

THE EXISTING BARRIERS IN IMPLEMENTING TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Sălăgean Horațiu Cătălin ¹, Bâlc Bogdan ², Gârbacea Răzvan Dimitrie ³

^{1, 2, 3} Department of Management, FSEGA, UBB, Cluj-Napoca, România

horatiu.salagean@econ.ubbcluj.ro

boby.balc@yahoo.com

razvan.garbacea@yahoo.com

Abstract: *In the current market economy, companies are constantly struggling to achieve a sustained competitive advantage that will enable them to improve performance, which results in increased competitiveness, and of course, profit. Among the few competitive advantages that can become sustainable competitive advantages, quality plays a crucial role. Recent research shows that about 90% of buyers in the international market, consider quality as having at least equal importance with price in making the decision to purchase. In the opinion of some specialists in economic theory and practice, total quality refers to the holistic approach of quality, which actually means, addressing all aspects of economic and social development and technical of quality. Thus, the holistic approach of quality at organisation-wide involves procedural approach of quality, in this respect, the study focuses on this type of quality approach, i.e. the procedural approach, taking into account the strategic aspects of the continuous improvement of quality, which means in fact, the quality management. Total Quality Management is seen as a way to transform the economies of some countries to be more competitive than others. However, Total Quality Management brings not and will not produce results overnight, it is not a panacea for all the problems facing the organization. Total Quality Management requires a change in organizational culture, which must focus on meeting customer expectations and increasing the involvement of all employees to meet this objective, as an expression of the ethics of continuous improvement. In general, research on quality aiming identify why an organization should adopt the principles of total quality management, but attempts to identify the failing companies' attempts to implement total quality management principles are not so visible. Concerns companies to introduce quality management systems are becoming more pronounced, therefore, in this study we try to identify and present the main reasons that prevent achieving quality and implementation of total quality management system, in other words, we are interested in identify barriers to implementation and development of a quality management system.*

Keywords: Quality; total quality; TQM; TQM implementation barrier.

JEL classification: M1; M10; M19.

1. Introduction

The literature distinguish between quality management and Total Quality Management (TQM).

Quality assurance procedures for goods and services have evolved continuously In line with the socio-cultural and technological changes that have marked the rapid evolution of society. Since the 1980s, are implemented integrated quality assurance concepts whose starting point was the "new philosophy" of Feigenbaum, namely, Total Quality Control. Arouses particular interest both in literature and in economic practice, the concept of Total Quality Management (TQM) used in parallel or complementary relationship with the concept of Total Quality (TQ) (Olaru, 1999). Feigenbaum show that obtaining quality performance has the effect of increasing the competitiveness instantaneous or in short time (Whalen, 1994).

Thus, an important step in the implementation of TQM is the organization to identify the level of her quality provide through its products and services. In this respect, Sandholm (1996), identifies very suggestive, five phases of quality in organizations:

- The first phase, called "*sleepy phase*" in which companies do not feel threatened in the market, competition is weak or non-existent, and the company obtained an acceptable profit. In this situation, the quality does not receive attention from the company.
- During the second phase, referred to as "*wake-up stage*", company situation completely changes to the previous phase. Starts to lose market position, which decreases profit. At this stage the company is aware that it is in the midst of a crisis.
- "*Phase hesitation*", the company realizes that something must change. It's a phase of testing, probing tools of quality management in the idea of changing something.
- "*Action phase*" in which the company can be seen that the instruments used results, or try to make significant changes. Is the phase where there is a change in the organizational culture and improving products / services
- "*Maturity phase*" where total customer satisfaction is achieved through the perfection of each level of the organization. Quality does not only apply to products / services, but all activities of the organization. Applied total quality approach, the company naturally the quality.

2. Key aspects of TQM implementation

In a recent attempt to define the concept of TQM, Mosadeghrad (2014) states that TQM aims to enhance customer satisfaction and organizational performance by providing high quality products and services through participation and collaboration of all stakeholders, teamwork, a customer orientation, continuous improvement and process performance by applying the techniques and tools of quality management.

The literature mentions that TQM implementation is a complex, difficult, lengthy, involving huge efforts from organizations. While the TQM has been suggested, in principle, to improve the performance of the practical application involves several difficulties. The same author (Mosadeghrad, 2014) states that several studies have reported an improvement in productivity of only 20-30% due to the implementation of TQM programs (Eskildson, 1994).

To achieve TQM implementation desire, it is necessary to be aware the following issues (Ilies, 2011):

- Involvement of management in the improvement process of continuous quality basic strategic objective
- Changes in organizational culture: implementing a philosophy that confirms this focus, encourages the involvement of all staff, as well as internal customers, continuous improvement
- Introducing the change through instruction, communication recognition performance; managers' behavior; teamwork; program to meet customer expectations
- Attitude of the managers who have to use quality tools and encourage communication and feedback to ensure an enabling environment for improved quality
- Developing quality strategy by defining the mission and quality policy formulation to achieve the strategic objectives of quality
- Stimulation, education and development of staff
- Determining quality costs as a measure of poor quality that means not to meet the needs and desires of customers.

