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Total Quality Management in Media Outfits and Organizational Performance

Ifeanyi Nwokeocha
Department of Journalism and Media Studies Federal University Otuoke, Bayelsa State Nigeria
Corresponding Author: Ifeanyi Nwokeocha ifeanyimn@fuotuoke.edu.ng

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A B S T R A C T

Total Quality Management (TQM) is a comprehensive management philosophy adopted by organizations to continuously enhance the quality of processes, products, and services. Its core objective is to meet or exceed customer expectations, thereby improving customer satisfaction and overall organizational performance. TQM has emerged as an essential practice in modern business environments due to its proven effectiveness in enhancing performance metrics. This study investigates the implementation of TQM in media organizations and its impact on organizational performance. Findings suggest that TQM underscores the significance of human resources in achieving quality excellence. Effective human resources management aligned with quality management principles is crucial for achieving total quality. Failures and costs often stem from communication gaps and lack of awareness. When quality becomes a shared priority across the organization, it becomes feasible to deliver products that meet customer requirements and preferences while minimizing defects in products and services.

INTRODUCTION

Economic globalization ushers in a myriad of challenges and opportunities for industrial enterprises in Nigeria. Particularly, the manufacturing sector finds itself grappling with an increasingly competitive landscape, both domestically and internationally. To navigate this terrain successfully, these companies must establish conditions conducive to thriving in multiple markets. Among the array of strategies delineated for market supremacy is the adoption and implementation of a suite of operations management practices (Heizer and Render, 2004). Among these, Total Quality Management (TQM) stands out as a preeminent contender, drawing significant scholarly and practical attention over the past two decades (Jung and Wang, 2006).

TQM emerges as a pivotal pathway towards organizational triumph, as underscored by Nwokeocha (2024), who posits that the foundational element of organizational success resides in the human factor. Over the years, TQM has not only endured but flourished in the modern industrial landscape, positioning itself as a cornerstone of contemporary manufacturing principles. Its breadth surpasses conventional quality control and assurance paradigms, encapsulating the entirety of organizational functions rather than confining itself to product components. Within the realms of management theory and practice, TQM has ascended to prominence, permeating discussions on quality standards and methodologies.

The genesis of TQM traces back to the post-World War II era, pioneered by Edwards W. Deming with the aim of enhancing the quality of goods and services. Initially embraced by Japan in the 1950s to revitalize their postwar economy, TQM catalyzed Japan's ascendance to global economic dominance by the 1980s (Evans and Dean, 2003). This success prompted a realization among American manufacturers that the traditional assembly line model, rooted in nineteenth-century principles, was obsolete in the face of modern global competition. Thus, a paradigm shift towards TQM ensued, marking the onset of an era characterized by relentless pursuit of quality enhancement throughout the 1980s and 1990s.

The pursuit of organizational excellence emerges as the focal point for contemporary enterprises (Kuvaas, 2006). However, achieving satisfactory employee performance necessitates a multifaceted approach encompassing managerial standards, knowledge, commitment, and performance appraisals, with an emphasis on quality management. Amidst this milieu, performance measurement emerges as a linchpin for effective organizational management. As asserted by Deming, improvement is contingent upon measurement, with organizational performance gauged by its attainment of market-oriented and financial objectives (Li, Ragu-Nathan and Rao, 2006). Departing from the conventional reliance solely on financial metrics, contemporary studies advocate for a holistic evaluation incorporating market-oriented criteria such as return on investment, market share, and profit margin, among others (Stock, Greis and Kasanda, 2000).

The imperative of TQM extends beyond mere product quality, encompassing the entirety of management practices, employee caliber, and client relationships (Nwabueze, 2001). This holistic perspective underscores the all-encompassing nature of TQM, as corroborated by Demirbag et al. (2006), emphasizing its pivotal role in fostering quality, satisfaction, and business success. Thus, this study embarks on an exploration of total quality management within media organizations, aiming to elucidate its impact on organizational performance.

METHODOLOGY

This research focus on the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) in media organizations and its impact on organizational performance. Understanding existing theories, models, and research related to Total Quality Management and its application in various industries.

RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Concept of Quality

Quality, encompassing authenticity, high standards, integrity, and value, permeates not only organizational realms but all facets of human existence. Bilich and Neto (2000) underscore the pivotal role of quality as they delineate its necessity in institutional strategies, emphasizing its omnipresence in daily operations from policy establishment to service delivery to meet customer demands. Djerdjour and Patel (2000) reinforce this stance, asserting that quality is no longer a luxury but a requisite for survival, underscoring its indispensable nature.

Total Quality Management (TQM) emerges as a solution for enhancing product and service quality. However, a comprehensive understanding of TQM necessitates an antecedent examination of the concept of quality itself. Dale (2003) and Evans and Dean (2003) elucidate quality as a cornerstone of institutional reputation, alongside reliability, delivery, and price, noting its elusive nature yet paramount significance. Hoyer and Hoyer (2001) echo this sentiment, highlighting the multifaceted nature of quality, extending beyond goods and services to encompass various dimensions such as time, place, people, and the environment.

Quality epitomizes an ongoing, pervasive process ingrained in the ethos and culture of institutions. Schonberger (1990) advocates for its integration as a fundamental philosophy across all departments, fostering a customer-centric approach focused on improved quality, cost-efficiency, responsiveness, and flexibility. Despite its centrality, the term "quality" remains subject to diverse interpretations and definitions. Reeves and Bednar (1994) elucidate the historical ambiguity surrounding its definition, noting the multitude of perspectives and applications across different contexts and time periods.

Amidst the variance in definitions, scholars like Deming, Crosby, Feigenbaum, Ishikawa, and Juran offer seminal insights into quality. While definitions may vary, their collective wisdom serves as a guiding beacon for understanding and implementing quality principles in both product

manufacturing and service delivery realms. Notwithstanding evolving strategies and tools for quality assurance, fundamental customer expectations have remained relatively constant over time (Hoyer and Hoyer 2001). Thus, while the concept of quality may elude precise definition, the enduring wisdom of quality gurus provides a solid foundation for its comprehension and application in diverse contexts. From the various definitions of quality indicated by these gurus in literature, there seem to be two levels in the concept of quality (Hoyer and Hoyer 2001), namely:

1. level one, by producing products or delivering services whose measurable characteristics satisfy a fixed set of specifications; and
2. Level two, products and services that satisfy customer expectations for their use or consumption.

Quality, as described by various scholars, encompasses a multifaceted concept. Aksu (2003) defines quality as the adherence to a defined set of customer requirements, which, if fulfilled, leads to a product or service that is suitable for its intended purpose. Contrarily, Wiele, Dale, and Williams (2003) introduce a nuanced perspective, highlighting the artistic and dynamic aspects of quality: "Quality is what astonishes and gratifies the customer." Seeking to harmonize these differing viewpoints, Pycraft, Singh, and Phihlela (2000), alongside Stamatis (2003), present their definition of quality: "Quality is the steady adherence to customers' anticipations." In accordance with Pycraft and Stamatis's elucidation, the term "adherence" implies a necessity to meet explicit specifications, reflecting a manufacturing-oriented approach. Aksu's definitions align with this interpretation of quality, emphasizing the importance of meeting customer requirements. Furthermore, the inclusion of "customers' expectations" endeavors to amalgamate both user-centric and value-driven perspectives.

Total Quality Management

Total Quality Management (TQM) is a systematic quality improvement approach for firm-wide management for the purpose of improving performance in terms of quality, productivity, customer satisfaction, and profitability (Bellis-Jones & Hand, 1999). It is a management philosophy intended to empower every member of the organization, promoting continuous, sustained, and long-term improvement in quality and productivity while eliminating employees' fear of change (Bellis-Jones & Hand, 1999). TQM integrates fundamental techniques and principles of quality function deployment, statistical control, and existing management tools in a structured manner (Bellis-Jones & Hand, 1999). Moreover, TQM focuses on continuous process improvement within organizations to provide superior customer value and meet customer needs (Gregory, 2000).

