

Embedding total quality management in private universities management essay



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The previous chapter consisted of a literature review about TQM, the management approach that started in manufacturing and business and then extended over the service sector and particularly in higher education.

Research shows that by adapting aspects of the TQM to fit their own needs, higher education organizations experienced a better ability to manage the process of quality, and maintain and enhance development. Vazzana. et al (2000), in their study about TQM in business colleges found that most PU's benefit from their attempt at using TQM to improve the quality of their universities. Similarly, Weller (2000) in his study of using the TQM tools to identify root causes of higher education attendance problems concluded that the application of TQM's tools and techniques to solve higher education problems as highly promising as it is in PU's areas.

The purpose of chapter five was to give a general understanding of the subject. The present chapter is about how TQM has, and can be, adopted in the PU's, what benefits PU's can get from implementing TQM, concerns about, and case studies of some PU's which have implemented TQM and what problems and benefits have been encountered in this context. The chapter concludes with a proposed model for TQM in the PU's in Egypt.

5. 2 TQM in Private Universities Context

Ever more, the implementation of TQM has extended over industrial organizations and has turned deteriorating companies into world leaders.

Although the origins of TQM are grounded in statistical analysis of performance, with statistical quality control being the principal tool for verifying the success of TQM measures, TQM lays importance on the human element of an organization (Deming, 1986; Juran, 1988). This makes TQM

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suitable for service sectors in general and particularly education. Although educational organizations have been slower to see the value of TQM, many of them are now using TQM to improve their administration and to face internal and external challenges. As Mangan (1992) notes:

Faced with soaring operating costs and persistent public demands for accountability, a growing number of colleges and universities are turning to TQM and its principles of customer satisfaction, teamwork, and employee empowerment as a tool to improve how institutions are managed.

There are three generic approaches to TQM in higher education (Harris 1994), Firstly there is a customer focus where the idea of service to students is fostered through staff training and development, which promotes student's choice and autonomy. The second approach has a staff focus and is concerned to value and enhance the contribution of all members of staff to the effectiveness of an institution's operation, to the setting of policies and priorities. This entails a flatter management structure and the acceptance of responsibility for action by defined working groups. The third approach focuses on service agreements stance and seeks to ensure conformity to specification at certain key measurable points of the educational processes. Evaluation of assignments by faculty within a specified timeframe is an example.

Lawrence and Mc. Collough (2001) propose a system of guarantees designed to accommodate multiple stakeholders and the various and changing roles of students in the educational process.

Durlabhji and Fusilier (1999) states that customer empowerment in education requires greater input from students as well as from business community that will eventually employ them and this in term will streamline education and eliminate any rest of the esoteric academic that exist in business coursework.

In his model of distributed leadership for managing change in higher educational institutions, Gregory (1996) suggests four dimensions of institutional leadership symbolic, political, managerial and academic.

In managing educational change there has been general criticism (Iven, 1995) that government initiatives are being pushed by a “ narrow, employer-driven strategy”. Policy makers do have an obligation to set policy, establish standards and monitor performance. They must articulate important educational goals (Fullan, 1993).

Roffe (1998) considers that due to open competition, students are becoming more customers as well as consumers and expected to pay a growing share of the costs of education.

TQM implementation in PU's, Osseo-Asare and Long bottom (2002) proposes enabler criteria, which affect performance and help organizations achieve organizational excellence. These criteria are leadership, policy and strategy, people management, resources and partnerships and processes.

The literature contains infinite cases of Total Quality Management principles incorporation in education. The application ranges from school stage (Weller and Hartley, 1994 and Schmoker and Wilson, 1993) to higher education

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stage (Sahney et. al, n2004 and Wiklund et. al, 2003). Some studies focus on the feasibility of implementing TQM in educational.

Anderson (1995) reported the results of a case study to evaluate the effectiveness of a TQM programme at the University of Houston, College of Business Administration. He found that the implementation of TQM had some positive results such as increasing the student perceptions of service quality.

Moreover, some studies show that TQM is also used to solve some specific issues. Weller (2000) reported that TQM principles can be used to identify root problem causes for absenteeism. It also can help in identifying realistic solutions which yield positive results in academic and non-academic areas.