3. Stages of TQM implementation

In the specialty literature there are several steps veneers implementation of quality management system. We present some of these approaches:

An approach to the steps to be taken in order to implement a TQM system, proposes the following steps (Stegerean, 2009:281):

- *Training*: during training management decides whether or not to pursue a TQM program.
- *Planning*: developing a vision and define objectives, developing organizational policies, preparing resources, and communicate throughout the organization detailed implementation plan (including budget and programming time), infrastructure and resources.
- *Evaluation*: this stage provides a thorough self-assessment based on the information received from the customer organization, characteristics of employees and the organization as a whole;
- *Implementation*: during this stage, are trained both staff and managers of the organization. Training involves inform each employee of the organization about what it means and implies TQM respectively be explained based society is its role in the organization and what is expected of him.
- *Diversification*: at this stage, managers will use experiences to integrate groups outside the organization (suppliers, distributors, and other companies that have a significant impact on business) in the quality.

Another model that we present, proposes a different approach to the stages of implementation of TQM, in the sense that the author (Dale, 1994) suggests that the implementation stage is the stages of evolution of the concept of quality: from quality inspection to TQM (Abdullah, 2010):

- *Inspection* - in this phase, the organization is concerned with activities such as examination, measurement, test and evaluation and ensure that the product or service conforms to specified requirements.
- *Quality Control (QC)* - methods and systems are used as part of the self-inspection.
- *Quality Assurance (QA)* - focus on continuous improvement through a systematic planning and preventing errors occurring from the source case.

- *TQM* - involves the application of quality management principles to all aspects of the organization, including customers and suppliers, and their integration with key business processes.

4. The existing barriers in implementing total quality management

Understanding the factors that are likely to impede the implementation of the TQM allows managers to develop more effective strategies for improving the chances of successfully deploy TQM and thereby to achieve excellence in the business (Jacobsen, 2008).

In the literature there are a multitude of studies that address very different ways for the identification of the factors that hinder the successful implementation of TQM. We will emphasize some of the approaches which describe barriers (and the causes which they determine) which prevents the application of the system of quality management.

Whalen (1994) identified the following barriers that hinder the implementation and development of a programme of TQM:

- Poor planning
- Lack of management commitment
- The strength of the labour
- Lack of appropriate training
- Complacency team
- Use of an invalid program (outside of shelf-life/moral)
- The inability to change the organizational philosophy (culture)
- Insufficiency of resources
- The lack of improvement of the quality of the measurement.

Other authors, Sebastianelli and Tamimi (2003), have identified five barriers in the implementation of TQM:

- Poor planning
- Practice management and development of human resources insufficient and inadequate
- Lack of quality planning
- The lack of leadership in the development of a quality culture
- Inadequate resources for TQM
- Lack of customer orientation.

Johnson (2013) argues that the main barriers were found to be the lack of benchmarking and employee resistance to change. Organizations must understand that benchmarking is a tool used to identify strengths and weaknesses in comparison with the best companies in their industry. Employee resistance can be overcome by appropriate training and involving them in the planning and implementation phases of TQM. It was also found that insufficient resources were an obstacle to the implementation of TQM.

Another author, Mosadeghrad (2014) addresses the barriers to deployment TQM in a more complex way, in the sense that its research was carried out in 23 countries, of which 28 studies were conducted in developed countries, and 26 studies in developing countries.

It states that the research conducted since the 1990s (Mosadeghrad, 2014) have shown very high rates of failure in the implementation of the TQM, authors like Schonberger, (1992); Eskildson, (1994); Elmuti et al., (1996); Tata and Prasad, (1998) reported increases of only 20-30% performance improvement organizations after implementation of the TQM, while Burrows in 1992 reported a failure TQM rate of 95% (Sebastianelli, 2003).

While the TQM was ranked first among all the techniques for quality improvement in 1993, it reached 15% in 2007, according to Rigby and Bilodeau (Mosadeghrad, 1986).

