



Quality Education in Sri Sathya Sai Schools

Minakshi Biswal

Assistant Professor, Vasanta college for Women,
Rajghat, Varanasi, U.P.

Abstract

The present situation calls for Quality Education. There are several proposal for achieving quality in education system. Till today we are not able to get the standard of quality education as there are many challenges to attain these particular criteria. Here the researcher explains the conditions for quality education and proves that Sri Sathya Sai School is one of the best schools to provide quality education.

Key words: *Quality, School System, Sri Sathya Sai School, Vidya.*

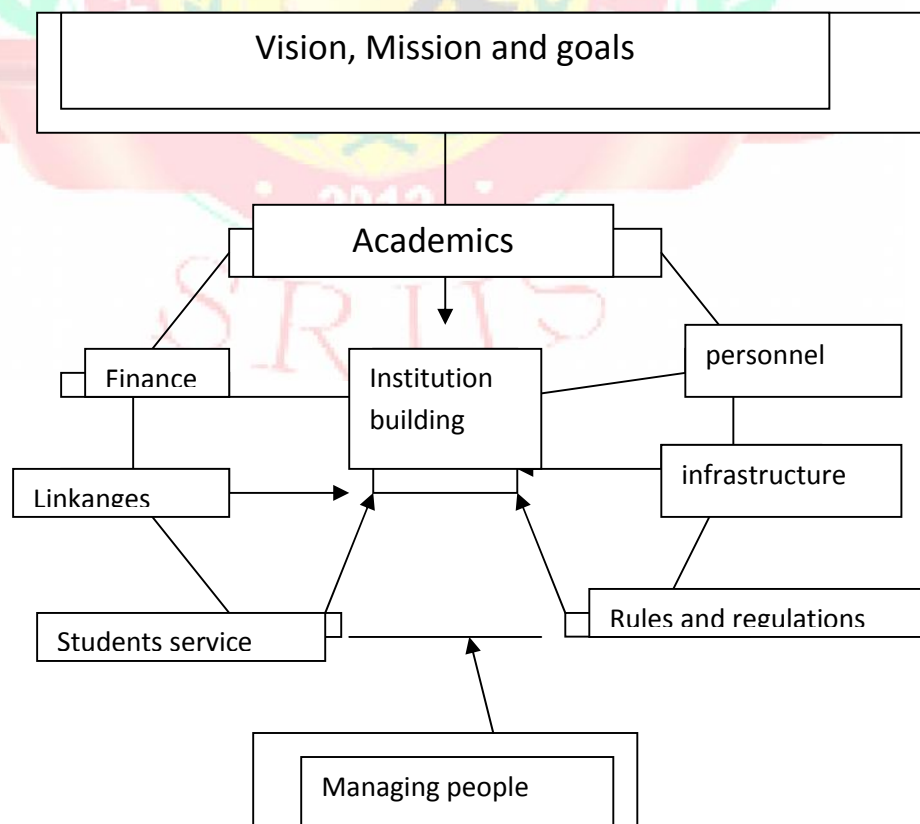
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Quality is an important dimension of a product/service. The consumer of the product/service is increasingly becoming conscious of the quality of the same in the market. Quality may lead to the branding of the product/service and may provide satisfaction to the consumer that he/she is getting the best for the price offered. Hence, the supplier of the product/service has an obligation to satisfy the consumer with products and services of the best quality. The supplier has to manage the quality in the best possible manner. In the context of educational institutions too, the learner desires to derive Quality education.

Quality education does not teach students what to think, but rather how to think critically. In the process, its holistic and participatory approach may conflict with more traditional curriculum design or strict standards-based schooling. Quality education aims not to reproduce but to transform. It consists of people consciously striving to educate their successors not for existing state of affairs but so as to make possible a future better humanity.

Total quality management means a system approach to the management of a school. A school may be considered as a system that consists of various sub-systems that are interdependent and interrelated. In a system approach, all components of a system/ subsystem produce a complex organism. Harmonious functioning of all sub-systems need to be ensured for the smooth operation of a system. In the context of an educational institution, the 10 areas or sub-systems have been identified (Mukhopadhyay Narula,1992)

School System



Purpose of the study:

This paper aims at explaining the holistic view adopted by Sri Sathya Sai Schools to maintain and increase quality of education.