The TQM pedagogical concept applied to higher education embraces all fields and levels of education and has an effect on the following:

Physical facilities (buildings, sport complexes, open field etc.),

Academic infrastructure (laboratories, library, documentation, communication, information infrastructure etc.),

Curriculums,

Examinations and evaluation systems,

Supplying academic and administrative personal and their improvement systems,

Research and publication,

Institutional development plans (strategic planning),

University - industry - society relations,

Deming claimed his production system can be applied to service organizations as well as to manufacturing organizations (Evans and Lindsay, 1999). Figure 4. 3 with reference to TQM applies Deming's production model to higher education. This system depends on the answers to these main questions. Who are the stakeholders (customers and suppliers)? What are the inputs and outputs? What are the key processes?

Stockholders

Suppliers

Stockholders

Customers

Families

High Schools

Business Sector

Vocational Institutes

Input

Government

Business

Families

Students

Outputs

Design & Redesign

Teaching Program

Customer research

Where are we now and where do we want to be?

Process

Figure 5. 1 TQM in Higher Education System

In figure 5. 1 the stakeholders are the customers and suppliers. The stakeholder groups can easily be extended beyond the members shown in the groups as customers and suppliers. Suppliers include families, high school, Vocational institutes, and business. The customers include the business community, graduate school, society, student, and families. Universities have a large number of different customers as shown in the figure 5. 1. University management should consider the relative importance of each customer group and balance and reconcile the interests of these diverse groups. Students as consumers of knowledge and services are considered to be ' the main customer'. Accepting students as an important group of customers can be taken as a revolutionary change in the management of quality in higher education. That group of students, as the

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consumers of education, should include potential students, existing students and graduate students. The university has different priorities and services for each group of students who make up the main customer group and attempts to satisfy their different needs. For example, introductory courses for potential students, student counselling for existing students and alumni associations for graduate students.

Processes include all facets of teaching, student counselling, and scientific research. The first process is to assess the educational needs of students in terms of their existing knowledge, future career opportunities, and the needs of the community and its future development. Other processes to be followed are planning curriculum for courses, including allocating resources, arranging facilities, administration and support, and finally teaching and learning. The quality of all these processes must be effectively and visibly assured. Like manufacturing systems, educational systems can include a means by which customer research can be conducted to evaluate and improve supply. For example, by observing students, analyzing test results, and using other resources from student feedback, instructors can assess their own effectiveness and develop strategies for improvement. Some colleges and universities survey their graduates and their graduates' employers to assess consumer satisfaction with their product. Feedback such as that mentioned, helps colleges, departments, and individual faculty members to redesign curriculum, improve course content, and improve services such as academic advising.

While industry usually has a product or service, educational institutions do not have perceived "products" in the generally accepted sense. Education
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has many outputs and inputs but the results from the process stage are often difficult to quantify in the short term. The inputs to the educational system are students, faculty, support staff, buildings and equipment and other facilities. Outputs include people with new knowledge and abilities and research findings as seen from the figure 5. 1.

5. 3 Quality Control of Higher Education

Vevere (2009) referred quality control to verification procedures (both formal and informal) used by institutions in order to monitor commitment level to quality standards. Vevere schemed quality control of higher education as interconnected system as shown below in figure (5. 2).

Figure 5. 2 system of external and internal control of higher education.

Source : Vevere , Nina (2009)

According to figure (5. 2) above, external control institutions verify the commitment to standards that higher education institutions claim. It is a fundamental principle of TQM to integrate TQM internally within the institution of higher education and externally with international organizations of education (Tang & Zairi, 1998). The International Accreditation Organization (IAO, 2010) is an independent and private education accrediting seeks to the finest global educational standards. IAO is a member of the International Education Accreditation Commission (IEAC), which is concerned with establishment, maintenance and improvement of standards of accreditation agencies across the globe. In each country, there is a local bodybodies coordinate and cooperate with international bodies concerned with higher education quality. In England, as an example, the Department of

Employment is concerned whether graduates can satisfy the needs of employers (Harvey et al., 1992). In Egypt, few universities got educational ISO and highly satisfied standards of National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation (NAQAA) for some specializations.

5. 4 Benefits of TQM for Private Higher Education

As the world is currently undergoing a dramatic change and education is considered the leading competitive change tool, so TQM as concluded in chapter four and explained in chapter five could be a reasonable approach for developing. The literature review of TQM is showing that many writers have encouraged the use of TQM in education.

Sallis (1993) argues that an educational organization could benefit from applying the TQM approach both in human and financial terms. Sallis points out that some concepts of TQM like 'right first time' cannot be directly implemented in educational organizations but educational organizations can still benefit from such a notion. He indicates that if an education organization applied TQM, mistakes will be minimized with clear systems and procedures, and good team work through careful and thoughtful planning. In this point, one can notice that although TQM originally started in manufacturing and it has somehow acquired business language, but it is still flexible enough to be adapted by PU's.

