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Quality in education – Need of the hour

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Abstract

Quality has been the need of an eternal quest through the corridors of human history. It has been the driving force for all human endeavors. It is the inspiration for transcendence from the mundane to the higher realms of life. It is the source of craving behind the unfolding human civilization through ages immemorial. Efforts have always been there to define quality. But it is impossible to define quality fully. It is perceived and recognized. It is best left to the admirer to perceive and appreciate for quality lies in the perception of the consumer. In this paper, author has tried to elaborate the necessity of quality education in this age of challenges.

Keywords: Quality, education, Need

Introduction

Concept of Quality

A wide range of efforts have been made to articulate the concept of quality. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the notion of quality includes all the attributes of a thing except those of relation and quantity.

The British Standards Institution defines quality in functional terms as the totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bear upon its ability to satisfy the stated or implied needs.

Oakland concluded and defined quality as the degree of fitness for purpose and function. It is thus a positive and dynamic idea and not a negative idea of absence of defect. Being a positive idea, it has endless possibilities of evolution and unfolding, making it an endless journey with a deliberate purpose and design and not necessarily a destination. Thus defining quality in general terms is very difficult.

Quality in Education

Defining quality education is a massive challenge since it deals with the most sensitive creation on earth- the human beings. Industrial products are finished goods-take them or leave them. Nothing can be done once they are finished. Education has no such finished product more even the graduates. They are on the way 'to be' human beings continue to learn and evolve 'to be' Education facilitates this very evolution of the individuals. Hence concept of quality has attracted the attention of Indian as well as of western scholars.

Western view point of Quality in Education

Education, here is goal oriented. Accordingly, Quality of Education has been seen with reference to following goals.

- Excellence in Education;
- Value addition in Education;
- Conformance of Education output to planned goals;
- Specification and requirements;
- Defect avoidance in Education process
- Meeting or exceeding customer expectations of Education.

The International Commission on Education for the 21st Century called for holistic development of individuals, thus optimizing physical, mental, intellectual and spiritual

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potentialities. Quality Education, for this Commission, must be supported by four pillars of learning:

Learning to Know

Learning to Do

Learning to Be

Learning to Live Together

Indian Perspective of Quality in Education

Indian Educational history dates back over 5000 years. Indian scriptures professed Education as an emancipating and liberating force, a process that manifest perfection already existent in man. Metaphysically than, quality Education is concerned with the nature and destination of primarily biological, the Indian view point includes evolution of the mind and consciousness with the body as the host. For them, human beings live in a multi-plan spiritual planes. In deputing the structural nature of human beings, particularly from the angle of education, the role of sense-organ has been highlighted both by western and Indian thinkers. Education is the training of these sense-organ to be receptive and sensitive, of the mind to enroll the senses, of intelligence to be discriminative to give right direction and of the body to be able to host the say, the part of the total consciousness. Triguna or there qualities i.e. Tamas (idle, inert or narrow)

Rajs (active, dominating and)

Satta (adventures enlightened & quiet)

Are said to be the constituents of human nature. Quality Education facilitates the movement from tamasik to the rajasik to the satwik stages and beyond to the trigunatita (attribute to the omniscient and omnipresent).

One important land mare of quality is the goal of education. If we take the goal of education to produce engineers or clerks, we are defining only one though significant skill skt: technical & economic. The same individual will grow to be a father and mother a husband or a wife, a brother or a sister, a neighbor and a member of social and political systems. The quality in education has to take into consideration the individual goals in context of social goals. This goal conforms to the contention of the goal of 'learning to be' and not become.

As would be evident, the western view of quality of education is functional 'want a graduate 'can do'. The Indian new of quality in education transcends functionalism and reaches the metaphysical level: what a graduate 'can be'. The ultimate destination is the projection hidden in human beings. According the reach for contents and processes of education is formulated.

Here are certain principles which can lead the institution towards quality institutions in the realm of education.

1. Nurture a vibrant familial environment in the institution.
2. Ensure proactive participation of all the partners in the institution.
3. Create awareness that schooling is a holistic living experience.
4. Consult students and parents about their expectations.
5. Develop collective future vision and long and short term perspective plans.
6. Develop indication of quality and benchmarks (minimum acceptable level)) for each major and minor activity of the institute.
7. Define quality parameters and insist on quality in every sphere and activity.
8. Create mechanisms for inter departmental and inter subject group dialogue and planning, breaking barriers.

9. Develop a staff development blueprint for each staff member.
10. Innovate and encourage innovation and discuss outcomes.
11. Celebrate organizational success and failures. Incorporating these principles in the institution can lead the institution towards quality assurance and ultimately quality control.

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