Management awareness of the importance of TQM, alongside business process reengineering and other continuous improvement techniques, was stimulated by the benchmarking movement to seek, study, implement, and improve on best practices (Zairi & Youssef, 1995). Commitment to continuous improvement initially originated in manufacturing firms but quickly spread to the service sector (Zairi & Youssef, 1995). Various studies have been carried out

to determine critical factors of TQM, and different instruments such as the Malcolm Baldrige Award, EFQM, and the Deming Prize Criteria have been developed for this purpose (Zairi & Youssef, 1995). These studies have generated a wide range of management issues, techniques, approaches, and systematic empirical investigations (Zairi & Youssef, 1995).

TQM has been globally recognized as one of the most durable management innovations of the past two decades, influenced by the Japanese approach towards quality improvement (Oschman, 2009). However, there is little agreement on the precise definition of TQM, despite its widespread practice (Boaden, 1997). For institutions to realize the value of TQM implementation, internal conceptual understanding of TQM is crucial (Douglas vs Judge, 2001). TQM brings together productivity, ethics, leadership, and performance into a unique relationship (Erikson, 2003). It is not merely a technique but a way of life and culture that should be embraced by all members of an organization, especially those in leadership positions (SteeKamp, 2001).

TQM blurs the boundaries between the organization and its environment, considering entities previously regarded as outsiders as part of the organizational process (Dervitsiotis, 2003). In recent years, TQM has been one of the most prominent ideas applied to management milieu to reengineer institutions and bring about change (Pycraft, 2000). According to Oschman (2009) and Hammer and Champy (2000), there are three main reasons for the popularity of TQM: its intuitive attraction, dramatic increase in effectiveness, and focus on process-based work to gain a competitive advantage. Motwani (2001) visualizes TQM as constructing a house, with top management commitment as the foundation and pillars including employee training, quality measurement, process management, and customer involvement. Incorporating factors of vendor quality management and product design completes the implementation of TQM (Motwani, 2001).

The Total Quality Management (TQM) Strategy

Four elements often highlighted as pivotal in a successful Total Quality Management (TQM) strategy encompass customer satisfaction, employee engagement, managerial guidance, and process enhancement and oversight. The significance of customer satisfaction has been a cornerstone in marketing theory for an extensive duration. Organizations devoted to quality must first identify their clientele (both internal and external), discern their specific requirements, synchronize all facets of the enterprise (encompassing marketing, production, finance, human resource management, and information systems) to fulfill these needs, and subsequently, conduct follow-ups to ascertain customer contentment (Feigenbaum, 1991). Just-In-Time (JIT), TQM, and Supply Chain Management (SCM) are delineated as alternative methodologies for enhancing the efficiency and efficacy of an organization's operational framework.

The concept of the cost of quality is esteemed as the principal yardstick for evaluating quality by both Crosby and Juran. Within their framework, it serves as a tool for gauging the efficacy of the TQM process, identifying quality enhancement initiatives, and furnishing cost validation to skeptics. By

consolidating discernible costs like review, inspection, testing, scrap, and rework, one can convincingly advocate for quality enhancement endeavors to management and other stakeholders. The cost of quality has witnessed a surge in attention in recent times, effectively serving its purpose of heightening awareness regarding quality and elucidating to management the monetary advantages of TQM (Handfield, Jayaram, & Ghosh, 1999). Within TQM systems, the objectives of product/service design are twofold: crafting products amenable to manufacturing and embedding quality within them (Chase, Aquilano, & Jacob, 2001). Streamlining manufacturing designs involves cross-functional collaboration to curtail the number of components per product and standardize them, thereby streamlining process management through reduced complexity and variance (Ahire & Dreyfus, 2000).

Efficient management of supplier quality is facilitated through fostering enduring, cooperative associations with a minimal number of suppliers to procure superior materials and/or services. Maintaining a select pool of suppliers augments product quality and enhances the productivity of buyers by fostering heightened commitment to product design and quality standards (Trent & Morczka, 1999). Quality not only confers a competitive advantage in terms of price/value over rivals but also empowers the firm to command a premium per unit sale price through product differentiation (Ahire & Dreyfus, 2000). Pursuing a high-quality strategy culminates in a sustainable competitive edge, as firms vying for quality prioritize an operational strategy that ensures product/service quality and perpetually seeks enhancement.