Design/ Methodology/ Approach of the study:

The experience of this school in relation to quality control in education is documented through a case study done by the researchers. The school is situated in Puttaparthi (Prashanthi Nilayam), Anantpur, Andhra Pradesh. The study is based on following eight parameters- **vision, learning environment, facilities provided, teaching methods, learner assignment, monitoring and supervision technique, maintaining discipline and role of the school authorities**. The researchers also interviewed few staff members for their views on the above parameters. The selection of the staff members was done by using the purposive sampling method. The researchers observed the daily working schedule of the school as a part of the school for fifteen days in a semester for nearly six semesters.

Description of the school:

Philosophy of education:

As per Sri Sathya Sai Baba, good education is the one that prepares a person to face life in its totality, contributing to the happiness and fulfillment of the individual, whereas poor education essentially fails in this task. According to him education involves at least three aspects. These are

- Integrated understanding of life
- Development of sound character and
- Acquiring life skills

Education has to cultivate humility and discipline, but today it is yielding a harvest of pride and envy. Vidya means vid (light) and ya (that which gives). So, Vidya or education has to shed light and illumine the dark spots in the mind and intellect. Education must enthuse youth to understand the precious heritage of Indian culture and spirituality, and evoke the higher powers they possess. Though there are perennial sources and spring of strength within them, they behave like weakling and ignoramuses. Patience, tolerance, tranquility and calmness have to be implanted in the heart. Forbearance is truth, right conduct, right living, love, nonviolence-all virtues rolled into one.

Good education provides an adequate and balanced map of reality that address significant facets of life and nature that affect one's happiness and meaning of life. At present, the general maps of reality given by schools are based on popular understanding of life, which in the long run fails in many significant ways, both for the individual and for society. Sri Sathya Sai Baba always tells, the characteristic of true education is humility. Humility helps to make one deserving of respect. Deservedness leads to wealth. Wealth should lead to righteousness. Righteousness is the means of liberation. We are now giving importance only to intellectual cleverness, which is wrong. Importance has to be given only to character. Education is of no value at all without character. End of education is character. So, education should confer character to its full extent.

Today's education is knocking off the "s" from "skill", with the result that the knowledge is killed, with disastrous results for mankind. Students should be given knowledge, skill and balance. In the present system of education this combination is absent. Every body is running after marks and degrees. Each is pursuing his own selfish interests, without regard to the interests of others. Science has enabled him to acquire immense control

over external world, but he has no control over himself. It is said, “we have guided missiles and misguided minds”. So, the quality of education can be improved, only when the selfishness from the minds of the children will be eliminated and love for the fellow beings will be filled.

As it is known that education is a tripolar process having teacher as one pole and parents and students are the other poles. To describe the role of a teacher, Baba tells, even a small house requires foundation. For a tree to grow, the roots have to be strong indeed. Without roots the tree will collapse with the first gust of wind. A house without foundation will fall down in a heap with the first gust of wind. Similarly for a good education, a strong foundation is needed. That strong foundation is a teacher having moral, ethical and spiritual knowledge and who is caring, loving, resourceful, creative and love to serve the society through teaching. He tells to teacher, “the profession of a teacher is the most responsible one. If the teacher strays away from the path of truth the entire society will suffer. So, you must make every effort to live uprightly. You have in your charge, looking up to you for guidance, children so innocent that they have no knowledge yet of the world and its ways. It is only when the teacher himself wedded to discipline and observes good habits that his pupils will be able to shape themselves into ideal individuals and citizens. When the teacher falls a victim to bad habits, undesirable manners, bad company and evil behaviour, the children too will naturally be drawn into evil ways. If the teacher sets an evil example before his pupils, it may happen that his students turn against him the evil that they learnt from him. Thus the teacher has to bear the responsibility of promoting the welfare of the world/ bring the world down to disaster. So, the first and foremost task of the teacher is the cultivation of virtue in the hearts of the pupils. This is much more vital than promotion of learning. Give up the mad rush in pursuit of degrees. Pursue rather, chances to serve others and promote the prosperity of the nation and the world”.

