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Dr. Pragya Aggarwal
Associate Professor,
Hindu College of Education
Sonapat, Haryana,
India.

Total quality management and teacher education

Dr. Pragya Aggarwal

Abstract

Quality has been defined as the fitness of product or service for its intended use and quality control conveys an idea about determining and maintaining that quality of product or service. Good buildings with well-furnished well-maintained classrooms, well-equipped laboratories, and a good library with ample facilities for students, well-qualified and committed faculty and an environment, which facilitates the prevalence of an effective's teaching- learning process are important sources of quality. National development is possible only through education. The education should be qualitative and hence Total Quality Management in education is needed urgently. When we accept TQM in education, a quality in the teacher education institutions.

Keywords: Teacher Education, Total Quality Management.

Introduction

Quality has been defined as the fitness of product or service for its intended use and quality control conveys an idea about determining and maintaining that quality of product or service. The concept of Total Quality Management (TQM) is not new industry. Various models have been used by industrialists worldwide to improve, monitor and maintain the quality of their product. Quality circles, ISO and TQM are the terms often used in the business management. It is a common belief that quality circles are for grass roots; ISO is for middle management and TQM for top management. Actually TQM is focused on the requirement of the people. It aims at effectiveness and efficiency is aligned to satisfy without wasting efforts and using full potential of people in an organization. It aims at avoiding defects and maintenance of orderly discipline in the organization.

Concept of Total Quality Management

The concept of the TQM was first introduced in 1920's, when the statistical approach was first used in quality control in factories of America. It is a management style based upon producing quality service as defined by the costumers-focused, fact-based and term-driven management process to achieves an organization's strategic imperative trough continuous process of improvement.

"Total Quality Management (TQM) is both a philosophy and a set of guiding principles that represent the foundation of a continuously improving organization. Total Quality Management (TQM) is the application of quantitative methods and human resources to improve the material and service supplied to an organization

Good buildings with well-furnished well-maintained classrooms, well-equipped laboratories, and a good library with ample facilities for students, well-qualified and committed faculty and an environment, which facilitates the prevalence of an effective's teaching- learning process are important sources of quality. Of all the ingredients of qualitative education mentioned above, the most important is tht dedicated faculty. A school, college or university, may not have a good building, furniture, playgrounds, and even well-equipped laboratories and libraries, but if the teachers are enthusiastic, highly motivated and committed to their task, the students are likely to have the best education. That is why Perry (1994) in "What is Quality in Higher Education?" appropriately writes: "Teachers who fell enthusiasm for their job and who are well qualified and experts in what they teach are the only essential ingredients in teachings quality".

Correspondence
Dr. Pragya Aggarwal
Associate Professor,
Hindu College of Education
Sonapat, Haryana,
India.

Total Quality Management (TQM) in Teacher Education

Teachers Education institutes have a vital role in improving the standards of the system of education by preparing competent and effective teachers. It has generally been agreed that the quality of nation is judged by the quality of its citizens. The latter is mostly determined by their educational system of the nation, which in turn is decided by the quality of teachers it has. Thus, the real dynamic force of education is the teacher. After independence, strenuous efforts have been seriously and continuously made for expansion and qualitative improvement of teacher education. For the qualitative improvement of education in general and teacher's education in particular various committees and commissions were formed. Among the commissions, the Kothari Commission (1964-65), which dealt extensively with all aspects of education, is worthy of mention. It said, "A sound program of professional education of teachers is essential for the quality improvement of education." "Unfortunately, the professional education of teachers has been neglected in the post-independence period". In their opinion, "quality of training institutes remain, with a few exceptions, either mediocre poor". Preparation of qualified and able teaching personnel is one of the most significant functions of all teacher education institutions. Realizing this fact, the National Policy on Education (1986) [7] places complete trust in the teaching community and has suggested a variety of steps to improve the status of teacher with effective accountability. The quality of teacher education would largely depend upon the effectiveness of teacher education institutions.

Quality of teacher education is an integral part of the quality of education system. Teacher education institutions have a greater responsibility in producing quality teachers, lest the future of our nation is at stake. The Education Commissions (1964-66), popularly known as the Kothari Commission, devoted one complete chapter to teacher education and detailed various recommendations for the improvement of its quality. It emphasized that the essence of teacher education is "quality" and in its absence, teacher education becomes not only a financial waste but also a source of overall deterioration on educational standards. They suggested objectives of teachers education be formulated on the basis of some broad principles listed as under.

- Reorientation of the subject knowledge
- Vitalization of professional studies
- Improvement in the methods of teaching
- Development of special courses and programs
- Revision and improvement of curricula
- Quality Control in Teacher Education Whitty (1991) emphasized that quality teacher education required
- A genuine partnership between the various stakeholders (training institutions, schools, etc) in all routes qualify teacher status.
- A clearer definition of competencies (or core professional skills) required by teacher as reflective practitioners.
- Monitoring of academic validation through a quality assurance system.
- Administration of professional accreditation through a Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (CATE) with strong extra- professional representation to ensure public accountability.
- Sensitivity to local and sectional needs within this national framework.

With such a framework, teacher's education could both control and assure quality.

A Change in Culture

TQM requires a change in culture. This is notoriously difficult to bring about takes time to implement. It requires a change of attitudes and working methods. The staff institutions need to understand and live message if TQM is not to make an impact. The latter is characterized by an understanding that people produce quality.

Two things are required for the staff to produce quality. First, the staff needs a suitable environment in which to work; they need the tools of the trade and they need to work with system and procedures, which are simple.

Implementing total quality management requires coping with change in a positive and constructive manner. In secondary teacher education institutions, management must be redesigned so as to be consistent with total quality culture. The major concern in secondary teacher education colleges should be educational excellence for which teacher education colleges' total quality management would go a long way driven and quality borne.

Conclusion

National development is possible only through education. The education should be qualitative and hence Total Quality Management in education is needed urgently. When we accept TQM in education, a quality in the teacher education institutions.

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