

Correlates of Total Quality Management and Employee Performance: An Empirical Study of a Manufacturing Company in Nigeria

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Abstract

This research work examined correlate of total quality management as a leadership style on organization performance. The current trend of total quality management as used in work organisations prompted the interest of this study. The objective was to establish relationship between total quality management and organization performance using a manufacturing company in Nigeria. One hundred and fifty (150) questionnaires were returned in usable condition. With the aid of chi-square statistical method, the four hypotheses formulated were tested. The findings showed a significant relationship between total quality management and organizational performance; between TQM and defect prevention and defect detention errors; between the success of TQM and perception of organization members; between total quality management and effective management of resistance to change performance. This study recommends that management should also provide enabling environment to implement total quality management policy with democratic leadership styles in the organisation and should think of how satisfy customers at the first time always. It concludes that a major strategy for achieving high quality is Total Quality Management (TQM) and a management system for improving performance throughout a firm by maximizing customer's satisfaction, making continuous improvements and relying heavily on employee involvement – all these should be establish by work organisations in respective of the sector involved.

Keywords: total quality, management, correlate, organization, performance.

1. Introduction

Total Quality Management (TQM) is a business management strategy aimed at embedding awareness of quality in all organizational processes. Wikipedia (2009) notes that it has been widely used in manufacturing, education, hospitals, call centers, government, and service industries, as well as science programmes amongst others. It is a management approach for an organization, centered on quality, based on the participation of all its members and aimed at long-term success through customer satisfaction, and benefits to all members of the organization and to the society. It involves making constant effort to identify what the

customer wants from time to time and determining how to cater for them based on the recognition of the fact that customers' needs, desires and wants normally change over time, in relation to changes which may occur in the key aspects of the environment such as social, political, economic and technological changes. TQM is a culture of continuous improvements based on continuous learning and adaptation to changes in consumer demand and product or operational methods. It requires that an organisation maintain quality standard in all aspects of its business by ensuring that things are done right the first time and that defects and wastes are eliminated from operations. It is an organization-wide management of quality. TQM is far more than shifting the responsibility of detection of problem from the customer to the producer. It requires a comprehensive approach that must first be recognized and then implemented if the rewards are to be realized. Today's business environment is such that managers must plan strategically to maintain a hold on market share and everyone in the organisation, from top to bottom, must play their parts. Human Resources are the source of ideas and innovation, and their expertise experience, knowledge, and co-operation have to be harnessed to get those ideas implemented. When human resources are treated like machines, work becomes uninteresting and unsatisfying. Under such conditions, it is not possible to expect quality services and reliable products. Organizations exist for joint efforts to achieve a common goal and to reach such goals, the factors of production (land, material, man, and money) must be properly utilized and harnessed. However, perhaps the most important and difficult, to manage of the factors of production is man i.e. the human element and this must be properly taken care of because human resource is the most important factor of production and any organization that neglects it does so at its own peril. In spite of the great scientific advances made by man, the standard of living of the vast majority of the world's population still depends more on man himself than on the technological aids, which are now available to him. The efficiency with which he can use technology aids his foresight in planning for the future and how to choose a course of action among the various alternatives that are available to him. Management Scholars have noted that although total quality management should result in a radical change in the culture and the way of work in an organization it sometimes does not due to some factors. There are several approaches for a planned, comprehensive approach to increasing organizational performance such as balanced scorecard; benchmarking; business process reengineering; continuous improvement; cultural change; knowledge management; management by objectives(MBO); outcome-based evaluation (particularly for nonprofits); programme evaluation; strategic planning and total quality management (TQM) which is of interest to this study.

2. Objectives of Study

This study is geared towards assessing the effectiveness of total quality management as a planned, comprehensive approach to increasing organizational performance in a manufacturing company. The study assesses and brings to focus the correlation of TQM on organisation performance. It outlines key aspects of implementation of organizational change which may enable a practitioner to more thoughtfully and successfully implement TQM. It explores the expectations and perceptions of TQM, sources of resistance to change and ways of dealing with them.

