



Total Quality Management (TQM) Implementation Barriers in Organizations

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Abstract

Total quality management early evolution focused more on production industries rather than service industries. Although used extremely successfully in manufacturing in the last two decades, the application of TQM in other organization has been less tried and tested, amid fears that the processes in other organization specially service industries do not lend themselves to the rigorous application of the set of statistical tools associated with TQM. However, the competitiveness as well as the rise in different industries share gave rise to the demand for TQM practice in different organizations. Some organizations find TQM implementation challenging in an efficient and satisfactory way, they also notice barriers or limits hindering TQM implementation. Due to these limits, organizations have not accomplished the expected benefits from TQM.

Keywords: TQM, organization, barriers of TQM



1. Introduction

Eugenia (2010) mentioned quality of goods and services are classified by the consumers who are the only factor that create competition between organizations. Quality in business perspective could be defined as relation among the organization process and product or service and customers of that organization (Carr, Gibson, & Robinson, 2001). This specific relationship must be analyzed and also anticipated to make sure that all needs of process and product and customer met (David L.. Goetsch & Davis, 2010). In a competitive market, quality is one of the most important survival factors in companies in the constantly expanding global market (Kaynak, 2003). Quality is an important factor in achieving the organizational economic success (U. A. A. Zakuan, 2007). Organization and companies can obtain competitive edge and increase their market share through high levels of their performance by providing product or service with high quality and proper price as required by demanding customers (Schroeder, Linderman, & Zhang, 2005). Organization and companies' specially international and multinational companies must pay considerable attention to Quality philosophies, procedures, tools and techniques. People and employee from different department and different level of any company or organization must consider quality as same target or same language for communicating for achieving the objective of customer satisfaction (David L.. Goetsch & Davis, 2010). Prior to the introduction of TQM by quality engineers, quality test was just a process to monitor the quality in the last stage or phase of a service or product but TQM is a philosophy of integrative management, targeting to constantly improve the quality and process to gain the satisfaction of the customer (Levine & Toffel, 2010) . Total Quality Management is quality philosophy and method that looks into merging the various functions in an organization, for example integrating finance, customer service, marketing, engineering, design, and so on, in order to concentrate on meeting the needs and expectations of the customer, and the organizational objectives and goals (C. Chang, Chiu, & Chen, 2010). TQM is a complete approach to enhance the quality, productivity, profitability, and the share in market (J. V. Arumugam & Mojtahedzadeh, 2011). Based on Demirberg (2006) TQM is an



element that can boost the quality as holistic method for constant improvement in all firms. TQM is driven from a philosophy in quality that concentrates on customer satisfaction (TarÃ-, 2005). TQM is powered to push all of the members in a firm, starting from the simple employee right up to the CEO, with the responsibility of making sure that quality is maintained in their specific products and services, and the management of their processes is carried out through the suitable process improvement channels (Kull & Wacker, 2010).

2. Definition of Total Quality Management (TQM)

All various types of organizations and companies can utilize TQM, ranging from small businesses to multinational businesses, government agencies, kindergarten and school, scientific or construction organizations, manufacturing firms, and contact centers (Perera & Kurupparachchi, 2010). Based on research by TarA (2005) TQM is based on three underlying elements: 1. Empowered employee 2. Continues improvement of quality 3. Design quality improvements team. TQM was described by Kumar (2009) as a full method for improving competitiveness, quality, and productivity in the global market. A more detailed definition was given by Yang (2005) where TQM was described as a general part of management that concentrates on competitive advantage, customer needs, and improving the quality. Based on Yang (2006) TQM also has a positive influence in aiding problem solving and decision-making processes and plays a major part in constant organizational improvements. TQM is an integrative management system to produce products or offer service with the high quality standard and full involvement of all organization levels (Duh, Hsu, & Huang, 2012). Everyone in the organization base on TQM methods has a crucial role in determining the production goods and offer services with high quality (Green, 2012). TQM also could be described as an