Murgatroyd and Morgan (1993) highlight the benefit of holistic organization in applying TQM. They mention that TQM is not concerned just with the outcome of education, but with the whole nature of education as a process for all stakeholders.

Howard (1996) states the following ways in which PU's can benefit from implementing TQM:

1. Stakeholder value through customer focus.
2. Employee commitment and development through involvement.
3. Goal achievement through strategic planning.
4. Services improvement through continuous process improvement.
5. Cost reduction through elimination of unnecessary tasks.

Howard highlights the benefits of TQM for PU's from three different dimensions: human dimension, financial dimension and planning dimension. In the human dimension, the stakeholders are satisfied and employees are committed; in the financial dimension, money and other resources are saved; and in the planning dimension strategic planning leads to goal achievement.

Therefore, the literature on TQM argues that implementing TQM in PU's would save time, money and efforts through doing things right first time. TQM will also help PU's to demonstrate values for all stakeholders, provide better quality provision and communication and continue seeking innovation and improvement.

5. 5 Obstacles about TQM in Private Universities

According to Srivanci (2004) and critical issues in implementing TQM in PU's includes leadership, customer identification, cultural and organizational transformation.

Deans and head of departments cannot eliminate unethical employment practices of lecturer's like what is applied in public universities where rigid rules is deployed. Hence they do not enjoy ultimate authority in hiring and firing of personnel and allocating resources.

Owlia and Aspinwall (1997) conclude that customer orientation is a more problematic principle of TQM when applied to PU's because of special nature of many academics whose motivation to work is often independent of market issues. Education consider as a provider of services. Its services include advice, tuition, assessment and guidance to pupils and students, their parents and sponsors. The customers and the stakeholders of the service are a very diverse group and need identifying. If quality is about meeting and exceeding customer needs and wants, it is important to be clear whose needs and wants we should be satisfying. The diversity of customers makes it all the more important for educational institutions to focus on customer wants and to develop mechanisms for responding to them. In PU's where the education process depends totally on the customer's fees to run, a funding cut may lead to a reduction in service that may not accord with what customers are feeding back. This is not much important in public universities where it is supported from government. This is a very difficult issue to resolve and TQM does not provide ready answers to it in private universities.

Cultural and organizational transformation in PU's main issue is under the frustrates the introduction of conventional TQM procedures is the principle of academic freedom as it plays out in individual professorial classrooms and their professional lives. Another important issues is that faculty members tend to work alone more often the together in projects since they gain more managerial and financial advantage at the opposite in public universities.

The obstacles that cause unsuccessful adopting and implementing TQM in PU's academia are (but not limited to):

The nature of the academia world, which makes the change process slow.

The resistance of academicians to change, so to learn about the new method of doing things.

The nature of some institutions as non-profit organization, which reduce the motivation to adopt new management methodology.

The concentration of the academicians (in their readings and researches) on their narrow specializations.

The TQM methodology and tools are relatively new especially in the developing countries.

High turnover rate of staff, which prevents accumulation of experience and sustain the momentum of change.

The absence of employees (units) who are specialized in TQM.

The common administration problem, is putting a high rank and qualified personnel in the leading position depending on their previous experience not on their specialization i. e. the leaders of the institution could be specialized in art, physics, anatomy or any other field but not in management and specifically in higher education management.

5. 6 Case Studies of TQM Implementation in Private Universities

To review the experiences of some educational organizations with TQM, in order to gain appreciation from their experiences in proposing the TQM model for PU's in Egypt and in developing the implementation framework. As with benchmarking, it is better to learn from the experiences of others than starting from scratch. The literature covers PU's which have adopted TQM. For this study the case studies will be examined from the perspective of US and UK experiences where the two countries are well reputable in higher education.

5. 6. 1 US experience

The first attempt to implement TQM in US higher education began in 1985. The movement spread quickly and in 1990, 78 higher education institutions were reported to be exploring or attempting to implement TQM.

The common factor in US higher education is that it is being driven toward commercial competition imposed by economic forces. Competition is the result of the development of the global education market on the one hand, and the reduction of governmental funding that forces public organizations to seek other financial sources, on the other hand. For example, at Oregon

State University the government cut funds by 35 percent. Some universities, such as Virginia Commonwealth University responded by decreasing staff salaries and increasing tuition fees. North Dakota University responded to such cuts by increasing the number of students without increasing quality. Competitive factors between universities did not allow for lower quality, so many institutions are looking to industry for ideas. Considering the similarities between experiences met in the commercial world and those faced in higher education, the TQM approach can be a solution for the “do more with less”.