3. Literature

3.1. The Concept of Total Quality Management (TQM)

Total quality management involves an organizational cultural commitment to satisfying customers through the use of an integrated system of tools, techniques and training. It is geared towards increasing the production of better products and services at progressively more competitive prices. It involves the continuous improvement of organizational processes, resulting in high-products and services. It is thus primarily a change in an organization's technology, its way of doing work. In the human services, this means the way clients are processed, the service delivery methods applied to them and the ancillary organizational processes such as paperwork, procurement processes, and other procedures. It is also a change in an organization's culture, its norms, values, and belief systems about how organizations function. In addition, it is a change in an organization's political system, decision making processes and power bases. Chaudron (2008) asserts that for substantive change to occur, changes in these three dimensions must be aligned. Total quality management as a technological change will not be successful unless cultural and political dimensions are attended to as well. TQM results in a radical change in the culture and the way of work in an organization. A system of TQM directs the efforts of an entire firm towards higher customer satisfaction, continuous improvement, and employee involvement. Many quality management principles are therefore, expressed in terms of changing individuals' attitudes and the organization culture. Lawal (2006) suggests that Total Quality Management is 90 percent attitude, specifically the attitude of listening to customers. TQM is a business philosophy, orientation or practice that embodies that belief that the management process must focus on the idea of customer-given quality through an organisation. Continuous improvement of product quality and service delivery is the optimum of the TQM. However, since every successful practitioner of TQM comes from a different culture, there seems to be no set path to it. Choppins (2005) observes that success with TQM may stem from developing a unique TQM model which reflects the business ethnics and purpose of business so that distress would be reduced to the barest minimum. It considers and rewards the effects of those directly involved both inside and outside the organisation. TQM involves a system of management that involves all people in an organisation delivering products or services that meet or exceed customer requirements. Carter (2003) asserts that TQM is a preventive, proactive approach to doing business and as such it reflects strategic leadership, common sense, data-driven approaches to problem solving and decision making, employee involvement, and sound management practice. TQM has a strong focus on process measurement and controls as means of continuous improvement. TQM is a quality initiative.

3.2 Basic Principles of Total Quality Management (TQM)

The principles of TQM are to seek to satisfy the external customer with quality goods and services, as well as your company internal customers; to satisfy your external and internal suppliers; and to continuously improve processes by working smarter and using special quality methods. The first and major TQM principle is to satisfy the customer- the person who pays for the product or service. Customers want to get their money's worth from a product or service they purchase. If the user of the product is different than the purchaser, then both the user and customer must be satisfied, although the person who pays gets priority. A second TQM principle is to satisfy the supplier, which is the person or organization from whom you are purchasing goods or services. It is only in the company's best interest that its suppliers provide it with quality goods or services, if the company hopes to provide quality goods or services to its external customers. It also involves supervisors trying to keep their workers happy and productive by providing good task instructions, the tools they need to do their job and good working conditions. The supervisor must also reward the workers with praise and good pay. The reason to do this is to get more productivity out of the workers, as well as to keep the good workers. An effective supervisor with a good team of workers will certainly satisfy his or her internal customers. One area of satisfying the internal supplier is by empowering the workers. This means to allow them to make decisions on things that they can control. This not only takes the burden off the supervisor, but it also motivates these internal suppliers to do better work. The third principle of TQM is continuous improvement. Never be satisfied with the method used, because there always can be improvements. The competition is improving, so it is very necessary to strive to keep ahead of the game. It also entails working smarter, not harder; examining the source of problems and delays and then improving them. Workers are often a source of continuous improvements. They can provide suggestions on how to improve a process and eliminate waste or unnecessary work. It also includes quality methods. There are many quality methods, such as just-in-time production, variability reduction that can improve processes and reduce waste.

3.3 Expectations and Perceptions of Total Quality Management

TQM should be purpose oriented. It should be used because an organization's leaders feel a need to make the organization more effective. It should be driven by results and should not be seen as an end in itself. If TQM is introduced without consideration of real organizational needs and conditions, it will be met by scepticism on the part of both managers and workers. Workers may see management as only concerned about the product, not staff needs. Furthermore, staff may see quality as not needing attention: they may believe that their services are already excellent or that quality is a peripheral concern in these days of cutbacks and multi problem clients. Partly because of heavy service demands, and partly because of professional training of

human service workers, which places heavy value on direct service activities with clients, there may be a lack of interest on the part of many line workers in efficiency or even effectiveness and outcomes. For TQM to work, employees must see a need for improved quality (from their perspective) and how TQM may help.

