CRITERIA FOR QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

In current decades, the commercialization of education has been converted into more clearly and they require for using promotion tools is greater than before. An excellence education is one that focuses on the whole child—the social, emotional, mental, physical, and cognitive expansion of each student despite of gender, race, customs, socioeconomic condition, or geographic location. It prepares the child for life, not just for testing. A quality education provides the outcomes required for personnel, communities, and societies to prosper. A quality education is supported by three key pillars: ensuring right to use to quality teachers; providing use of quality erudition paraphernalia and professional growth; and the establishment of safe and compassionate quality learning environments. In reviewing the delve into literature related to quality in education, UNICEF takes a broader perception and demonstrates by this scrutiny that programs must include a broader definition concerning learners, content, processes, environments and outcomes. Children have a right to an education, a quality education. Instructional headship, teacher quality, parent and community development, efficient instructional programmes, logical learning environment are the quality indicators (criteria). This paper discusses about the quality of higher education and criteria for quality in higher education.

Keywords: *Quality education, key pillars, UNICEF, higher education, criteria for quality education.*

Introduction

In contemporary decades, the commercialization of education has been changed into more evidently and they need for using support tools is greater than before. *A quality education is one that focuses on the whole child—the societal, poignant, psychological, substantial, and cognitive expansion of each student despite of gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or geographic location. It prepares the child for life, not just for testing.* A quality education provides possessions and directs policy to make certain that each child enters school well-built and learns about and practices a well-built lifestyle; learns in an atmosphere that is physically and psychologically safe for students and adults; is enthusiastically engaged in learning and is connected to the school and broader community; has contact to bespoke learning and is supported by capable, caring adults; and is challenged rationally and prepared for success in college or further study and for employment and participation in a global milieu. A quality education provides the outcomes needed for individuals, communities, and societies to prosper. It allows schools to align and amalgamate fully with their communities and access a range of services across sectors designed to support the educational development of their students.

Meaning of Quality Education

Quality   A good = effectiveness or efficiency. ... Definition by VVOB's quality edification is one that provides all learners with capabilities they require to become economically productive, develop sustainable livelihoods, contribute to peaceful and democratic societies and enhance individual well-being. (Vlaamse Vereniging voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking en Technische Bijstand (vzw) Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance) VVOB is also a learning organisation and, internally, we exchange experiences from around the globe. Currently, VVOB implements national programmes in five African countries: Rwanda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Kenya, DRCongo

Definition of Quality Education

Many definitions of quality in education exist, testifying to the complexity and multifaceted nature of the concept. The terms efficiency, effectiveness, equity and quality have often been used synonymously (Adams, 1993).

UNICEF

UNICEF takes a broader perspective and demonstrates by this analysis that programmes must encompass a broader definition involving learners, content, processes, environments and outcomes. Children have a right to an education, a quality education. Defining Quality in Education recognizes five dimensions of quality: learners, environments, content, processes and outcomes, founded on 'the rights of the whole child, and all children, to survival, protection, development and participation' (UNICEF, 2000)

Quality Criteria in Higher Education

Action plans have been evolved for each state covering quality sustenance measures, university-college interaction, role of government and national agencies in enhancing quality of higher education, and quality enhancement according to the seven criteria.

Criterion 1: Curricular Aspects

Curriculum is in the core of education. It is important to have a relevant, well structured curriculum that answers all the questions about the future and equips the student with all the necessary skills and knowledge. This criterion consists of a weightage of

- 100 (- for affiliated colleges)
- 150 (- for Autonomous institutions and Universities).

The key aspects to consider while complying with this criterion are:

- Curriculum design and development,
- Curriculum planning and implementation,
- Academic flexibility,
- Curriculum enrichment,
- Feedback system.

Criterion 2: Teaching-Learning and Evaluation

The teaching-learning processes, students' results, desired outcomes etc comes under this criterion. As the first criteria deals with a "**WHAT**" in learning, this one assesses the "**HOW**" the learning happens. This criterion contributes a weightage of

- 350 (- for affiliated college)
- 300 (-for Autonomous institutions)
- 200 (-for Universities)

Some important areas to focus on to improve this criterion.

- Student enrollment and profile,

- Catering student diversity,
- Teaching-Learning process,
- Teacher quality,
- Evaluation process and reforms,
- Student performance and learning outcomes.

Criterion 3: Research, Consultancy and Extension

This criterion, as the name suggests, is about the **academic research**, extended **consultancy** services from the side of institution towards the industry and the field of study, and **extension** which is the outreach of institution towards the society, addressing various real-life problems, finding solutions, and other extra-curricular activities to improve the overall quality of the institution.

It holds a weightage of:

- 150- for both Affiliated and autonomous institutions)
- 250 (- or universities).

The key aspects of this criterion are:

- Promotion of research,
- Resource mobilization for research,
- Research facilities,
- Research publications and awards,
- Consultancy,
- Extension activities and institutional social responsibility, Collaborations.

Criterion 4: Infrastructure and Learning Resources

Having a good learning environment and necessary facilities are important while working towards the quality of education. Classrooms, labs, technology, facilities for physical fitness and medical purposes, proper and sufficient reference materials are all vital for assuring higher educational quality of the institution.

This criterion has a weightage of:

- 100 (- for Universities, Affiliated institutions and autonomous institutions)

The major factors to consider while improving this criterion are:

- Physical facilities including hostel, playgrounds, internet wifi, medical emergency addressal etc,
- Library as a learning resource,
- IT infrastructure,
- Maintenance of campus facilities

Criterion 5: Student Support and Progression

Mentoring and providing guidance for the students in various aspects of education and their field of study also matters. Helping and guiding students in their education contributes into the

overall quality of education. How the institution facilitate the progression of students to higher level of education and/or towards employment is also an important factor while working on this criterion.

Criterion 5 has a weightage of:

The key aspects of this criterion are:

- 100 (- for Universities, Affiliated institutions and autonomous institutions)
- Student mentoring and support,
- Student progression,
- Student participation and activities.

Criterion 6: Governance, leadership and management

Governance and management are the back of the institution. Having a well-structured governing body and a management helps to find and address gaps in practices, and efficiently implement proper counter mechanisms on time. The quality and future of the institution depends on it. Internal quality assurance, faculty empowerment, financial resource management, strategy development, all comes down to this criterion.

- 100 (- for Universities, Affiliated institutions and autonomous institutions).

The key aspects of this criterion are:

- Institutional vision and leadership,
- Strategy development and deployment,
- Faculty empowerment strategies,
- Financial management and resource mobilization,
- Internal quality assurance system.

Criterion 7: Innovations and best practices

This criterion is to assess factors like

- The approach of institution towards a greener, eco-friendly campus,
- Energy conservation in the institution,
- Innovative ideas implemented in the institution, and
- Practices towards a common, better future. Etc.

Criterion 7 has a weightage of

- 100 (- for Universities, Affiliated institutions and autonomous institutions)

The key aspects of this criterion are:

- Environment consciousness of management, staff and students,
- Innovations and their implementation, and its results.
- Best practices.

Issues and Hurdles in Access of Quality in Higher Education

- Lack of resources
- Accountability

- Less budget
- Untrained faculties
- Poverty
- Extremely low level of public investment

Improving the Quality of Education
- Increase pedagogical support for instructors
- Students should be educated about educational best practices
- Students can improve learning by designing the course and materials

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