

PRINCIPLES AND DIMENSIONS OF QUALITY EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS:
CHALLENGES IN A WAY TO HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract:

This paper deals with the quality education in schools in Indian perspectives. A quality education in schools is a strong base for the coming higher education. The India philosophers and great thinkers have regarded quality of education as that which helps children to become conscience and productive citizen so that they are able to face future challenges in their life. Quality education includes: Learners who are healthy, well-nourished and ready to participate and learn, and supported in learning by their families and communities; Environments that are healthy, safe, protective and gender-sensitive, and provide adequate resources and facilities; Content that is reflected in relevant curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills, especially in the areas of literacy, numeracy and skills for life, and knowledge in such areas as gender, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS prevention and peace; Processes through which trained teachers use child-centred teaching approaches in well-managed classrooms and schools and skilful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities; Outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes, and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in society. The authors try to discuss the quality dimensions like teaching methods, teaching-learning environment, teaching –learning process, teaching – learning materials, instructional strategies, monitoring of the school activities and co-operation of the school management committees in school activities. The present system of higher education does not serve the purpose for which it has been started. In general education itself has become so profitable a business that quality is lost in the increase of quantity of professional institutions with quota system and politicization adding fuel to the fire of spoil system, thereby increasing unemployment of graduates without quick relief to mitigate their sufferings in the job market of the country. Thus, we should think of quality and quantity, both, in our education system. This will lead the way of school education towards higher education.

Key Words: *Quality education, school education, quality model, quality dimensions, challenges.*

Introduction:

Human being is social animal and education is the main tool which shapes him to separate him from the animals. It is the process of education which enables him to act, think and live a life. It is formal education system which helps an individual to prepare himself for meeting the challenges of life. The formal education system is responsible for the life basics of an individual. But, the recent surveys show that student education is no longer based around the basics. In order to obtain a quality education one need to teach the fundamentals. A quality education begins with the fundamentals like, problem-solving, teamwork, and organization.

The dictionary meaning of 'quality' is simple and straightforward. Dictionary defines 'quality' as a mental or moral attribute, trait or characteristic, a feature of one's character, a habit. Quality may refer to the relative nature or kind or character, trait, faculty or skill, accomplishment or characteristic. Quality, in fact, refers to the degree of excellence in relation to an attribute or faculty relative to some norm or standard expressed either in time or space or unit adopted and accepted for comparison. The concepts of quality of education comprise of the combinations of these elements, involving an extension or modifications of the general concepts of quality (Pradhan, J. S. and Saxena, D., 2012).

The India philosophers and great thinkers have regarded quality of education as that which helps children to become conscience and productive citizen so that they are able to face future challenges in their life. According to Rabinder Nath Tagore, true education should realize at every step how our training and knowledge have organic connections with our surroundings. It must teach one to live in harmony with all that exists around us. Dr. Radhakrishnan felt that quality is that which gives the children a purpose in their life. Education in this view should aim at perfection of the individuals.

Three principles of Quality:

- 1. Promotion of Efficiency and Productivity:** It is concerned with efficiency measured by the satisfactory nature of the outcomes or results, error or defect free products or

consequences which result from the devising of a defect and error free process or procedure of production, or operations, or system or unit.

2. **Prevention of Creeping of error:** It refers to inefficiency or defect into the system, designs, structures or products. The production of perfect products or generation of perfect outcomes warrants results that are perfectly ideal or that fully conform to the accepted norm or standard.
3. **Principle of Cure:** In case the existing product, design, system, structure or unit is already afflicted and affected either by inefficiency, errors or defects, the operative principle has to be that of cure. The reduction or elimination or removal of errors and defects through the application of the principle of cure will be required in such cases.

Quality education includes: Learners who are healthy, well-nourished and ready to participate and learn, and supported in learning by their families and communities; Environments that are healthy, safe, protective and gender-sensitive, and provide adequate resources and facilities; Content that is reflected in relevant curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills, especially in the areas of literacy, numeracy and skills for life, and knowledge in such areas as gender, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS prevention and peace; Processes through which trained teachers use child-centred teaching approaches in well-managed classrooms and schools and skilful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities; Outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes, and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in society.

This definition allows for an understanding of education as a complex system embedded in a political, cultural and economic context (Rasheed, Sadig, 2000). Indeed, each of us judges the school system in terms of the final goals we set for our children our community, our country and ourselves. A Report to UNESCO (Learning: The Treasure Within, 1996) education throughout life as based upon four pillars:

- Learning to know acknowledges that learners build their own knowledge daily, combining indigenous and 'external' elements.
- Learning to do focuses on the practical application of what is learned.
- Learning to live together addresses the critical skills for a life free from discrimination, where all have equal opportunity to develop themselves, their families and their communities.

