



## Total Quality Management in Higher Education: The Need of the Hour

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### Abstract:

*Today in the emerging global world, Total Quality Management is the key factor in any enterprise and education is not exclusion. When the world is turning into materialistic world with a competition to excel, quality becomes the prime factor in ensuring the output of qualitative results. Today, when TQM is applied to all the Managerial sector, corporate sector and Hospitality sector, Education sector becomes the prime area to insist, maintain and sustain quality education at all the spheres of education. It is very necessary that the quality of our higher education rise to higher status and greater heights. Only a few top higher educational institutions are regarded as the centers of excellent quality education like the IIMs, IITs, AIMS, BITS-PILANI etc. With the changing scenario of increasing number of private institutions, it becomes very essential to withstand our educational institutions with the mark of excellence in quality. In fact, TQM is practical and strategic approach of functioning an institution catering to the needs and requirements of the Students. It will prove to be a key factor in developing quality culture in our education system. The use of TQM principles starts in the classroom. The teachers should initiate a lead in establishing their mission. TQM is related with people, system and culture. For the efficient functioning of the TQM, quality steering committee should be established and a strong feedback loop for quality assurance should be arranged. This paper aims at presenting the necessity of TQM for ensuring and sustaining quality culture and values in education as education is the backbone of any nation. Education without quality will prove futile and meaningless. Only quality education can nurture, cultivate, create and shape future young generation of India to lead them in the global world.*

**Keywords:** Education, Kaizen, Learning Challenge, Motivation, Sustainable environment, Total Quality Management

Total Quality Management involves quality assurance, and extends and develops it. TQM is about creating a quality atmosphere where the goal of every member is to delight their customers. The structure of the organization allows them to do so. Here, the customer is sovereign. This approach has been popularized by Peters and Waterman in search of excellence. Many companies, such as Marks & Spencer, British Airways and Saints bury have been following this approach for a many years. It is about providing the customer expectations which are thought to be short-term & fickle. Thus the changing tastes, generates new needs and wants. TQM is not something that is trusted upon. It cannot be done to you or for you. TQM is not an inspection. It is about always trying to do things right first time and every time, rather than occasionally checking if they have gone wrong. TQM is not about working to someone else's agenda. The 'total' in TQM dictates that everything and everybody in the organization is involved in the enterprise of continuous improvement. The 'management' in TQM likewise means everyone, because everyone in the institution, whatever their status, position or role, is the manager of their own responsibilities. It is both a mind set and a set of practical activities an attitude of min.d as well as a method of promoting continuous improvement. It is a practical & strategic approach to running an organization which focuses on the needs of its customers and clients.

It seeks a permanent shift in an institution's focus on the needs of its customers expediency to the long term quality improvement. Constant innovation improvement: "Kaizen" — means step — by — step improvement. TQM requires a change of attitudes and working methods, a change in the way in which institutions are managed and led. Two things to work.

1. A suitable environment to work.
2. Encouragement and recognition of their successes & achievements.

The key to successful TQM culture is an effective internal/external customer- supplier chain. In education it changes the usual set of relationships to one with a clear customer focus. Education is about people learning. If TQM is to have relevance in education it needs to address the quality of the learner's experience - the prime activity-learning. Miller, Dower and Inniss make the same point in Improving Quality in Further Education. The use of TQM principles begins in the classroom with the teachers establishing their 'mission' -which provide a sense of direction and purpose, acts as a unifying factor, criteria for decision making, articulates values, ensures consistency of purpose, defines customers, characterizes the organization to its community & provides challenge & motivation. Form this, negotiation might take place about how the two parties will seek to achieve the mission — the styles of learning & teaching and the resources they require.

- a) Establishment of a quality steering Committee
- b) Strong feedback loop-for quality assurance

TQM is concerned with people, system & culture. There are some barriers to be overcome when introducing TQM:

1. Cultures are conservative, homeostasis is the norm
2. Most staff is most comfortable with what they know and understand
3. Strategic plan -institution's mission
4. Trust-senior management

It is (MBWA) management by walking about — where the leader has to visualize and understand the feeling of the frontline & processes of institution because total quality culture has shared values, commitment to always getting right, open and explicit communication, time for team work, training in quality, total involvement and sensitivity to others need. In educational institutions the focus is on the customers wants i.e. the learners, who are external customers and the staff members who are internal customers. The stakeholders are parents, governors, employers or government and the society as a whole. The institution should clearly define the nature of service it would provide to its customers. It should maintain an excellent and continuing dialog with them. While the major focus must be on external customers i.e. learners, it is important to remember that everyone working in the institution provides service to his colleagues. TQM staff members are the internal customers. Poor internal relationships prevent an institution working properly and in the end it is the external customers who suffer. There should be proper coordination in the components of the TQM i.e. structures, processes, customers, team. Leadership and values. Total quality management in higher education means improving quality of courses, input, instructional processes, resources, management processes and structures as well as student support services, output and linkages with world of work and other organizations. On the basis of the analysis of the initiatives taken by the universities such as Virginia Commonwealth University, South Bank University and Aston University, P. K. Tulsi has suggested the following approach for total quality management: Identifying Customers Needs; Specifying quality standards; Benchmarking;. Identifying gaps in the existing system; Planning for improvement; Implementation of improvement plans; Monitoring and Evaluating, and Modification of plans; Implementation of total quality management in higher education requires deep commitments; full involvement of people; top management support, fair reward and recognition policies and training of concerned people in the concept; tools and techniques of total quality management. While Crawford has visualized the following stages in the implementation of TQM: Mission to be compatible with its vision; Objectives to be transformed into specific attainable, measurable goals; Goals motivating

individuals and offering a payoff to the institution; Plans to bring together human, physical and financial resources; Resources that permit implementation of the plans.

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