

TQM AND MARKETING PERSPECTIVES FOR SURVEYING EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Assoc.prof.dr. Levente Dimén,
Assoc.prof.dr. Nicolae Luduşan

„1 Decembrie 1918” University of Alba Iulia, Romania

Summary

- Introduction
- Presentation of the TQM
- Institution changing measures
- Methods of problem solving
- The basic principles of TQM as applied to higher education
- Student as customer
- Conclusion

Introduction

- *seeks to evaluate the arguments for the proposition that students in higher education are “customers” and should be treated as such, and investigate whether the adoption of the terminology, systems and processes of the “student-as-customer” leads to a **degradation or improvement** of the quality of education and level of service delivered to higher education students,*

Presentation of the TQM

- Total Quality Management is a „management approach to long-term success through customer satisfaction
- In a TQM effort, all members of an organization participate in improving processes, products, services and the culture in which they work.
- Implementation of TQM entails cross-functional quality improvement teams, working groups called quality circles.

Institution Changing Measures

- Create constancy of purpose for improvement of product and service.
- Adopt the new philosophy.
- Cease dependence on inspection to achieve quality. Build in quality in the first place.
- End the practice of awarding business on the basis of price alone. Instead, minimize total cost
- Improve constantly and forever [every process].
- Institute training on the job.
- Institute leadership. The aim of supervision should be to help people . . . to do a better job.
- Drive out fear.

Institution Changing Measures (2)

- Break down barriers between departments.
- Eliminate slogans, exhortations, and targets ... for zero defects and new levels of productivity. Such exhortations only create adversarial relationships, as the bulk of the causes of low productivity belong to the system and thus lie beyond the power of the work force.
- Eliminate work quotas, management by objective, management by numerical goals. Substitute leadership.
- Remove barriers that rob people ... of pride of workmanship
- Institute a vigorous program of education and self-improvement for everyone
- Put everybody in the [organization] to work to accomplish the transformation.

Methods of Problem Solving

Steps in all the various TQM models:

- select a problem(s),
- diagnose the problem(s),
- suggest the solution(s),
- and hold the gain(s).

Problem Solving

- Coate(1990) espouses a 10-step problem-solving process:
 1. **Identify** and select the most important **opportunities** for improvement. Start with critical processes. Select team members and empower them to make improvements.
 2. Determine the **key customers** of the highlighted processes or services. Survey the customers, and analyze survey data
 3. Select the most important issue and write a clear issue statement
 4. Identify and flowchart the key process or processes.
 5. Agree on which aspects of your performance you want to measure and, with your customers, set goals for continuous improvement in meeting or exceeding their expectations. To do this the teams must realistically evaluate current performance and set obtainable goals for improvement.

Problem Solving

5. Begin to explore probable causes of the problems and barriers to improvement.
6. Gather data on the probable causes. The information collected gives the team a benchmark against which to measure its future progress.
7. Evaluate the data and show in "pictures"-charts and graphs.
8. Brainstorm and develop permanent solutions. Implement solutions; monitor their performance; adopt them if they work.
9. If the problem is solved, standardize the fixes as normal operating procedures.

The Basic Principles of TQM As Applied to Higher Education

- **Delight the customer**: best at what matters most to customers, and this changes over time. The aim is to prevent poor-quality services from being produced or delivered in the first place by focusing on processes and emphasising prevention rather than cure.
- **People-based management**: Knowing what to do, how to do it, and getting feedback on performance is one way of encouraging people to take responsibility for the quality of their work.

Basic Principles of TQM

- **Continuous improvement**: incremental change, not major breakthroughs. For the individual lecturer, enhancement is about improving their students' work based on the premise that they want their students to do well.
- **Management by fact**: Knowing the current performance levels of the products or services in the customers' hands is the first stage of being able to improve.
From this perspective academic quality is a „way of describing how well the learning opportunities available to students help them to achieve their award. It is about making sure that appropriate and effective teaching, support, assessment and learning opportunities are provided for them”

Student as Customer

- There is considerable debate in the literature regarding perceived **positive** and **negative** aspects of the “student as customer” concept, drawing upon both general argumentation and empirical studies

Student as Customer

- students increasingly are paying the costs of their university education. This makes the student *the customer* in the higher education process
- This (may) turn education into an industry like any other, and the primary purpose of an industry is to satisfy its customers.

Student as Customer

- Some authors (Clayson, Haley) suggest (withouth empirical evidence):
 - students are seeking the easiest way to obtain a qualification
 - If the teaching staff give objective grades based on assessed performance, the student-customer will exercise their legitimate right as a consumer and will complain.
 - educators have come under pressure to reduce academic standards, to provide teaching materials in a style which not always reach an appropriate academic standards, and to give inflated grades for mediocre work
 - failure to achieve desired assessment outcomes should be blamed on the educator

Student as Customer

- Marsh and Roche (2000) suggested that the outcome above presented is **merely a popular myth**. and, there is a positive association between student workload and student evaluation of teaching

Conclusion

- students are paying an increasing proportion of the costs of higher education in several countries
- higher education is still very largely funded by governments out of general taxation
- higher education institutions must not seek to serve only the interests of students to the exclusion of other stakeholder groups.

Conclusion

- There is little evidence that students are sufficiently short-sighted as to prefer a university education that is built around easily-won qualifications and a cheerful approach to customer service.
- The evidence suggests that students have a reasonably discerning approach to higher education, believe that hard work is necessary to achieve worthwhile results, and do not penalise educators who insist on hard work and objective assessment of performance.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

ldimen@uab.ro

nludusan@uab.ro