Today more than 200 private institutions of higher education are involved in TQM throughout the USA. There are many success stories in the US. The experiences of some US higher educational institutions prove that the effect of using TQM in private higher education is positive.

5. 6. 1. 1 Oregon State University

One of the most publicized success stories is that of Oregon State University (OSU). For a number of reasons the first pilot study was conducted at OSU. First, quality was considered a high-priority issue. Second, it has high probability of success. Third, management agreed that it was important. Fourth, no one else was working on it. Fifth, it was also important to the customers of the organizations.

OSU, as leader of TQM in higher education movement, has had a real success; “time has been saved, costs have been reduced, people have been empowered at all levels, and morale has skyrocketed”.

Oregon State University followed the following steps as a planning stage to implement TQM:

Exploring Total Quality Management through visiting companies with TQM programs, inviting Deming to visit and explain TQM, reading key resources and attending TQM classes.

Forming a pilot study team which was seen as a learning experience for the OSU's staff and a model for future teams. It consisted of 10 managers and front-line workers, a team leader, and a training officer/ facilitator.

After the first pilot team experience, they began implementing TQM by focusing top management on strategic planning, including the following steps: defining the mission, understanding customers, identifying the critical processes of the president, developing the vision and identifying breakthrough items.

Developing a training program, a quality manual and a recognition system.

Establishing daily management system.

Establishing standing cross-functional teams.

5. 6. 1. 2 Northwest Missouri State University

Northwest Missouri State University is another leader in TQM in higher education. It defines its success as: enrolment is now at capacity: the budget is balanced; faculty salaries are higher than average; and about 10% of budget has been shifted from administration to instructions. The implementation of TQM followed the following steps (Waller, L. D., 2000):

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Senior management began to learn about quality management.

Developing internal expertise that was required rather than obtain some ready improvement methodology and rely on outsiders to provide the expertise.

The management of the transformation became a full-time enterprise for those school district employees who were involved.

The introduction of leadership training and development for principals-to-be. This was to provide this critical group with continuous improvement skills needed in the schools.

A decision making process at the school level was introduced.

Classroom Learning System was introduced based on Deming's problem solving Plan-Do-Study-Act cycle.

5. 6. 1. 3 The University of Pennsylvania

The University of Pennsylvania is committed to TQM in the Wharton School MBA; curriculum has been developed using TQM principles. Moreover this University has improved the method of recouping corporate research changes and reduced charges from \$ 18 to \$ 13 million.

The university proposed an eleven-step model for implementing TQM

The president adopts quality as the core of institutional value system and communicates this value, and works to develop commitment to it throughout the institution.

The president promotes the value through frequent symbolic and substantive actions.

Educate administrators and academic deans in TQM and customer orientation, in team/participative management.

Identify customer's needs and set performance objectives.

Train and designate " internal resource persons" who provide technical assistance to the rest of the institution.

Train faculty, staff, and employees in appropriate statistical techniques, process analysis, decision making, and customer orientation.

Form quality teams to seek continual improvement in the process and identify individual quality champions.

Define/delegate authority throughout the institution.

Develop performance measurement systems to continuously monitor the progress of the institution; the measurement should focus on the stakeholders' needs satisfaction.

Institute incentives and reward systems and relate them to TQM objectives.

Work continuously to reduce the resistance to change.

5. 6. 2 UK Experience

The first TQM initiatives in UK higher education were later than in the USA; the first attempts were in the early 1990.

5. 6. 2. 1 De Monfort University

De Monfort University (DMU) has some successful results in implementing TQM. The Faculty of Design and Manufacture at DMU completely reviewed and revised traditional teaching methods and courses, which were no longer appropriate for the end of twentieth century. Teaching staff became 30 percent more efficient with double the number of student, and effectiveness of the revised course content was widely reorganized by industry, student and other design faculties. In Leicester Business School at DMU, with the application of TQM, higher participation rates and increase in staff productivity achieved.

The strategic plan for the implementation was rooted with the concepts of identifying the customers, understanding their needs and serving them well. The plan focused on the following steps:

The establishment of a quality council comprising the university's most senior academic and non-academic managers. The purpose of the council is to review the university's processes and critical success factors in order to identify key issues for improvement.

Raising quality awareness through a series of awareness courses. These courses provide early education and training for actual and potential council members. In addition to the awareness courses, there is specific training in quality management tools and techniques.