3.4 Sources of Resistance

TQM implies finding ways to change the organization from its current state to a better developed state. Change is inevitable and desirable but its acceptance varies, its impact differs and so it is often resisted either by the organization itself, groups or trade unions and individuals. Resistance can manifest in strikes, reduced production, shoddy workmanship, high rate of absenteeism requests for transfer, resignation, loss of motivation to work, mental error and lateness in arriving at work. Implementation of large scale change such as TQM will inevitably face resistance, which should be addressed directly. Individuals tend to resist change for several reasons. First is because they fear the unknown. Again, they may dislike having to learn to use new skills. Also change disrupts stable friendships. The resistance could be because they have a lack of trust in management. The organizational structure also tends to resist change because change is a threat to the power structure, the existing organizational systems are designed to maintain the status quo, other sub-systems within the organization resist change, and previous commitments have been made in the form of sunk costs. Management resistance to employee empowerment is likely. They may see decision making authority in zero sum terms, if employees have more involvement in decision making, managers will have less. In fact, one principle in employee involvement is that each level will be more empowered, and managers lose none of their fundamental authority. There will undoubtedly be changes in their roles, however. They will spend less time on control and more on facilitation. For many traditional managers, this transition will require teaching, training, self reflection, and time as well as assurances from upper management that they are not in danger of being displaced. Hyde (2007) opines that resistance in other parts of the organization will show up if TQM is introduced on a pilot basis or only in particular programmes. Kanter (2008) refers to this perspective as segmentalism where each unit or programme sees itself as separate and unique, with nothing to learn from others and no need to collaborate with them. This shows up in the "not invented here" syndrome with those not involved in the initial development of an idea feeling no ownership for it. There are several tactics which can be helpful in dealing with resistance to TQM implementation. Generally, they have to do with acknowledging legitimate resistance and changing tactics based on it, using effective leadership to enrol people in the vision of TQM, and using employee participation. A useful technique to systematically identify areas of resistance is a force field analysis which involves creating a force field of driving forces, which aid the change or make it more likely to occur, and restraining forces, which are points of resistance or things getting in the way of change. The analysis of the force field involves looking at which driving forces may be strengthened and which restraining forces may be eliminated, mitigated, or counteracted. If it appears that, overall, driving forces are strong enough to move back restraining forces, adoption of TQM would be worth pursuing. The change plan would include tactics designed to move the relevant forces. Another way to address resistance is to get all employees on the same side, in alignment towards the same goal. Leadership is the

mechanism for this, and specific models known as transformational or visionary leadership are most effective. Research on change implementation has identified four methods. The first, "intervention," involves a key executive justifying the need for change, monitoring the process, defining acceptable performance, and demonstrating how improvements can be made. This would involve a leader articulating a compelling vision of an ideal organization and how TQM would help the vision to be actualized. It is often found to be more successful than the second method "participation," in which representatives of different interest groups determine the features of the change. Participation is sometimes more successful than the third method "persuasion" which involves experts attempting to sell changes they have devised. The fourth method "edict," is the least successful. A powerful way to decrease resistance to change is to increase the participation of employees in making decisions about various aspects of the process. Onabanjo (2006) identifies two rationales for employee participation. The first rationale is to increase employee commitment to the resultant outcomes, as they will feel a greater stake or sense of ownership in what is decided. A second rationale is that employees have a great deal of knowledge and skills relevant to the issue at hand for instance, increasing quality, identifying problems, and improving work processes, and their input should lead to higher quality decisions. A manager should consider any decision area as a possibility for employee participation, with the understanding that participation is not always appropriate. Employees or their representatives may be involved in decision areas ranging from the scope and overall approach of the TQM process to teams engaging in quality analysis and suggestions for improvements. They may also be involved in ancillary areas such as redesign of the organization's structure, information system, or reward system. Involvement of formal employee groups such as unions is a special consideration which may also greatly aid TQM implementation. It should be realised that change will occur when the addition of three factors (dissatisfaction with the status quo, desirability of the proposed change, the practicality of the change) is greater than the "cost" of changing (time spent in learning, adapting new roles and procedures, etc.) A final possible area of resistance, is the "not invented here" syndrome which may be seen after TQM is successfully adopted in one part of the organization and attempts are made to diffuse it, or spread it to other areas. Such resistance may be prevented or reduced by following the general techniques earlier identified. Also, each new area (programme, department) should have a new assessment and contracting process: different circumstances should be expected in each part of the organization.

