

Total Quality Management [TQM]: An Analytical Study in the Context of Quality Consciousness

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ABSTRACT

Total Quality Management (TQM) espouses a philosophy of continuous improvement in all areas of an organization. This philosophy assumes that the responsibility for quality is not restricted to an organization's quality assurance department, but is instead a guiding philosophy shared by everyone in an organization. At this outset all important aspects of this modern technique of quality improvement have been discussed in proper manner. Guidelines for successful TQM have also been incorporated. A comparative explanatory statement regarding TQM and traditional quality approach has been presented at right place. At the end, constructive suggestions for scientific quality management have also been described.)

INTRODUCTION:

Now a days, the concept of 'Total Quality Management' (TQM) has been accepted throughout the world. And many organizations around the globe are conducting "Organizations Development Programmes [ODP]" to enhance quality consciousness. TQM calls for continuous improvement of quality with the cooperation of employees through innovation in product and technology to meet the changing requirements of the customers. 'Total Quality Management' may be defined as creating an organizational tradition devoted to the constant improvement of skills, team work processes, product and service quality and customer satisfaction.

TQM is not a technique but a collection of approaches designed to optimize the performance of an organization. In other words, TQM is the sum total of the quality of various aspects of the business system, namely product design and development, production, purchase, marketing, financing etc. It also involves all technical and administrative systems and procedures which can ensure the desired quality on a sound basis. TQM characters a shift away from the conventional productivity centered approach to a quality centric & systemic approach to management. The company's mission, objectives, values and strategies, integrative approach towards highest quality, well-organized marketing, workers participation, effective populace management etc. are the main components of TQM. Therefore, TQM is the style of managing the whole, to achieve all round excellence.

The launching of ISO: 9000 series standards by the ISO(International Standards Organization) is an attempt to help the industrial organizations in adopting TQM to improve their quality and productivity and to serve their customers efficiently. Thus, it can be stated that the whole concept of TQM is directed towards meeting the requirements of customers of an organization.

The TQM philosophy greatly emerged in the 1950s, under Dr. Edwards Deming's guidance, who is

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regarded as the father of TQM. He believed that the responsibility for quality should be shared by everyone in an organization. The Japanese adopted his ideas, and over time, developed them further. They extended the application of process improvement from manufacturing to administrative functions and service industries. During the 1980s, several North American manufacturers emulated Japanese success and extended the application of the total quality concepts to the areas of employee motivation, measurement and rewards. They also made additional contributions to the TQM philosophy, most notably in the areas of variability reduction, problem solving, team work, and defining & satisfying customer expectations.

Objectives of the Study: The main purpose of this study is to find out technical aspects of this modern method of quality management. Additionally, to analyze benefits and obstacles of TQM, to find out scope of the technique and to evaluate the performance of this technique of quality consciousness are other significant objectives of this study.

Methodology: Facts and findings of this study are based on secondary data. Published annual reports of government owned enterprises as well private companies, progress reports of business associations and other related published papers have been used for collection of information.

A Comparative Analysis of TQM and Traditional Management Approach

S. No.	T Q TQM Approach	Traditional Management Approach
1.	In this approach quality is considered as the top most priority.	The top priority is given to profit in Traditional Management.
2.	Communication is conveyed with action.	Communication is conveyed with slogan and saying.
3.	It is based on large span of control.	It is based on small span of control.
4.	It focuses on customer satisfaction.	It focuses on management's requirements.
5.	In this approach the quality is considered as integral part of organization.	The quality is not considered as integral part of organization.
6.	Emphasis is given on multi-skilled workforce with job rotation.	Emphasis is given on division of labor.
7.	Production of high-quality goods & services and customer satisfaction are regarded as the keys to enterprise success. Opportunities for employee – participation & significant role are provided to the working force.	Maximization of profits & return on capital employed and growth in sales are regarded as the keys to enterprise success. Such opportunities do not exist in Traditional Management approach.
8.	In TQM, emphasis is given on prevention of problems and a structure approach is adopted to identify and solving the problem.	In Traditional Management, problems are fought as they occur and the fighting fire approach is adopted to solve the problems.
9.	TQM managers are viewed as process managers and they provide leadership to employees.	Traditional Managers are viewed as functional specialists and they belief in inspection and interference in the processes of their subordinates.