organizational method for generating total involvement in planning and developing constant improvement that meets and exceeds the needs of the customers (Ooi, Lin, Tan, & Chong, 2011). Previously when the fault error is discovered by the quality manager or staff, the production line is halted and the producers are stopped, reworked, or rejected but TQM is the method of discovering the source or reason of each defect and error to stop it from initiating the process of production for the product or service. Using a basic iterative process, TQM backs up quality assurance in order to respond to changes in the product or services, by boosting the effectiveness of their operational process (Ng & Jee, 2012). It was stated by Temtime (2002) that TQM is a set of practices focusing on items like “meeting the needs of the customers, lowering rework, raising the level of involvement and teamwork in employees, and product redesign”. TQM always tries to improve the quality of all processes, products, people, and services of a firm (Temtime & Solomon, 2002). Once TQM is adopted and performed in various organizations in various countries, ranging from developing countries to developed countries, a lot of quality advantages will be gained (S.-Y. Lam, Lee, Ooi, & Lin, 2011). Berry (1991) described the process of Total Quality Management as total corporate focus on furnishing and outperforming the expectations of the customers and greatly lowering the costs caused by weak quality and implementing a new system of management. The TQM principles have been defined by many writers and elements that it affects, as management leadership, management commitment, the employee’s engagement, and partnership with the suppliers, constant improvements, and so on (Ng, Jee, & Anuar, 2012). Lagrosen (2001) claims that TQM has turned into a well-known system for enhancing the performance of corporations, and the satisfaction of the customers. TQM has been found to be the starting point of competitive advantages and innovations, as well as corporate cultures (Irani, Beskese, & Love, 2004).



Effective and successful implementation of TQM can aid the organization to lower the cost of poor quality method like rework, replacement, warranty, or late deliveries. If Total Quality Management is adopted in a successful manner, the customers will be more satisfied and the products and services offered will be of better quality and lower prices, that can induce high sales and the generate profits and lead to the growth of the business (Valmohammadi, 2010).

3. Importance of Total Quality Management (TQM) Implementation

Implementation of TQM is a method for managing to boost the overall effectiveness, efficiency, competitiveness, and flexibility of a company (S. K. Ho & Fung, 1994). Even though in theory, using TQM practices is a major part of improving the performance of the business, in reality a significant number of businesses have failed to implement their quality program (R. Kumar, Garg, & Garg, 2011). Cultural and structural change is a crucial necessity for TQM to be adapted successfully. The links between the design of the organization and the success of the Total Quality Management might be varied, in a certain level of cultural value (Ooi, et al., 2011). Total Quality Management needs delicate and precise pre-planning, after all, it is supposed to create a considerable change in culture, system, and structure of an organization (Green, 2012). The Total Quality Management principle of quality states that initiatives must be in the basis of sincere consultations with employees, end-users, and other stakeholders (Veeri Arumugam, Ooi, & Fong, 2008). Comprehensive pre-TQM diagnostic and benchmarking has to result in a well-developed and documented implementation strategy with well-defined statements of targets, goals, objectives, aims, and plans (Zatzick, Moliterno, & Fang, 2012). Provision must be given from the beginning, for controlling and evaluating how this initiative is being implemented. It is also of great importance that the senior management clearly understands the alternative models



of Total Quality Management at the beginning, which must then be translated into clear and supporting commitment at the board level (Zatzick, et al., 2012). Hundreds if not thousands of organizations that had attempted to implement TQM, but a large number of them failed (Valmohammadi, 2010). Although there are many cases in which they succeeded, the majority of the organizations implementing TQM stated no marginal or visible improvement in their financial returns, competitiveness, and productivity (Yong & Pheng, 2008). Many reasons have been put forth as to being the cause of their failure, but most of them ultimately come down to the management not being able to carry out a total system. Implementing Total Quality Management needs changes in the structure, system, and process as a vital underlying factor in order to gain an improvement in the performance of the business and to alter the behavior of the staff (Cheng, 2008). As Cheng (2008) mentioned if a company wants to implement TQM successfully, something needs to change. The change has been split into its most basic form, which involves modifications in language, behavior, and the priorities of the management, as stated below:

- Change into a shared language and beliefs about quality (which consists of a dedicated concentration on the satisfaction of customers) and to a model that describes every person as being accountable for the quality of the work they do.
- Change in the behavior of the people, to concentrate on prevention and constant improvement.
- Change in the behavior of the management so that quality is managed with the utmost importance, just like the rest of the organization's important tasks.

When the company needs to carry out Total Quality Management, its vision in that certain company needs to be well defined, which means every manager, inclusive of the president, has to create a personal vision regarding the effort for establishing Total Quality Management (Bhat



& Rajashekhar, 2009). Managers must work hard and be committed to defining their vision, both individually and as a whole management unit. The management team and the higher management in particular, need to be seen as being responsible for the failure or success of the Total Quality Management programs. The managers have to be given power to generate their visions, discuss them openly, and connect their actions and behaviors to the effort for the Total Quality Management (Valmohammadi, 2011).

