing quality improvement in Higher Education.

Keywords: Quality Improvement, Educational Institutions, Quality Assessment, Perceptions.

INTRODUCTION

The Higher Education System in India faces many challenges. These include: the fall out of large scale expansion in terms of quality and standards; resource constraints in the face of budget cuts and freeze; academic implications of national policy on reservations in admission and appointments to promote quality; concerns about access, accountability, autonomy, discipline etc. the overall picture of Higher Education in India does not match with the global quality standards. Hence, there is enough justification for an increased assessment of the quality of educational institution. Basically, these institutions assumed that quality could be determined by their internal resources such as faculty with an impressive set of degrees and detailed admission brochure of institution, number of books and journals in the library or e-library system of the institution, an ultra-modern campus. This view of determining quality in Higher Education, popularly termed as the "value-addition" approach, which does not measure the competencies students develop through the courses offered. The competencies are recall, understanding and problem solving.

CONCEPTS OF QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The concepts of quality can be defined as an outcome, a property or a process. Looking back at the past fifty years, the Higher Education system in India has shown remarkable resilience and growth. It is indeed creditable that, through our education system, we have been able to meet the human resource needs to implement a wide range of development projects and programmes. Quality management concept in business and in education remain same, there are certain limitations in adopting of quality management because educational institutions cannot be considered as industry and the products are not their students but it is the education imparted to the students. In quality management, the customer is defined as the next person in line. In an educational institutions, students directly receive the teaching services and hence are the customers of the teacher there whereas the faculty and administrators of institutions are the suppliers of the services. Even the supplier's customer concept of quality management cannot be applied in education because the customers do not understand what is to be acquired or what is of good quality. The definitions of students on quality experience has to be found through discussions an observations of what gives them joy of learning or not just enjoyment without learning. If the teaching and learning process confirms to their ideas. Ideas about what is quality education as students enjoy learning. Teachers need to discuss such questions with the students as: why are you here? What are you trying to do? Have the teacher can help you in dong it well? A teacher has to build up a consensus in a class regarding what constitutes a quality experience. Once a manually agreed purpose is established, the quality management concepts ensure that curriculum coherence increases, education is improved, productivity of teachers is enhanced and teacher and students find greater joy in their work and are able to make positive contributions to the society. Therefore, it is necessary that the institutions of Higher Education accept the mantra of "Quality" and provide for a standardized assessment of what exactly the students are able to do as a result of their education.

EXPECTIONS FROM EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS:

Institutions of Higher Education are accepted to prove knowledge, Know-how, wisdom and character to the students through their curriculum. "Knowledge" enables them to understand what they learn in relation what they already know and creates an ability to generalize from their experiences. "Know-how" takes them beyond merely understanding and enables them to put their knowledge to work. "Wisdom" makes them capable. Capable of deciding their priorities. "Character" development in the combined effect of knowledge. It is recognized by certain traits such as honesty, integrity, initiative, curiosity, truthfulness, work alone and in a group. However, most of the educational institutions hardly pay attention to the development of either wisdom or character. Many educators have not developed wisdom themselves and hence throw up their hands at the thought of imparting it to the students. They link that these elements are to be taken care of by someone else. Wisdom and character are two important human qualities which are best developed by making students to participate in creative team activities.

IMPLEMENTING QULAITY ASSESSMENT:-

Educational institutions prepare of implementing total quality assessment as well as management. Quality assessment and management influences the goals, roles and mission of an institute. Who are the key players and what are their individual goals and motivations? How the culture of an institute will change in an environment of increasing demand for quality? Answers to such questions should be available in the institution most of the quality standards for accreditation state that assessment principles are complementary to the institute's mission. Clearly defined mission, goals and objectives guide faculty, administration, staff and governing bodies in making decision related to planning, resource allocation, programs and curriculum development. These goals and objectives shall focus on student learning, other outcomes and institutional improvement.