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PROBLEMS REGARDING IMPLEMENTATION of TQM:

The implementation of TQM is not an easy job. In practice, several psychological and organizational obstacles or breakdowns may arise in effective TQM process. Some of them may be pointed out as follows –

- Too little visibility of top management support;
- Irregularity of team meetings;
- Lack of formal strategy;
- Lack of effective communication and Management Information System (MIS);
- Narrowly based training programmes;
- Non-implementation of quality improvement team recommendations;
- Misinterpretation and misunderstanding the philosophy of TQM;
- Lack of effective leadership;
- Lack of faith in the benefits of TQM concept etc.

SIGNIFICANT SUGGESTIONS: For the successful implementation of TQM, the following guidelines should be followed:

- TQM philosophy assumes that the responsibility for quality is not restricted to an organization's quality assurance department, but is instead a guiding philosophy shared by everyone in an organization. In other words, TQM requires that everyone should take responsibility for quality.
- An enormously important principle of TQM is that quality is a measurable commodity, and to improve, we need to know where we are and where are we going?
- TQM espouses a philosophy of continuous improvement in all areas of an organization. According to Mike Hick, the problem areas must be identified, prioritized and critical processes selected for continuous improvement.
- TQM seeks to prevent the problems at the root cause level by implementing corrective actions.
- TQM seeks to prevent poor quality in products and service, rather than simply to detect and sort out defects.
- TQM emphasizes on specialist as well as coordinated team work, because the quality teams have several advantages over individuals. A properly constituted team has a much richer mix of skills to bring to bear on a problem.
- It focuses on the satisfaction of the customers. That determines the success of an enterprise.
- A computerized data base is needed to store information to monitor quality.

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- Quality efforts time and again require reducing process or product-design variation, and statistical methods are perfectly matched to maintain this objective. This is a fundamental aspect of TQM.
- TQM should be based on employee involvement and empowerment. In other words, it can be stated that the success of the TQM approach is depends upon a well-trained and motivated personnel force that is involved and empowered. Suggestion schemes, delegation of authority, job-design improvements are the main techniques to ensure the employee involvement and empowerment.
- Principle of enlargement of long-term relationships with high-quality suppliers should be given due weightage,
- TQM implementation process should always be based on value improvement philosophy,
- Principle of inventory reduction should also be kept in mind during the execution of TQM process. etc.
- TQM should be considered a continuous programme as the requirements of customers keep on changing.
- TQM should also try to integrate the operations of various departments.
- Workers and managers should be given the necessary training for the effective implementation of TQM.

Essential Steps to be taken in the process of an effective TQM

The process of TQM is an ongoing process. It has some essential steps or sub-parts such as –

- Identifying the degree of commitments of top management through quality policies & procedures;
- Establishing the objectives of TQM;
- Identifying the resources available;
- Creating organizational awareness based on customer-oriented values & quality commitment;
- Formulating the specific plans;
- Developing the strategies for implementation of TQM;
- Allocating the required resources;
- Implementing the plans;
- Measuring the benefits TQM philosophy in terms of increased customer satisfaction and
- Monitoring and reviewing the TQM plans.

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CONCLUSION:

In a nutshell, we can say that TQM is the sum of the technical as well as administrative systems and procedures which can ensure the desired quality on a constant basis. At present, it has become a proven technique to guarantee continued existence in the global competition. Thus, the effective implementation of TQM has become an essential need of all modern organizations either they engaged in manufacturing/trading or providing services. For successful implementation of TQM, suggestions submitted in this study should be considered.

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