

Quality in higher education

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Dr. Aruna Ms Sangeeta Faculty Commerce, Faculty Art , Rama Degree College Ram Manohar Yadav Chinhat, Lucknow Mahavidyalaya, Fatehpur The overall scenario 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 the country's educational institutions.

Traditionally, these institutions assumed that Quality could be determined by their internal resources, viz. faculty with an impressive set of degrees and experience detailed at the end of the institute's admission brochure, number of books and journals in the library, an ultra-modern campus, and size of the endowment, etc. , or by its definable and assessable outputs, viz. , efficient use of resources, producing uniquely educated, highly satisfied and employable graduates.

This view of determining Quality in higher education, popularly termed as the “ value-addition” approach, does not measure the competencies students develop through the courses offered. The competencies are recall, understanding, and problem solving. Recall” amounts to a competency of gaining knowledge by way of reading, viewing, listening, assimilating, and demonstrating it when required. “ Understanding” is comprehension, which requires explanations and vocabulary development, and demonstrating it by giving ideas, predict, and evaluate cause and effect. The competency of “ problem solving” can be developed by solving text-book type of problems and the expertise so developed can be used in handling real-life situations. The students should understand and accept these concepts, and the level of competency they are expected to attain should also be defined in consultation with them.

Quality is defined as ‘ the fitness to use and conformance to requirement’ (Juran, 1984)‘ A predictable degree of uniformity and dependability at low cost and suited to the market’ (Deming, 1986)‘ The totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs’ (American Society for Quality Control, 1990)‘ A perception arising as a consequence of how well a company meets all explicit and implicit promises made to a stakeholder. (Feigenbaum, 1995)

‘ A function of competencies in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes, capacity and competition vis-a-vis needs. ’ (Goel and Biswal, 1996)‘ product or service possesses quality if it helps somebody and enjoys a good and sustainable market’ (Deming, 1997)‘ Resultant from the system that produced it, and is an attribute of that system as much as of the product itself— of its processes, its people and the way they work together. (Holt, 1998)‘ Efficiency in meeting the set goals, relevance to human and environmental needs and conditions and " something more" in relation to the pursuit of excellence and human betterment.. ’ (Rajput and Walia, 1997)

Thus, Quality is skill, excellence, perfection, standard, competence for work and value for money. It is further defined as combination of competence with virtue, excellence in performance and capability of delivering goods.

An Internal Quality Assurance system is a system under which students, staff and management satisfy themselves that control mechanisms are working to maintain and enhance the quality. In the specific context of higher education institutions, IQA is the totality of systems, resources and information devoted to setting up, maintaining and improving the quality and standards of teaching, scholarship (student learning experience), research, and service to

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community. with a view to improve quality in education the hierarchy given below will be suggested as steps of enhancing quality in any institution.

Since independence, the higher education system has grown rapidly. By 1980, there were 132 universities and 4738 colleges in the country enrolling around five percent of the eligible age group in higher education. Today, India is the third largest higher education system in the world (after China and the USA) in terms of enrollment. However, in terms of the number of institutions, India is the largest higher education system in the world with 17973 institutions (348 universities and 17625 colleges). This means that the average number of students per educational institution in India is also lower than that in the US and China. Before going further, it will be useful to discuss the types of institutions imparting higher education in India.