Teachers are not only the moulders of the future of a country, parents are also responsible. They must bear the majority blame for ruining the character of the children by being over indulgent and giving them too much freedom. They should strike a balance between freedom and discipline. They should provide them examples of honesty, sense control and discipline. While explaining about discipline Baba tells, “you must have seen

gardens where snake-gourds are grown on a raised pandals, when the gourd starts growing, the gardener hangs a small stone at its end, so that the pull may make it grows larger, a heavier stone is used. So too, according to the age level, the discipline enforced must become harder and in order that the child may grow straight forwards steady and strong. Knowledge can be given by teacher, however, the discipline, the rigorous control of the senses and behaviour must be administered by the parents. Then the children become sacred souls, holy, sanctified individuals. Even while their minds are tender and their hearts unsoiled, children must be trained to purify and sweeten their thoughts, words and deeds. So, the parents should be very careful while dealing with their children. They should have unity in thought, word and deed. They should be ideal for their children.

The third and the most important pole of the education system is students. While advising to students Baba tells, “you must have fear, humility and faith. Fear of doing wrong, of falling into falsehood. Humility should be before elders, teachers and parents. Faith should be in God, in your strength, in your own victory”. He tells children to develop all divine qualities and follow four “F”: **follow the master, face the devil, fight to the end and finish the game**. He stresses on implicit obedience. He wants the children to be the torch bearer of the society.

The noble ideals of self confidence, self satisfaction, self sacrifice and self realization are promoted in this school. This school has not only integrated learning and teaching courses but also integral programmes. The extrinsic education labeled as “systematic education”, with exclusive emphasis on perceptive knowledge and thinking alone, has tended to promote functional fixations, insulated the mind against finding new paths and has ultimately driven out creative and metaphysical thinking. In addition to developing memory, understanding and cultivating the skills relevant to the mastery of academic subjects and disciplines through a series of skills like self-help skills, professional skills; social/group skills and lastly the ethical skills are given importance. In order to ensure the academic excellence the school conducts an admission test to ensure the entry level of the students. With the normal curriculum the students are exposed to cultural heritage of India as well as its current social and economic problems. The students have to undergo timely yoga and sports and games to have proper physical condition. As a whole this school provides ideal conditions in all aspects of a child’s growth.

Findings:

The findings reveal that the school has developed an elaborate quality control system and is focused on providing quality education to all its students. It provides an unique educational experience, where learning methodologies are backed by ultra modern infrastructure. The School has a strong philosophical foundation based on Bhagwan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's teachings. The spiritual base is provided by the presence of Bhagwan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. As Bhagwan Sri Sathya Sai Baba believes, "true education consists in the refinement of character and cultivation of personality. Mankind will bloom and blossom if its education system is marked by moral and spiritual excellence." The operational implication of conceptual frame work of integral education have to be clear for bringing about the desired educational renaissance, the Sri Sathya Sai Schools, with teaching resources, tools, contents of courses and methodology adopted there in, have been designed in such a manner that they promote both the **perceptive knowledge (Janja)** and **intuitive insight (Prajna)** in order to develop an integrated personality the perfect man. The school ensures qualitative and holistic education for the child. The school environment nurtures creativity, arouses curiosity and develops confidence in the young minds and strives to make them responsible citizens.

The students are devoted to Sai ideals. In contrast to the other school campuses, the most outstanding feature of life at these campuses is on discipline at all levels and in every activity. In Sri Sathya Sai Baba's words, "**the medium of this institute is discipline; the first, second and third languages are love, service and sadhana**". Innovative and interactive methods are used in the classrooms which are supported with a range of activities and examples from the everyday life, for a better understanding of the concepts. There exists an open and congenial teacher taught relationship which is based on two way communication. The student teacher ratio is 1:10. The students are encouraged to ask questions and put their views on any matter of discussion. Broad academic planning is done on which teachers are free to explore and devise their own means and ways of broadening and deepening the understanding of the taught. The school boasts of well developed infrastructure facilities. Assessments are done on unit wise and semester basis following CCE. Extra help is provided to low achievers through remedial classes to bring up their performance level. Rules of

behaviour are clearly laid down which every student has to follow. Impressionistic discipline is followed by the teacher and the taught. The education system follows a total residential pattern. **Education is free of cost here.** As per the CBSE results of past years the schools bears the best of the best results. The alumni prove to be best citizens by practicing all the values in their daily life.

Conclusions:

There are no such points / occasions where the researcher could find any lacuna of the system. So, no doubt as per the researchers this is the best system to produce quality education. This system can be easily followed and quality education can be easily achieved in our Indian education system.

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