3.5 Implementation Principles and Processes

A preliminary step in TQM implementation is to assess the organization's current reality. Where the current reality does not include important preconditions, TQM implementation should be delayed until the organization is in a state in which TQM is likely to succeed. However, a certain level of stress is probably desirable to initiate TQM. This is because people need to feel a need for a change. Finally, action vehicles are needed i.e. mechanisms or structures to enable the change to occur and become institutionalized. TQM processes and models of employee participation are such mechanisms. Essential or desirable preconditions may be identified in macro and micro areas. Macro factors include those which are concerned with issues such as leadership, resources, and the surrounding infrastructure. Micro issues have to do with internal

issues such as employee training and empowerment and organizational processes such as quality assurance. In designing a comprehensive change process, the leader must acknowledge the existing organizational culture (norms and values, managers' leadership philosophies and styles at all levels) to ensure a good fit.

TQM also needs to be congruent with or aligned with other organizational processes, including reward systems, financial & information systems, and training systems. Implementing TQM essentially involves organizational transformation which has to do with beginning to operate in new ways, developing a new culture a type of change which though difficult, is possible.

3.6 Organizational Performance

Organizational performance factors provide the social context within which individuals and groups must perform. Organizational performance is the result of factors such as work processes; team/group communication and interaction; corporate culture and image; policies; leadership; climate for innovation and creativity; and loyalty. Human performance factors can either positively or negatively influence organizational performance and vice-versa. The issue of organizational performance can be approached either from the perspective of culture (internal) or brand (external). Organizational Performance can be divided into three major categories: social, technical/operational, and ideological. There are numerous, major methods and movements to regularly increase the performance of organizations. Each includes regular recurring activities to establish organizational goals, monitor progress toward the goals, and make adjustments to achieve those goals more effectively and efficiently. Typically, these become integrated into the overall recurring management systems in the organization (as opposed to being used primarily in one-time projects for change. There are several approaches for a planned, comprehensive approach to increasing organizational performance such as balanced scorecard; benchmarking; business process reengineering; continuous improvement; cultural change; knowledge management; management by objectives(MBO); outcome-based evaluation (particularly for nonprofits); programme evaluation; strategic planning and total quality management (TQM) which is of interest to this study.

4. Methodology

A total of 150 respondents, which represents eighty five percent of the total population in the selected manufacturing company, returned the questionnaire distributed in usable condition. The respondents consist of 100 (66.7%) male employees and 50 (33.3%) female employees. The purposive sampling technique was used to select the organisations. The hypotheses tested in this paper are based on the comprehensive debate of the effects of total quality management on organisational performance.

5. Results and Discussions

96 (64%) of the respondents opine that there is in fact a significant relationship between total quality management and organisation performance while 54(36%) disagreed. 87 (58%) agree

while 63(42%) disagree that the concentration on product defect detection is preferred to product defect detention. This implies that majority of the respondents believe in product defect prevention to product defect detention. All 150 (100%) of the respondents agree that the system of total quality management is directed towards customer satisfaction and employees' involvement. 142(94.6%) of the respondents agree that quality leadership styles and total quality management are major means of improving organisation performance while only 8 5.4% disagree with this notion. 146 (97.3%) of the respondents agree that to achieve quality management, executive level managers must give top priority to quality and not just lip service while only 4(2.6%) disagree with this point. All of the respondents agree that part of top-level commitment is that every organisation unit must be responsible for quality. 54(36%) of the respondents agree that the quest for quality is a top management responsibility while 96 (64%) disagree with this notion. This implies that majority of the respondents believe that quest for quality should not be for top management alone. Again, all 150 (100%) of the respondents agree that one of the main aims of TQM is to meet customers/clients' optimum requirement. All 150 (100%) of them also agree that the process whereby one individual exerts influence over others in work organisations is called leadership and that the behaviour exhibited by a leader during supervision of subordinates is referred to as leadership styles. 128(85%) of the respondents agree that TQM succeeded in their organisation because the employees saw a need for improved quality while 22 (15%) disagree with this notion. This implies that majority of the respondents believe that for TQM to succeeded employees saw a need for improved quality.