4. Barriers of Total Quality Management (TQM) Implementation

Some organizations find TQM implementation challenging in an efficient and satisfactory way, they also notice barriers or limits hindering TQM implementation. Due to these limits, organizations have not accomplished the expected benefits from TQM. It is generally known that implementation of TQM involves some factor changes in the organization (Rezazadeh, Najafi, Hatami-Shirkouhi, & Miri-Nargesi, 2013). In a survey conducted by Yui (1997) forty-one percent of the 138 people who took the survey accepted that they do not know the requirements in introducing and implementing TQM, even if they knew the concepts. Managers of organizations recognize that the methods in implementing TQM are organizational and political and they question the absence of empirical models to help successful total quality management practice. There seems to be a multitude of causes for failure of companies' effort in implementing a quality management approach. Nonetheless, the main problems seem to be the absence of planning as well as appropriate cultural support of TQM programmers (Sebastianelli & Tamimi, 2003). Yui (1997) also indicated that the absence of support from top management as well as proper training could also one of the barriers for TQM implementation. Lim Peng Boon (2006) pointed out the main causes of TQM failure which was due to the lack of knowledge on implementing TQM properly. Basically, the research problems are as follows:



- Lack of commitment and understanding on “Quality” in management.
- Lack of knowledge about the benefits of implementing TQM.
- Insufficient understanding of TQM and inadequate knowledge of the measurement techniques that are used for measuring the efficacy of implementing TQM.
- Absence of clarity in the implementation plan and methods as well as guidelines.
- Ignoring the importance of customers.

The limits in implementing TQM will brought to attention in manufacturing, services, government, as well as education sectors (Zatzick, et al., 2012). Thus, it is vital that every company understands and avoids the barriers before and during implementation of TQM (Sebastianelli & Tamimi, 2003). Mohanty and Lakhe (1994) argued a case of implementing TQM in a company in Mumbai, India. From the case study analysis, it was concluded that there are major obstacles in TQM implementation, especially in developing countries:

- Insufficient knowledge on Total Quality Management;
- Uncertainties of the staff about the intentions of management;
- Fail to maintain commitment and interest in long run;
- Measurement of TQM effectiveness is challenging;
- Lack of proper internal communication;
- Challenge of evaluating customer satisfaction and expectations; and
- Inadequate training resources;

Failure to adopt, find the ways to monitor and manage the overall progress is amongst the other difficulties in TQM implementation (Green, 2012). Furthermore, the failure to train necessary skills right before TQM is implemented may create serious problems for the implementation



process (Ehigie & McAndrew, 2005). Regarding TQM only as an internal process and hence failing to include subcontractors, suppliers, and others in the process chain also creates a challenge for implementing TQM (Green, 2012). An extended review done by Masters (1996) discovered fifteen different hurdles and difficulties to TQM implementation that are common in all types of organizations. These obstacle are: lack of commitment in management, insufficient understanding and knowledge of TQM, incapability to change culture in the organization, inappropriate planning, lack of constant training and education, using a prepackaged program or failure to form a learning group that provides continual improvement, wrong reward system, scarce resources, ineffectual measurement techniques, lack of attention to customers, incompatible and isolated organizational structure, improper use of empowerment and teamwork, adapting TQM to the organization, and short term focus. Gunasekaran (1999) studied implementation of TQM in a British manufacturing company through interviewing employees from various functional sections of the company. He emphasizes on people-centered factors, for example, group work and authorization, and he believed that lack of proper communication among departments and management was the actual problem with implementation of TQM. Fazel and Salenga (2000) have listed sixteen obstacles which are absence of the company's explanation of quality, lack of a formal plans for change, lack of a focus on customers, weak communication, lack of employee authorization, lack of staff trust in management, the perception of quality being a quick fix, motivation for temporary financial outcomes, politics and turf issues, lack of motivation, and lack of time to spend for initiative in quality, which were reported by the organizations implementing TQM. A study that was carried in India exposed the difficulties in TQM implementation: lack of long-standing supplier connection, continuous need for traditional incentive schemes, slogans to improve productivity, performance rating, numerical targets, and not being able to identify and provide the appropriate

kind of training as required by the job (Bhat & Rajashekhar, 2009). Tamimi and Sebastianelli (2006) have pointed out many issues and hurdles that companies come across during TQM implementation. These issues include lacking human resource development and human resource management (HRM), absence of quality plan; absence of leadership in quality; insufficient TQM resources; and improper focus on customer. The study of Amar and Zain (2002) on barriers to successful TQM implementation, established eleven factors of management, Human resource, attitude on quality, organizational culture, interdepartmental affairs, equipment, machines, materials, information, method and training. Sila (2005) mentioned some reasons for TQM failures such as lack of top management commitment, over- or under-reliance on statistical methods, and failure to build and sustain a quality-oriented culture. The reason for failures of TQM implementation may often be subscribed to a general lack of understanding of the TQM concept, most of the managers have difficulties in understanding and interpreting TQM (Dahiya & Bhatia, 2013). Table 1 shows the significant barriers in TQM implementation recognized by different researchers.