Using quality function deployment to ensure the customer satisfaction. This method was applied in the Department of Vision Sciences. There were eight essential areas to consider: students' wants and needs, skills necessary to <https://assignbuster.com/embedding-total-quality-management-in-private-universities-management-essay/>

meet the wants and needs, programme and course content to deliver the skills, organization and assessment of the programme, resources, implementation of the programme, monitoring discrepancies between goals and outcomes, and control of the system in changing circumstances. However, the experience of quality function deployment showed it to be a complex tool.

De Monfort University did not use a particular TQM model but instead only used the TQM principles, tools and techniques whenever appropriate and possible, because was difficult to provide an objective assessment to its success or of its cost over the years.

5. 6. 2. 2 South Bank University

Total quality management initiative was launched in 1992 at South Bank University. This has involved a thorough and ongoing review both of the quality of service it provides for its students and the wider community and of its academic quality, particularly in the area of teaching and learning.

South Bank University, decided at an early stage that it should reflect more accurately the principle that real quality issues involved the ongoing commitment of all staff, support and academic, at all levels. Students are rightly encouraged to be involved more actively in the learning process, to be critical and imaginative about their own learning.

Within five years, linking TQM into the strategic planning process, South Bank started to establish a competitive advantage by “ achieving differentiation (of its courses) through the quality of the learning experience, if a way can be found of advertising this to potential customers”. It is <https://assignbuster.com/embedding-total-quality-management-in-private-universities-management-essay/>

expected that up to ten significant quality improvement measures (for example in academic staff time saved by increased efficiency in validation procedures or in improved feedback from student course board representatives) will have been achieved at the cross-university level in response to common problems identified through the quality service agreements. Most importantly, there will have been a change in the culture of the institution where all staff accepts their personal responsibility for quality improvement as a natural part of their job.

The quality management plan can be summarized as follows

The vice-chancellor and senior executive take direct responsibility for leadership of the university's quality plan.

Quality commitment to all university elements.

Continuous improvement is everyone's responsibility.

Deployment of resources to support quality management.

Quality management responsibility is best handed by operational levels.

Encouragement of the diversification of quality management forms.

Development of staff.

From the quality principles and mission statement, critical factors of strategic importance are identified: teaching and learning, research, community service, institutional management, priority resource allocation, enhancing technical and information support, and quality advancement

procedures. These factors formed a framework for further actions in the quality plan.

In implementing TQM, each faculty formed its own quality committee to provide leadership and to increase quality improvement at faculty level. Responsible officers (e. g. deans) are charged with ensuring that performance targets are achieved within the specified time. As a part of staff development, brainstorming is used to identify strengths and weaknesses.

South Bank University learned that the commitment of the staff to the quality initiatives and staff development, in addition to the stakeholders' involvement and empowerment are essential to the strengthening of a quality culture.

The purpose of presenting case studies is to learn how they applied TQM and propose a model that suits the PU's in Egypt.

All of the five educational organizations began to apply TQM as a means to respond to the great demand for change and improvement. Some used TQM to face the reduction of funding or the challenge of competitiveness.

This is the case in the PU's; it faces challenges and needs to encourage improvement, as discussed in chapter four. In Implementing TQM, universities get used different TQM models according to their needs. TQM requires creativity, responsibility and participation from managers and staffing in an environment of collaboration and open communication. It requires commitment at the top level. It needs strong visionary leadership that will facilitate the cultural change toward continuous development. TQM

also demands the establishment of an environment of teamwork. Another important issue about implementing TQM is that the top management play a major role in planning the organization's processes. The PU's as an educational organization should aim at satisfying stakeholders' needs. Nevertheless, TQM demands time, effort and a willingness to change. It creates a learning organization where education, training and re-education are essential for TQM success.

TQM requires staff at all levels to be motivated to do not only what is better but what is best by the involvement and empowerment of all staff. TQM is about believing that there is always a better way of doing the services of the organization. So, involvement and empowerment, training and education, and continuous improvement are characters of the TQM organization.

The implementation of TQM seems to be more effective if it is steady and well-planned. It also needs appraisal using quality tools and techniques. This is a very difficult task but not impossible. It just needs time and patience and a view point. From the previously discussed case studies, it seems that TQM approach succeeded in educational settings and this success can be translated into the following results:

Saving time.

Saving effort in the long term.

Saving money and resources.

Establishing a quality culture.

Identification of strong and weak points.

Stakeholder empowerment and involvement.

Communication empowerment.

Better understanding of stakeholders and their needs.

Building a positive teamwork environment.

Raising authority delegation.