Principles of TQM

According to Dean and Bowen (1994), Total Quality Management (TQM) is characterized by its principles, suggesting that it functions as both a philosophy and an approach to management. Barner (2008) further elaborates on this by describing TQM as a philosophy aimed at quality improvement, emphasizing the elimination of waste, continuous improvement, and the involvement of all employees. While Dean and Bowen highlight the importance of principles in TQM implementation, Barner underscores the role of principles in supporting the TQM philosophy.

The TQM concept is underpinned by key principles, as noted by Choppins (1995), Dale (2003), Oschman (2009), and Oakland (1989). These principles serve as foundational elements guiding the application of TQM within organizations.

Top Management Commitment and Support

Top management plays a crucial role in fostering a culture of total quality improvement within an organization. It is imperative that top executives demonstrate a deep understanding of quality principles, exhibit unwavering commitment, and actively engage in the improvement process from its inception. This commitment entails assuming personal responsibility for driving the initiative forward, providing clear direction, and exercising decisive leadership, even when confronted with resistance from employees who may impede progress.

Total Employee Involvement

Unlike earlier quality management paradigms, Total Quality Management (TQM) emphasizes the involvement of every individual within the organization, irrespective of their department or hierarchical position. TQM seeks to organize and engage the entire workforce, recognizing that each employee, at every level, contributes to the organization's overall quality objectives.

Continuous Improvement

Continuous improvement lies at the heart of TQM philosophy. Rather than viewing quality enhancement as a finite task, organizations must adopt a perpetual pursuit of excellence. This entails proactively seeking out opportunities for improvement, rather than settling for the status quo. Cultivating a cadre of managers dedicated to perpetually advancing quality standards, both internally and externally, is essential for sustaining momentum in this journey.

Continuous Training

Training stands out as a cornerstone in the endeavor to enhance quality. Commencing with educating senior management on TQM principles, the training cascade should extend throughout the organization, fostering a shared understanding and language around quality improvement. Continuous training efforts contribute to building a cohesive organizational culture centered on quality enhancement.

Teamwork

Within the framework of TQM, teamwork emerges as a critical driver of continuous improvement. Teams are recognized as more potent and effective units compared to individual efforts. Cultivating a collaborative environment where teams operate flexibly and foster mutual trust among members is essential for organizational success.

Empowering Employees

Empowerment entails creating an environment where individuals feel empowered to take ownership and responsibility for process improvement within defined parameters. TQM provides avenues through which employee empowerment can bolster organizational endeavors, both in quality enhancement and broader empowerment initiatives. Delegating responsibilities traditionally reserved for senior management can institutionalize participation and foster a culture of empowerment.

Democratic Management Style

A distinguishing feature of TQM is its democratic management approach, which emphasizes employee participation in decision-making processes. This participatory management style solicits input from empowered employees, fostering a culture of inclusivity and collaboration.

Customer Satisfaction

In the realm of total quality, customer satisfaction serves as the primary impetus for organizational improvement. Organizations must prioritize understanding and meeting current and future customer needs, striving not only to meet but exceed customer expectations.

Culture Change

Quality culture serves as the linchpin that unites all TQM principles. Cultivating a culture of trust, belonging, and continuous improvement fosters an environment conducive to achieving organizational goals.

Total Quality Management and Organizational Performance

Performance measurement is an integral part of all management processes, historically involving management accountants in budgetary control and the development of financial indicators like return on investment (Drucker, 1990). However, it's argued that traditional aggregate financial accounting indicators aren't suitable in Total Quality Management (TQM) contexts (Terzioski & Samson, 2000). Authors emphasize the necessity of using direct quantitative measures of manufacturing to gauge the effectiveness of TQM programs (Prajogo & Sohal, 2003). As companies recognize quality as a strategic competitive variable, they understand that high quality must extend to production processes, aiming to produce quality products while minimizing costs.

Though TQM offers potential for enhancing competitiveness, evidence suggests disappointment in its ability to sustainably improve organizational profitability (Kaynak, 2003). Performance management systems form the foundation of human resource (HR) practices, fostering a systems approach to organizational management. Ideally, such systems align organizational and employee goals through goal-setting and connect employee goal achievements to HR decisions via performance measurement (Shank & Govindarajan, 1994).