CONSIDER DIFFERENT PERCEPTIONS:-

Both faculty and administration believe that quality measures should be implemented in their institution, but the movement suffers because of their considerably different perceptions. The administrators may fill that they are already doing those kinds of things in their curriculum and out comes assessment merely establishes criteria for success and making any additional changes are not essential. But the faculty's perspective is quite different, as same of them feel that there has to be a continuous campaign of reinforcement form top administrators, that they are totally committed to quality implementation an assessment programmes. Faculty resists on the issue of measuring learning and the tents of a quality education: because they misunderstand the goals of quality and assessment and their potential to compliment the mission of the institute. Even when the decision is taken, perceptions differ on how the institute should prepare for implementation of quality and assessment. For example, administrators feet that the preparation should comprise evolving administrative infrastructure, organizing conference, bringing consultants on the campus and advertising for a new assessment coordinator. On the other hand the faculty perceives that little or no genuine planning is underway. Faculty and administration in most of the institutes function independent of the another. Faculty feels that all the activities related to imparting knowledge such as teaching, learning and assessment are their exclusive domain. The administration thinks that quality implementation and outcomes assessment is an instructional matter. The difference in perceptions became a major source of faculty administrator conflict and is one of the foremost contributors to the culture resistance in most of the institutes.

ROLE OF FACULTY:-

        Educational institutions are a system of inter-dependent process, comprising of collection of highly specialized teaching faculty linked within a functional hierarchy. Faculty is viewed as a "commodity", employed on the basis of perceived needs of the institution. Through they form the institution's true competitive edge, teachers have very little autonomy. Which are generally process manager, provides students with presides over the transformation of inputs to outputs of greater value to the institute and to the ultimate customer. Students enjoy and take pride through learning and accomplishment and hence they are active contributors in the process and valued for their creativity and intelligence. Teachers work 'in' a system where as the Head of an institute works 'on' the system and continuously improves the quality with the help of teachers. Students study and learn 'in' a system and the teachers have to continuously work 'on' the system to improve the teaching quality with the help of students. Quality education is what makes learning a pleasure. Some measures of student's performance may be increased by competitions for grades or by prizes, but such learning would be unhealthy. It takes a quality experience to create an independent learner. Teachers must discuss with the studentsof what constitutes a quality experience for them. Everyone in the system is expected, invited and trained to participate in the improvement process rather than just dictated form the top administration.

ROLE OF ADMINSTRATOR:-

The administrator of institution handles various department functions, faulty and the students, who do not appreciate that they are inter dependent. They also exercise managerial leadership enough participative management in playing their roles as mentors, facilitators, innovators etc. Quality results from the institute's education management system. People working in the system cannot do better than the system allows. Problems arise when the individuals, single as well as jointly, do not do their best. Such a situation could only be prevented when people understand where they fit in and have the knowledge to maximize their contributions to the whole. Administration must create an environment that nurtures a team-oriented culture, which can prevent problems and make continual improvements. Performance appraisal, recognition and reward systems place people in an internally competitive environment. The competition should be against the environment or to please the customer or to eliminate waste of resources.

IMPLEMENTING SUGGESTION:-

Recently, a survey revealed that a vast majority of Indian graduates coming out of universities are unemployable. They lack in essential language skills besides the domain knowledge and the skills required by most of the organizations in liberalized India. The following suggestions may be considered in this regards: -

1. More Indian Universities need to come out of the Govt. control. It does not mean that these Universities forget their larger social objectives. What we basically need to achieve is that while retaining focus on larger social objectives, Indian Universities maintain themselves as independent entities and focus upon merit driven hiring and give primacy to quality research and education.
2. Such students who can afford higher education on their own must be made to pay for their education. For the majority of the rest of the students, there should be appropriate arrangement for bank loan.
3. The Universities need to be funded by the Govt. and a greater share of the Govt.'s budget should go to the Universities.
4. Teacher and student ration needs to improve for higher education in India.
5. The teachers need to be paid better so that the best of the brains come in the field of teaching.
6. The contact teachers should be banned in higher education level.
7. The appointment of teachers needs to be done through a rigorous process.
8. The performance should be assessed for all the teaching faculties on the basis of learning outcomes, performance in terms of research and innovation displayed by them.

CONCLUSION:-

Quality has both absolute and relative meanings. The impacts for improving quality of Higher Education and scrutiny by the accreditation agencies and employers are gaining momentum in India. There are many quality management tools and techniques use which could be adopted in the field of Education to diagnose a system and identify potential for improvement. Now the people have started to realized that there is no other activities that promises more leverage in the improvement of society than the development of a generation that understands quality and remains equipped to improve it. Therefore, sharing of the experiences among the educational institution on quality issues may generate ideas for evolving norms and strategies for the quality assurance of the management process, curricular inputs, practices and the evaluation system as well.

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