- Learning to be emphasizes the skills needed for individuals to develop their full potential.

This way of conceptualization of education provides an integrated and comprehensive view of learning and, therefore, according to the report constitutes quality of education. “Educational Policy” should address the question of the quality of school education from the following three aspects:

1. Upgrading the quality of teachers, through the adoption of the following policies and measures:

- *The level of pre-service education of teachers*, which is carried out at secondary school level in some countries, should be raised to higher education level, as in the case of many industrially developed countries, which have created teachers’ colleges and universities. In some of those countries, graduate courses are offered in teacher education.

- *Teachers’ certificates* should indicate whether they are for primary school, secondary school, technical or vocational education, teaching the handicapped etc., according to the pre-service education.

- *Recruitment and placement* of teachers should reflect an equitable balance between the various subject-areas, experienced and less-experienced teachers, urban and rural areas, etc.

- *In-service training* is strongly recommended as lifelong education of all those engaged in the teaching profession to upgrade teaching capacities both in theory and practice.

Curriculum development and related matters (see (2) below) should be taken into account in the in-service training of teachers.

- *Working conditions of teachers* – such as class size, working hours/days and supporting facilities – should be considered.

- *Teachers’ salaries* should be high enough to attract promising young people to the teaching profession and a reasonable balance achieved between their salaries and those of other civil servants.



The formulation of a comprehensive teacher policy, combined with above-mentioned measures, should be a matter of prime concern to the authorities concerned.

2. The design and development of the curriculum and related matters should be carried out by the authorities and professional groups concerned. The school curriculum reflects the contents of teacher-training courses. Teaching methods, textbooks, teaching materials and aids should be developed simultaneously with the curriculum. Academic research achievements in natural and social sciences, and humanities should be taken into account in curriculum development. The important role of experimental studies, and experience of working and living with nature, should also be considered in the development of teaching and learning methods.

3. The improvement of school management is the third area in which school education can be upgraded. School is a fundamental educational establishment where practical educational activities are carried out systematically. Although in most cases teachers work alone in classrooms, they are members of a group, which works together to develop what could be called a 'school culture. We can hardly expect high-quality school education without good leadership on the part of the headmaster and active co-operation of teachers in school management.

Finally, improving the quality of school education considered from the three aspects mentioned above should be a fundamental policy issues in all countries, whatever their circumstances, in the coming century.



Fig. 1: Quality Education. (myedumusing.files.wordpress.com)

‘Quality education’ is when the end user (learner) receives an optimized output (outcomes) from the committed delivery. This delivery enhances and nurtures further growth and development of the end user for a productive and better future ([myedumusings](#)). Thus, it is clear from this discussion that we need to focus on enhancing the quality of education when we follow the elements and process shown in Fig. 1.

Quality Dimensions of School Education: The major factors that influence quality of school education are as follows.

1. Basic infrastructure and facilities in Schools.
2. Healthy learning Environment
3. Teacher and Teacher Preparation
4. Curriculum and Nature of Content
5. Teaching Learning materials
6. Teaching – learning process.
7. Activity Based learning
8. Instructional time Period
9. Teaching – learning Methods
10. Teaching – learning Strategies.
11. Evaluation Techniques
12. Supervision of Teaching – learning process
13. Monitoring of the School Activities
14. Community Participation through School management Committees
15. Community Support in School Activities

The Challenges of Quality Education:

Education and academic quality can mean different things to different people, depending on their perspective, role and context and, in part because of this, quality is notoriously difficult to evaluate. The main identified challenges of the quality education are:

- The knowledge challenge.
- The challenge of decentralization.
- The resource challenge.
- The challenge of social inclusion.
- The challenge of data and comparability.

- The challenge of good and resourceful teachers
- The challenge of quality text books.
- The challenge of proper learning environment.
- The challenge of implementation of technology in schools.
- Te challenge of e-governance in schools regarding quality.

The Model of Quality Education: The educational model applies to all academic courses and programs that are taught in the schools, whether in whole or in part. The key principles of the quality education model are: academic excellence, interaction with the media, internationalization and administrative efficiency. The educational model incorporates the following elements:



Fig. 2: Model of Quality Education (<http://www.pucp.edu.pe>)

Quality Education Equals Exceptional Student Education: A Way to Higher Education:

Everyone is interested in a quality education. A quality education leads to an excellent student education which paves the way for him to higher education. All parents and teachers want their children to have nothing but a quality student education. There are ways to ensure that a quality education always equals an exceptional student education. The future of India depends on a quality education being provided in every school. The quality of the education

plays a major role in the student education which helps him to establish for higher education. Using a framework that increases quality education in our schools can help us design maps to continuous improvement in student education. When the educators know they are promoting a quality education through their teaching practices it allows for an ongoing road to improvement and accelerated student education. The confidence the teachers gain from this can help enhance the quality education all schools aim for when promoting exceptional student education. Recent surveys show that student education is no longer based around the basics. In order to obtain a quality education you need to teach the fundamentals. Student education depends on the basic skills in order to succeed. A quality education begins with the fundamentals like, problem-solving, teamwork, and organization. These core principles are what create a quality education and promote an exceptional student education.