Scholars argue that quality practices have become too crucial for management accounting to ignore TQM, as traditional accounting primarily supports cost and production analysis, neglecting quality (Sila, 2007). TQM philosophy underscores the integration of quality from inception, making quality standards and improvement everyone's responsibility (Lord & Lawrence, 2001). Quality, as per Waldman and Gopalakrishnan (1996), is largely perceived by customers based on how well products or services meet their needs and expectations. Failure to meet these needs results in poor quality, underscoring the importance of customer involvement throughout manufacturing stages (Easton & Jarrell, 1998).

Human Relations Theory

The human relations theory, often attributed to the findings of the Hawthorne experiments conducted by Elton Mayo and his colleagues at the Western Electric Company in Chicago between 1927 and 1932, posits several key principles. Firstly, it emphasizes that a worker's need for recognition, consultation, and a sense of belonging surpasses mere physical abilities or stamina in influencing morale and productivity (Mayo, 1927-1932). Secondly, the theory highlights the importance of non-economic factors, such as social rewards and sanctions, in motivating workers and determining their job satisfaction (Mayo, 1927-1932). In essence, it suggests that productivity is heavily influenced by social and psychological factors rather than just the conditions of work (Mayo, 1927-1932).

Moreover, the human relations theory underscores the impact of informal groups within an organization on individual workers' work habits and attitudes (Mayo, 1927-1932). These informal groups play a significant role in shaping the overall dynamics and culture of the workplace, thereby affecting productivity and employee satisfaction (Mayo, 1927-1932). Lastly, an effective supervisory style is characterized by managers consulting with work groups and their informal leaders before implementing any changes to the work schedule (Mayo, 1927-1932). This collaborative approach ensures that workers feel valued and included in decision-making processes, fostering a sense of ownership and commitment to organizational goals (Mayo, 1927-1932).

When all these factors, among others, are properly addressed, workers develop a sense of belonging and are treated as integral stakeholders in organizational progress (Mayo, 1927-1932). Their welfare is adequately considered, leading to enhanced motivation and commitment to achieving optimal productivity and fostering organizational growth (Mayo, 1927-1932). Thus, the human relations theory underscores the importance of recognizing the social and psychological needs of workers and fostering a supportive work environment to drive overall success (Mayo, 1927-1932).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Total Quality Management (TQM) places a strong emphasis on the pivotal role of individuals in ensuring quality standards. Both human resources management and quality management underscore the pursuit of comprehensive quality. Failures and expenses often stem from inadequate communication and awareness rather than inherent deficiencies in systems. While systems are undeniably vital, their efficacy hinges greatly on the individuals behind their design. The evolution of traditional organizational structures and the escalating significance of cohesive work teams underscore the indispensability of team-oriented management within the realm of TQM. Establishing a corporate identity and fostering a supportive atmosphere are imperative components of TQM. This approach necessitates the establishment of rigorous quality benchmarks at minimal expense, comprehensive training encompassing team dynamics across all organizational tiers, seamless integration of systems and technology with human expertise, and the

unwavering motivation, engagement, and dedication of personnel at every echelon of the organization. Addressing human resources concerns with due diligence is an indispensable prerequisite for the triumphant execution of TQM.

1. Regulatory authorities within Nigeria ought to promote the adoption of Total Quality Management across all sectors operating within the nation. Additionally, governmental bodies at every tier should facilitate essential infrastructure provisions such as reliable power and efficient transportation networks to bolster the seamless delivery of services.
2. It is imperative for company leadership to arrange recurrent training sessions aimed at equipping their workforce with comprehensive insights into various quality enhancement methodologies.
3. Defined protocols must be established to govern the meticulous selection of raw materials for production processes.
4. Management is tasked with delineating stringent quality standards for their products, thereby ensuring that only items meeting the specified criteria are permitted for market distribution. Substandard products should be rigorously withheld, ensuring only those meeting the established benchmarks are made available to consumers.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

The implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) in media organizations is crucial for enhancing organizational performance. By prioritizing quality, focusing on effective human resources management, and promoting open communication, media organizations can meet customer expectations, minimize defects, and improve overall performance. TQM has proven to be an effective management philosophy in modern business environments, and its adoption in media organizations can lead to significant improvements in organizational performance.

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