

Chapter 3

Contemporary Perspectives on Higher Education Quality Management

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ABSTRACT

Quality management is considered a very important factor for the long-term success of each and every organization. The links between quality management and organizational performance can never be overemphasized. Quality management in both goods and services industries gives a company a distinct competitive advantage over its competitors in the market place. Market share can also be gained or lost over the level of quality management in an organization; that is if an organization's quality management process is poor, the market share is lost, and conversely, if it is quality management is good, a market share is gained. Quality is, therefore, a competitive priority for any serious organization. Quality management is the only factor that ensures an organization's survival and growth especially in institutions of higher learning and other service organizations. Quality management focuses on meeting consumers' needs, meeting the competition, improving continuously, and extending these concerns to all phases of business.

INTRODUCTION

Quality management is a very important factor for the long-term success of each organization. The links between Quality Management and organizational performance can never be over emphasized. Quality management in both goods and services industries gives a company a distinctive competitive advantage over its competitors in the market place. Market share can also be gained or lost over the level of quality management in an organisation; that is, if an organisation's quality management process is poor the market share is lost and conversely, if its quality management is good, a market share is gained. Quality is therefore a competitive priority for any serious organisation. Quality management is the only factor that ensures an organization's survival and growth especially in institutions of higher learning and other service organisations. Quality management focuses on meeting consumers' needs, meeting the competi-

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tion, improving continuously and extending these concerns to all phases of business. In the contemporary world all managers must understand that the real price of poor quality is lost clients and ultimately, the death of an organization. Consequently organizations must pay particular attention to quality management in order to be successful in today's business environment. Hence, a systematic procedure/ standard operating procedure (SOP) has to be grown and followed. Different concepts of quality management have to be understood clearly for managers to be able to design and execute a quality management programme effectively. As the primary focus of quality management (QM) is to meet customer requirements and strive to exceed customer expectations, it follows however that, this first chapter should explain Quality Management explicitly in a practical way. It must cover the various definitions and principles of quality management, fundamental beliefs, norms, rules and values that can be used as a basis for quality management. The chapter must also show that Quality Management is an extensive and structured organization management approach that focuses on continuous quality improvement of products and services by using continuous feedback. The chapter will show the Benefits of Quality Management in institutions of higher learning and other services industries. The chapter should indicate the two main dimensions from which quality management may be viewed, that is, product dimension of quality and service dimension of quality. There are various disciplinary perspectives from which professionals view quality management from. The following perspectives will be addressed:

- Financial Perspective,
- Marketing Perspective,
- Operations Perspective,
- Engineering Perspective,
- Production Perspective, and
- Supply Chain Perspective

After considering the different perspectives of quality management, the chapter will end by looking at quality management systems where it is going to reveal how checks and balances are going to be made through quality management systems audit. After reading this chapter, readers should be able to understand the basics of this powerful management tool.

Finding the way to quality is neither easy nor smooth; people must muddle and stumble for quite a good period of hard work. Managers must reach out and listen to anyone with ideas inside and outside the organisation. According to Foster (2017) the key to achieving total quality management lays in empowering employees with the authority and responsibility to improve manufacturing processes throughout the organisation, however, before an organisation could empower its employees it needs to equip them with right and quality tools for specific jobs. Academic institutions need to have intellectual experts; people who have the correct qualifications for the correct jobs. Management should get involved in the process of reaching out in order to learn from every source they could. Dahlgaard and Kanji (2009) argued that for an organisation to have an effective quality management programme it should formulate and implement staff development policies, continuous on job re-training. Armed with teams of trained and empowered employees the organisation would be able to produce goods and services of higher quality. Management must set target levels of education and skills required of each and every job description and adhere to the policy no matter what comes. Issues of quality management must not be left to rank and file workers only, the organisation's top-management and chief executives must be compelled to be involved (Foster, 2017). Quality management programmes often fail because of lack of commitment by top-management.

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