Test of Hypotheses

Four hypotheses were tested for the study.

H₀: There is no significant relationship between total quality management and organisation performance.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between total quality management and organisation performance.

H₀: There is no significant relationship between TQM and defect prevention and defect detention errors.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between TQM and defect prevention and defect detention errors

H₀: There is no significant relationship between the success of TQM and perception of organization members.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between the success of TQM and Perception of organization members.

H₀: There is no significant relationship between total quality management and effective management of resistance to change performance.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between total quality management and effective management of resistance to change performance.

Hypothesis One

H₀: There is no significant relationship between total quality management and organisation performance.

Table 1 – Relationship between TQM and organisation performance

Variables	O	E	O – E	(O – E) ²	(O – E) ² /E
Agree	63	37.5	25.5	650.25	17.34
Strongly Agree	41	37.5	3.5	12.25	0.33
Disagree	31	37.5	- 6.5	42.25	1.13
Strongly Disagree	15	37.5	- 22.5	506.25	13.5
Total	150				32.3

Since the X^2 calculated value of 32.3 is greater than X^2 tabulated value of 9.49 at 0.05 level of significance and 4 degree of freedom, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies a significant relationship between TQM and organisation performance. In all, a system of total quality management was found to be directed toward customer satisfaction and employees' involvement within the company. TQM is a major means of improving performance within the company. Every unit is responsible for quality. A major objective of total quality management is to meet customers/ clients' optimum requirement. Total quality management was found to be responsible for improved performance in the organisation. The highest level of performance at the company required a well-defined and well-executed approach to continuous improvement and learning.

Hypothesis Two

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between TQM and defect prevention and defect detention errors.

Table 2 – Relationship between TQM and Defect Prevention and Defect Detection Error

Variables	O	E	O – E	(O – E) ²	(O – E) ² /E
Agree	58	37.5	20.5	420.25	11.21
Strongly Agree	40	37.5	2.5	6.25	0.17
Disagree	38	37.5	0.5	0.25	0.01
Strongly Disagree	14	37.5	-23.5	552.25	14.73
Total	150				26.12

Since the X^2 calculated value of 26.12 is greater than X^2 tabulated value of 9.49 at 0.05 level of significance and 4 degree of freedom, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies a significant relationship between product defect prevention and product defect detection of error. Total quality management is focused on quality; presumably a concern of both management and workers. Its methods and improvements eliminate wasteful bureaucratic activities, save money, and make more human resources available for core activities, specifically client service.

Hypothesis Three

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between the success of TQM and perception of organization Members

Table 3 – Relationship between TQM and Perception of Organization Members

Variables	O	E	O – E	(O – E) ²	(O – E) ² /E
Very large extent	69	18.2	50.8	2580.64	141.8
Large extent	39	18.2	20.8	432.64	23.8
No extent	12	18.2	-6.2	38.44	2.1
Small extent	23	18.2	4.8	23.04	1.3
Very small extent	7	18.2	11.2	125.44	6.9
Total	150				175.9

The X^2 calculated value of 175.9 is greater than X^2 tabulated value of 9.49 at 0.05 level of significance and 4 degree of freedom, the null hypothesis is therefore rejected. This implies a significant relationship between the success of TQM and perception of organization members. Workers may not see the need for change only seeing management as concerned about the product, not staff needs. Management initiatives focused on concerns such as budget or cost will not resonate with beleaguered line workers. The success of TQM is significantly affected by workers' perception. Pruger & Miller (2006), and, Ezell, Meniffee & Patti (2008) both observe that employees may believe that their services are already excellent. Due to heavy service demands, and professional training of human service workers, which places heavy value on direct service activities with clients, there may be a lack of interest on the part of many line workers in efficiency or even effectiveness and outcomes. This challenge should be addressed

by all administrators and in particular anyone interested in total quality management. Workers often have needs and concerns, which are different from those of administration. For total quality management to work, employees must see a need (for improved quality from their perspectives) and how total quality management may help.

