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Role of ICT in Total Quality Management in Education

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ABSTRACT

The common impression is that TQM (Total Quality Management) is a process for industry and not for educational institutions, but in fact this is not true. There are many benefits of TQM in Education and it can help greatly in improving overall quality of a educational institute. There are many factors which help to achieve TQME (Total Quality Management in Education) and one of the most essential factor in this age of digital literacy today is ICT (Information and Communication Technology). Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) is increasingly becoming indispensable part of the education system. It has changed many aspects of the lives. These changes have caused educational institutions, administrators, teachers to rethink their roles, teaching and vision for the future. ICT has opened new challenges for quality education. Information Communication Technology is used in the enhancement of teaching and learning.

This paper explains what is meant by term TQM and what its importance in the area of education is. This paper clearly points out that the success or failure of any educational program of institute now days depend on how information technology is integrated in their programme. It explains how information technology can be inculcated in all facets of educational programmes of an institute to achieve total quality management in education.

Role of ICT in TQME

TQM is a philosophy and system for continuously improving the services and/or products offered to customers. Now that the technologies of transportation and communication have replaced national economic systems with a global economy, nations and businesses that do not practice TQM can become globally non-competitive rather rapidly. This march towards non-competitiveness can be avoided if citizens are helped to become TQM practitioners. The common impression is that TQM is a process for industry and not for educational institutions, but in fact this is not true.

The potential benefits of TQM in an educational institute are very clear:

1. TQM can help a school or college provide better service to its primary customers-students and employers.
2. The continuous improvement focus of TQM is a fundamental way of fulfilling the accountability requirements common to educational reform.
3. Operating a no-fear TQM system with a focus on continuous growth and improvement offers more excitement and challenge to students and teachers than a "good-enough" learning environment can provide. Therefore, the climate for learning is improved.

The above mentioned benefits of TQME can be achieved by integrating ICT in Education. Appropriate use of ICT can transform the whole teaching-learning processes leading to paradigm shift in both content and teaching methodology. Before knowing how ICT can help in TQME, we should be familiar with the term ICT.

Meaning of ICT

ICT is an acronym that stands for **Information Communication Technologies**, that includes all technologies for the manipulation and communication of information. Broad definition of ICT includes radio, television, satellite, mobile phones, computers and the internet. It can be divided into two groups; traditional ICT namely radio, television and the new ICTs like internet and telecommunications. Learning through new ICTs is also called e-learning. Information and communication technology (ICT) is an indispensable part of the contemporary world. It is a force that has many aspects of the way we live, and also an electronic means of capturing, processing, storing and communicating information. The potential of information and communication technologies today, from the time we awaken in the morning to the time before we sleep, we are surrounded by media, such as newspapers, radio, television and computers. Sometimes we are not even aware that we are surrounded by these media. All these media come under the overall umbrella of ICTs.

Impact of ICT in education includes two things-ICT and education. It includes any communication device, application or service used to educational purposes to support and improving the learning of the students. ICT can be considered as a sub field of educational technology. According to UNESCO: ICT is a scientific technological and engineering discipline and management technique used in handling information in application and association with social, economic and cultural aspects. Appropriate use of ICT can transform the whole teaching-learning processes leading to paradigm shift in both content and teaching methodology. ICT can act as a powerful tool for Education and can help in achieving TQME in following manner