

# Tqm sustainability



Various approaches to TQM Sustainability Introduction In current extremely competitive market, organization's forced to adopt and implement a variety of innovation management techniques. One of the main tools that have been used widely is a management philosophy known as Total Quality management (TQM). However, TQM can only be successfully implemented if the organization's top management are supported a life-long improvement process. The current goal for any organization that implements quality management is to achieve business excellence.

Under the current globalization of markets, researcher found that environment is one of the most important components of business. So this leads us that sustainability cannot be separated from TQM process. According to Zairi & Liburd (2001), they define TQM sustainability as " the ability of a firm to embrace to change in their business environment by implementing current best practice methods in order to maintain and achieve superior competitive performance". Therefore, the evolution of TQM such always develops along with the changes in the business environment or they will defiantly left behind.

There are lots of efforts that companies use in order to sustain their TQM such as implementing self-assessment, benchmarking, competitiveness, excellence, etc. so this paper attempts to identify two important approaches to TQM Sustainability which are self-assessment and benchmarking. Various approaches to TQM Sustainability Self-assessment Self-assessment consider as a tool that provides organizations a clear vision and information regarding their current level of excellence.

This assessment tool helps top management to make right decisions and also help them to assist the organization by choosing the right strategy to move forward which help the organization to gain a competitive position in the market (Khoo & Tan, 2003). Lots of researched define self-assessment in different ways. For example, Hillman (1994) defined self-assessment as “ the process of evaluating an organization against a model for continuous improvement, in order to highlight what has been achieved and what needs improving”.

Self-assessment helps to provide the input for the quality improvement plan as it's identify organization's areas of improvement that they need to be improved. By implementing self-assessment, top management can recognize the organization's strengths and weakness, which further help in indenting the suitable strategy for successful present and future (Porter and Finn, 1994; Van der Wiele, 1995). In addition, Ritchie and Dale (2000) mentioned that self-assessment considered as a necessary task that each organization need to implement in order to maintain the momentum required for continues improvement.

According to Hillman (1994), self-assessment is a tool designed for organization which helps them to measure their current performance, identify the obstacles to successful performance, spot out their strengths and development opportunities. Also it helps organizations to monitor their changes and improvement over time. Self-assessment considered as a quality initiative that provide an organization an internal and external focus since it is implemented by their own staff based on excellence standards.

As noted by Samuelsson & Nilsson (2002), self-assessment provides an excellent cultural benefit as it provides a spirit of continuous improvement and allows organization's employees to gain a full understanding of their business and current performance. To support these literature reviews with a real example of organization that implemented this approach. Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA) initiated a self-assessment program in 2010 with collaboration of Dubai government excellence program (DGEP) which is based on EFQM criteria in order to assess their excellence performance internally.

DEWA is a fully monopoly government organization that found the need to establish self-assessment program in order to improve their practices, results, and overall performance of the organization. Self-assessment Programme goals are alignment with DEWA overall Balance scored to spread and sustain the culture of excellence within the organization. After implementing this tool, management notice great results of this approach on the overall organization performance where each DEWA's divisions start to compete by providing their best service and by improving their quality of work.

Internal self-assessment help DEWA to identifies their areas of improvement and put an action plan to overcome these gaps (Abden , 2013). So we can notice a great example of the benefit of self-assessment programmed to sustain TQM within organization. Benchmarking Benchmarking is term that originally used by land surveyors, who used this term (benchmarking) to identify a fixed point from all other measurements. While in late 70's,

benchmarking term took a broader meaning when it's applied to business organization.

Benchmarking has been viewed by lots of researcher as an important management tool of TQM sustainability ( Kouzmin, Loffler, Klages, and Korac-Kakabadse, 1999). Benchmarking defines as “ the systematic process of searching for the best practices, innovative ideas and highly effective operating procedure that lead to superior performance” (Hammer and Stranton, 1995). Benchmarking implemented in its modern form around 1976, with the introduction of competitive benchmarking with Rank Xerox when they implement a strategy known as “ Leadership through quality”.

In addition to that, Spendolini (1992), argues that the initiation of the Baldrige Award in 1988 has positively influenced the idea of benchmarking, since this awards required the winners to share information regarding their quality and business process improvement with other companies. Lots of business such as Motorola, AT&T and Xerox have implemented benchmarking as standard operation procedure since the mid-to late 80's (Blakeman, 2002). According to Murray (1997), he discussed the benefit of benchmarking and its implementation.

He mentioned that benchmarking helps organization to target their key areas for improvement within their operations so they can increase their productivity, quality and competitiveness. As noted by Murray (1997), benchmarking process usually contains 4 main steps as follows: 1. Analyzing the organization's performance, procedure and practices. 2. Selecting the benchmarks that need to compare. 3. Collecting data on the benchmarks'

practices. 4. Analyzing the data. According to Camp (1995), there are 4 types of benchmark that organizations implement such as follows: 1.

Internal benchmarking: this type of benchmarking is about a comparing divisions or procedures within one organization. Internal benchmarking aims to identify the best internal process and use it as a baseline for external benchmarking with other companies in the market (Spendolini, 1992). 2.

Competitive benchmarking: This type of benchmarking usually compares firms in the same markets that have competing work process, products or services (Camp, 1989). 3. Functional benchmarking: This type of benchmarking compares companies that have similar process in the same function outside one's industry (Camp, 1989). 4.

Generic benchmarking: This type of benchmarking compares work process of different organizations that provide different business. This is the most difficult type of benchmarking since it requires a careful understanding of the entire process (Elmuti and Kathawala, 1997). From the main findings above, we notice that benchmarking has a positive and direct impact on the performance since it's provide organizations with a vision that help these organizations on their quality and performance improvement. Conclusion The conclusion emerging from this paper that the best work and achievement in the world is ultimately useless if it's not maintained.

Companies put lots of efforts in order to sustain their TQM by implementing various approaches to TQM Sustainability such as self-assessment, benchmarking, competitiveness, excellence, etc. so this paper attempted to identify two important approaches to TQM Sustainability which are self-assessment and benchmarking. Self-assessment is an quality tool that helps

organization to measure the progress of TQM implementation within an organization and also help them to identify areas of improvement in order to generate a future actions plan to overcome these areas.

This part was supported by giving an example from the real life case of a government organization that implemented self-assessment (DEWA). In addition, this study covered benchmarking term which is considered as a quality tool that helps organization to compare their process with best practices. Finally, we can notice that organization must consider quality as a long term concept that need a full commitment and need a continuous searching and striving for their improvement even if they reach an acceptable level of performance. References