Table 1: Barriers of TQM implementation

Author	Barriers to TQM Implementation
Rahim and Whalen (1994)	Poor planning, Lack of management commitment, Resistance of the workforce, Lack of proper training, Teamwork complacency, Use of an off-the-shelf Program, Failure to change organizational philosophy, Lack of resources provided, Lack of effective measurement of quality improvement
Masters (1996)	Lack of management commitment, Inadequate knowledge or understanding of TQM, Inability to change organizational culture, Improper planning, Lack of continuous training and education, Inability to build a learning organization that provides for continuous improvement, Incompatible organizational, structure and isolated, Insufficient resources, Inappropriate reward system, Use of a prepackaged program or inappropriately, Paying inadequate attention to customers, Ineffective measurement techniques, Inadequate use of empowerment and teamwork, adapting TQM to the organization Short term focus

Author	Barriers to TQM Implementation
Ngai and Cheng (1997)	Cultural and employee barrier, infrastructure barrier, managerial barrier,
Salegna and Fazel (2000)	Lack of a companywide, definition of quality, Lack of a formalized strategic, plan for change, Lack of a customer focus, Poor inter organizational communication, Lack of real employee empowerment, Lack of employee trust in senior management, View of quality program as a quick fix, Drive for short-term financial results, Politics and turf issues, Lack of strong motivation, Lack of time to devote to quality initiative
Amar and Zain (2002)	Human resource, management, attitude towards quality, organizational culture, interdepartmental relations, materials, machines, equipment, information, method and training
Sebastianelli and Tamimi (2003)	Inadequate human resource development and management; lack of planning for quality; lack of leadership for quality; inadequate resources for TQM; and lack of customer focus.
(Huq, 2005)	Lack of customer management, poor training, cultural barriers, Lack of employee involve
K. Subrahmanya Bhat, Jagadeesh Rajashekhar (2009)	lack of benchmarking and employee's resistance to change; method and training
(Bhat & Rajashekhar, 2009)	Lack of customer orientation, lack of planning for quality, lack of total involvement, lack of management commitment, and lack of resources.
Faisal Talib, Zillur Rahman, M.N. Qureshi (2011)	Lack of top-management commitment; High turnover at management level; Attitude of employee towards quality; Lack of proper training and education; Lack of coordination between departments; Human resource barrier; Poor planning; Employees' resistance to change
Ali Mohammad Mosadeghrad (2011)	Lack of employees particularly physicians' involvement; Lack of consistent top management support; Poor leadership and management; Lack of a quality-oriented culture; Insufficient education and training; Inadequate resources; Lack of a robust monitoring and measurement system; Employee shortage; Lack of a plan for change;
(Talib, Rahman, & Qureshi, 2013)	Poor quality systems, improper training and education, Lack of teamwork
(Mosadeghrad, 2013)	lack of consistent managers' and employees' commitment to and involvement in TQM implementation, poor leadership and management, lack of a quality-oriented culture, insufficient training, and inadequate resources.

5. Conclusion

So most of the barriers and obstacles are common in different companies and organization but some of them exactly come up from the nature of business activity of respective companies.



TQM is a combination of different processes, systems, committed management systems, transparent communication and culture for client satisfaction; many organizations have successfully executed the TQM philosophy and have achieved a high reputation for presenting high quality products with low process cost (Yong & Pheng, 2008). Many companies decided that effective TQM implementation may improve competitive abilities and provide strategic advances in the marketplace and return on investment (Bhat & Rajashekhar, 2009). As far as TQM is adopted and is practiced effectively in the company many advantages will be carried. These advantages include improvement in involvement of employee, improvement in communication, higher productivity, and higher quality and less rework, improvement in client satisfaction, lower cost of poor quality, improvement in competitive advantages (Bon, et al., 2012). In section 4 some barriers and obstacles were identified from previous researches that have negative impact on TQM implementation in any organization or company. The managers of quality section or the leaders of companies must find the specific factors which support TQM implementation practice in the company and remove the obstacles and difficulties from TQM implementation path.



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