Hypothesis Four

H₀₄: There is no significant relationship between TQM and effective management of resistance to change.

Table 4 – Relationship between TQM and effective management of Resistance to Change

Variables	O	E	O – E	(O – E) ²	(O – E) ² /E
Very large extent	79	18.2	60.8	3696.64	203.1
Large extent	35	18.2	16.8	282.24	15.51
In extent	10	18.2	-8.2	67.24	3.7
Small extent	18	18.2	-0.2	0.04	0.002
Very small extent	8	18.2	-10.2	104.04	5.72
Total	150				228.03

The χ^2 calculated value of 228.03 is greater than χ^2 tabulated value of 9.49 at 0.05 level of significance and 4 degree of freedom, hence the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies a significant relationship between TQM and the effective management of resistance to change. Organization members are often resistant to change because it creates uncertainty, fear, anxiety and worry many a times. Workers have stories to tell of the introduction of new programmes, techniques, systems, or even, in current terminology paradigms. Usually the employee, who can be anywhere from the line worker to the executive level, describes such an incident with a combination of cynicism and disappointment. In the manufacturing company employed for this study, resistance to change was identified early and managed using approaches of education and communication; participation and involvement; facilitation and support as well as manipulation and cooperation among others.

6. Recommendations

This paper recommends that for organizations to survive and grow in today's challenging marketplace they need true commitment to meeting customer needs through communication, planning and continuous process improvement activities. Creating this culture change can improve the products and services of any organization as well as improve employee attitudes and enthusiasm. All of these will help, with the ultimate goal of improved quality, productivity, organization performance and customer satisfaction which is an important competitive advantage in today's marketplace. TQM involves the purposeful change of a process to improve the reliability of achieving an outcome. Management should also provide enabling environment to implement total quality management policy with democratic leadership styles in the organisation and should think of how satisfy customers at the first time always. A system of

total quality management should be directed toward customer satisfaction and employees' involvement within the company. The executive level managers must give top priority to quality and not just pay lip service to it. Workers at all levels must be ready to be involved in the implementation process. The main reason of total quality management is to meet customers/clients' optimum requirement. This must be given utmost priority at all times. Top managers should not exercise decision making in themselves over their subordinates but manage by objectives to give the organisation edge over their competitors and make the subordinates have relevance and sense of belonging. It was found that top managers at the manufacturing company exercise leadership by consultation, seeking the consent of subordinates and shareholders before making decisions. The highest level of performance requires a well-defined and well-executed approach to continuous improvement and learning. This must be maintained at all times because continuous improvement is the key arm of total quality management. Organizations can improve on their system via effective TQM in order to achieve a high level of organizational performance and sustainable competitive advantage. Some existing organizational operations limit organizational performance. Effective TQM should be utilized to the best advantage, while seeking to continually improve on them. Organisation members at all levels should be regularly trained, educated on refreshed as the case may be on the contemporary management and TQM strategies. Mission Statements and Vision should be reviewed regularly in the light of the dynamic business environment. This is in order to periodical ascertain the prevailing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threat as a means of achieving results in realization of organizational goal.

7. Conclusion

This paper concludes that TQM is a business philosophy, orientation or practice that embodies that belief that the management process must focus on the idea of giving customer quality through an organization. It is an organizational cultural commitment to satisfying customers through the use of an integrated system of tools, techniques and training. It is geared towards increasing better products and services at progressively more competitive prices. It involves the continuous improvement of organizational processes, resulting in high-product and service. Members of any organization are resistant to change. Change creates uncertainty, fear, anxiety and worry many a times. For TQM to work, employees must see a need and how TQM may help. Fortunately, TQM is focused on quality; presumably a concern of both management and workers. Planned change processes often work, if conceptualized and implemented properly. TQM, when administered in the organization was responsible for improved organizational performance as manifested in: the speed of services; the quality of services; the average state of facilities; the organization's effectiveness in the realization of its goals and profitability.

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