These statistics have made Mosadeghrad (2014) to wonder whether the TQM has gotten just a "fad" of management. It is important first of all to understand the reasons for the failure of the TQM. In this respect the author summarizes the reasons responsible for the failure of the TQM addressed in the literature, and that have been classified into three groups (Mosadeghrad, 2014: 162):

- *Ineffective or inappropriate TQM models*: TQM does not provide an explicit theory. There is little agreement on what is and what its essential characteristics are. Basically, a TQM model consists of two components: values and principles (e.g. the top management implication, customer focus, employee involvement, teamwork, etc.), and techniques and instruments (for example, statistical control tools process). As a result, different models TQM may lead to different results.
- *Ineffective or inappropriate methods for the implementation of the TQM*: many of the failures are attributed to TQM deployment methods according to Claver et al., 2003; Hansson and Klefsjo, 2003; Seetharaman et al., 2006. Although many quality management gurus have contributed to the development of the TQM, have offered relatively few practical frameworks and methods for TQM implementation principles. Cooney and Sackey (2003) believe that TQM offers a vision of organizational change. However, it does not provide the tools to implement such a change. Similarly, Zairi and Matthew (1995) conclude that TQM, 'heads' have been defined but not "means". As a result, there is no standard method for implementing the values and principles of the TQM in an organization.
- *The wrong environment for the implementation of the TQM*: it requires an environment of support (supporting leadership, culture and infrastructure) to implement the TQM.

In this context, the author grouped the barriers that are preventing the implementation of TQM in five categories:

- *Strategic barriers*: strategic issues are significant barriers for implementation of TQM and have the greatest negative impact on its success. These barriers are mainly related to the management and leadership of the organisation.
- *Structural barriers*: are related to the structure, systems and physical resources necessary to implement the TQM
- *Human resources barriers*: are those obstacles are related to human factors, such as lack of employee engagement and resistance to change in TQM
- *Contextual barriers*: are those difficulties that arise when there are developed a context and a culture appropriate to achieve the highest potential of the deploying of the TQM
- *Procedural barriers*: mainly are generated by the complexity of the processes, the lack of focus on the client, the lack of partnership with suppliers, the bureaucracy and the lack of a system of evaluation and self-assessment.

Strategic barriers:

- inappropriate TQM program
- barriers to the adoption of TQM
- unrealistic expectations
- deficient leadership
- poor management
- the lack of top management support
- poor involvement of managers
- the strength of the middle management
- inadequate planning
- the lack of consistency of objectives

- lack of long term vision
- the lack of a vision and a clear directions
- conflicting objectives and priorities
- the lack of priority of improving the quality
- the previous failures in terms of initiatives of change
- the lack of Government support
- political uncertainty

Structural barriers:

- organisational structure inappropriate
- lack of organizational flexibility
- lack of physical resources
- lack of information systems
- lack of financial support, the cost of implementation
- lack of time

Human resources barriers:

- the lack of interest of employees
- the lack of commitment and involvement of employees
- employee resistance to change
- a deficient human resources management
- poor delegation at all hierarchical levels
- few employees work tasks and increasingly higher
- lack of training and education of employees
- lack of motivation and satisfaction of employees
- the lack of recognition and rewarding for success

Contextual barriers:

- inadequate organizational culture
- difficulties in changing organizational culture
- lack of guidance teams
- poor communication and ineffective
- poor coordination
- the lack of confidence of employees in the management
- cultural issues resolution
- lack of innovation
- political behaviour
- the diversity of the workforce
- barriers mentality

Procedural barriers:

- lack of focus
- the lack of an adequate process management
- lack of concentration on the client
- the lack of involvement of suppliers
- bureaucracy
- lack of evaluation and self-evaluation
- the change agent or counsel incompetence in implementing quality
- ineffective corrective action
- efforts to improve quality are time consuming

It can be seen that strategic barriers are the most common types of barriers that hinder the successful implementation of TQM system. Also, the human resources barriers have a very large impact on the success of TQM implementation.

We can affirm that, within both the strategic-level barriers and the barriers related to human resources, leadership is a key factor in managing change necessary to implement the TQM.

5. In conclusion

TQM is seen as a way to transform the economies of some countries to be more competitive than others. However TQM brings not and will not produce results overnight, it is not a panacea for all the problems facing the organization.

TQM requires a change in organizational culture, which must focus on meeting customer expectations and increasing the involvement of all employees to meet this objective, as an expression of the ethics of continuous improvement.

TQM implementation is a complex, difficult, lengthy, involving huge efforts from organizations. While the TQM has been suggested, in principle, to improve the performance of the practical application involves several difficulties.

TQM implementation stages are: training, planning, evaluation, implementation, and diversification.

Main reasons for the failure of TQM are: ineffective or inappropriate TQM models, ineffective or inappropriate methods for the TQM implementation, wrong environment for TQM implementation.

Implementation barriers can be divided into the following categories: strategic barriers, human resources barriers, structural barriers, contextual barriers, and procedural barriers.

Implementation of TQM is a process of transformational change within the organization and to cope with this change it is necessary that the top management of the organization (leadership) to be able to motivate, maintain enthusiasm through organization and to identify effective ways to overcome barriers they face in order to successfully complete the implementation of TQM system.

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