In addition to the basic principles being taught in the classroom there are other things that go into creating a quality education. One thing is to set a high standard of achievement. Promote exceptional student education from the very beginning of a child's school career by setting a standard of achievement. While it is okay to set high standards for your children to ensure a quality education it is important to not put pressure on your child when doing this. Set the standards and then help them work towards them. That is what a quality education is all about.

Another thing that can be done to promote an excellent student education is creating a foundation of teaching methods that works. This is going to take some time and you will probably find some methods along the way that don't work so well, but the end result will be a strong core of teaching methods that work for you and your students. Your teaching methods may be different from other teachers you work with. And that ok. As long as they work for you and your students then that is all that matters.

It is also important to create a way to measure the progress of our students. This method coincides with the last in the sense that we may have to alter our teaching methods if our students are not progressing and advancing in what they are learning. There will always be topics and subjects that are harder to teach than others. But if you can find a way to teach it and your students are understanding and learning because of your teaching methods then you are succeeding. It is important to assess our methods and our students progress often to make sure no child is left behind. Meaning no child is left not understanding what was taught. (phil-race.com/new.html).

Conclusion:

It is concluded from the discussion in this paper that there are some questions remained unanswered, how the faculty and administration of a school prepare for implementing Quality? How the introduction of Quality education implementation influences the goals, roles, and mission of school? Who are the key persons and what are their individual goals and motivations? How will the culture of a school change in an environment of increasing demand for demonstrable Quality and outcomes? Answers to such questions should be available in the school and education system. Most of the Quality Standards state that assessment principles are complementary to the school's mission. Clearly defined mission, goals, and objectives guide faculty, administration, staff, and governing bodies in making decisions related to planning, resource allocation, programs and curriculum development, and definition of program outcomes. These goals and objectives should focus on student learning, other outcomes, and school improvement.

The present system of higher education does not serve the purpose for which it has been started. In general education itself has become so profitable a business that quality is lost in the increase of quantity of professional institutions with quota system and politicization adding fuel to the fire of spoil system, thereby increasing unemployment of graduates without quick relief to mitigate their sufferings in the job market of the country (Kumar, Sanjeev, 2012). So, the drawbacks of the higher education system underscore the need for reforms to make it worthwhile and beneficial to all concerned. Thus, we should think of quality and quantity, both, in our education system. This will lead the way of school education towards higher education.

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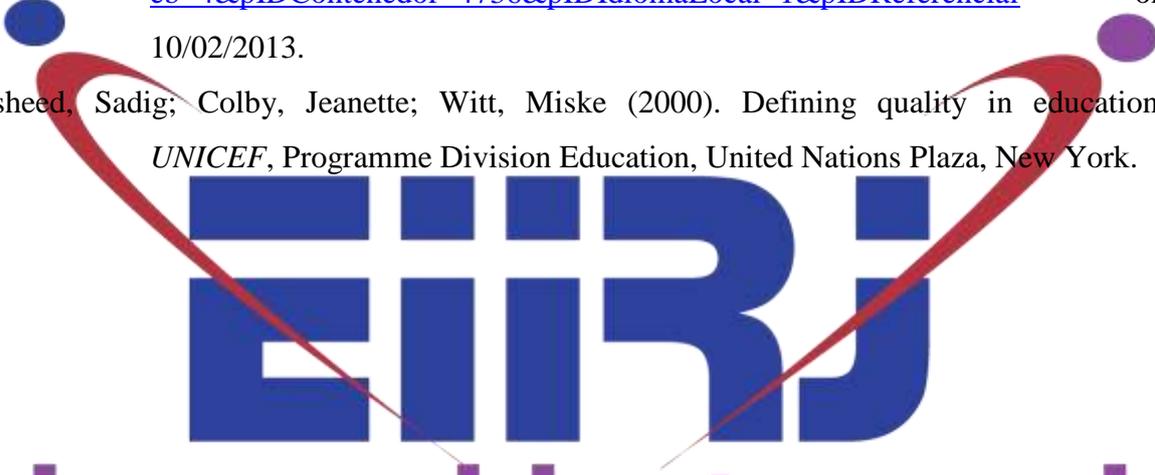
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