Total Quality Service (TQS) As Perceived by the Employees In SMEs

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ABSTRACT

The present study deals with Total Quality Service (TQS) of the employees working in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in Tiruchirappalli District, TamilNadu, India. Respondent’s personal profile like age, community, educational qualification, gender, marital status, monthly income and occupation are treated as independent variables; customer, process, prevention, compensation, decision making and feedback are considered as dependent variables of the study. A sample of 125 respondents from 13 SMEs was taken up for the present study. Eight hypotheses have been formulated and examined by using T-test, ANOVA, Chi-square and Correlation. The findings show that there are no significant variance among the age and occupation of the respondents, but there are significant relationship among the educational qualification and monthly income of the respondents. The results indicate that the factors focusing on TQS like customer, process, prevention, compensation, decision making and feedback of the employees have been playing an important role in the organizational success. The authors have studied many attributes of employees from the study conducted and it is a useful guide to frame polices for employees betterment and development of the country in the field of Total Quality Management (TQM) in general, Total Quality Service (TQS) in particular.

Keywords: Total Quality Service (TQS), Total Quality Management (TQM), Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs).

INTRODUCTION

Quality is achieving the target operational goals. It can also be interpreted as customers expressed and implied requirements. Quality consists of: the entirety of features and characteristics of a product or service that bears on its ability to meet a stated or implied needs; fitness for use; and conformance to requirement.

The purpose of quality is to provide the consumer with an appropriate tender with prohibited processes while ensuring that this improvement does not translate into additional costs. It is achievable to recover a huge number of problems at a low cost. However, the closer we get to perfection, the higher the costs we reach.

TQM refers to execution of a production plan that is based on a quality process that involves all employees, i.e. a widespread approach by which company uses the whole thing to gratify its beneficiary in provisions of quality, cost and deadline. A quality spirit must be developed and shared by all in order for total quality management to succeed.

RELATED LITERATURE

Calvo-Mora et al., (2014) studied the relationships between soft-hard TQM factors and key business results. TQM is a primary management values which is based on a combination of societal and technological factors that must be carried out for a reference framework, such as one in the EFQM model. The findings of the work empirically identify three dimensions that correspond to the soft-hard TQM factors (managing the human resources, strategic management and resources and processes management). In addition it also shows how these proportions develop a management system which has a significant effect on key business results.

Herzallah et al., (2014) examined the relationship between TQM practices, feasible strategies, leadership and firm performance in the Palestinian economy. Results show that TQM practices have an
oblique, positive and significant relationship with financial performance throughout competitive strategies. In addition to it, a positive relationship was observed between competitive strategies and financial performance. The findings might assist managers to execute TQM practices in order to efficiently allocate resources and improve financial performance.

**Bon and Mustafa, (2013)** reviewed the literature on the relationship linking TQM and originality in services organizations, and developed research theoretical framework and initial conceptual model. The hypothesized and conceptualized relationship between TQM practices and innovation model comprises of top management commitment, leadership, involvement of employees, employee empowerment, focus on customer, training, analysis of information, and continuous improvement as independent variable; and radical/incremental product innovation, radical/incremental process innovation, administrative and marketing innovation as dependent variables.

**Calvo-Mora Schmidt et al., (2013)** investigated the existence of soft and hard TQM factors in the EFQM quality model and their impact on key business results. The findings suggests that (1) the factorial analysis combines the EFQM's five facilitating criterion in three factors: soft factors, managing the strategy of partnership and resources and process management; (2) the regression technique spots out the authority of the hard factors (managing the strategy of partnership and resources and process management) on the key business results and points out the authority of soft factors on the outcome is formed through the mediation of the hard factors of TQM.

**Abdullah and Jose, (2012)** investigated the relationship between the practices of soft and hard quality management, and to examine the direct and indirect possessions of soft and hard aspects on firm performance. The findings shows that soft aspects have a encouraging influence on hard aspects; hard aspects has a straight effect on performance and soft aspects have straight and not direct effects on performance. Accordingly, hard aspects act as a mediating variable between soft aspects performance.

**Singh, (2011)** analyzed the interaction of factors for success of TQM in SMEs aimed to identify and develop the structural relationship among different factors for success of TQM in SMEs. In whole, 11 factors have been identified for successful implementation of TQM. The findings concluded that the top management commitment, training employees and empowerment of employees, supplier development and coordination between sessions are found to be the most important factors for implementation of TQM, whereas process management, customer satisfaction, product/service design and quality are observed as dependent variables.

**PROBLEM AND OBJECTIVES**

The problem of the study is to find out the perception of employees on Total Quality Service working in selective SMEs in Tiruchirappalli District, TamilNadu, India. This study is analyzing the employee’s perception on certain parameters. The formulated objectives of the study are as follows:

- To study the Total Quality Service (TQS) as perceived by the employees in select SMEs in the study area.
- To study the factors influencing on selected independent variables of TQS.
- To study the association between the six major factors determining TQS.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The authors adopted descriptive research design and used survey method. This research is focused on the employees of SMEs in the study area. The universe of study comprises of more than 3000 employees working in 100 SMEs which have been gathered from TIDITSSIA, Tiruchirappalli. Out of 100 SMEs, 13 SMEs were selected purposively. 125 employees were taken as the sample size (i.e., 50% of the sample) for the present study using Purposive Simple Random Sampling Technique.

Interview Schedule was designed keeping the objectives of the study. The research tool i.e., interview schedule is divided into 2 parts. Part - I deals with Personal Profile of the Employees and Part - II deals with Measurement of Total Quality Services (TQS).

In order to give the overall perceptive of employees on TQS in their SMEs, each question is given under this rating as ‘1’ indicates an absolutely disagree, ‘2’ indicates strongly disagree, ‘3’ indicates slightly disagree, ‘4’ indicates neither disagree nor agree, ‘5’ indicates slightly agree, ‘6’ indicates strongly agree and ‘7’ indicates absolutely agree.
Any measuring instrument is valid when it measures most accurately the objects or individuals and their characteristics. As far as the present study is concerned the research tool adopted for the study was found to be highly reliable and valid.

The present study employs both primary and secondary data for analysis. The primary data was obtained using interview schedule. The tool consists of personal profile of the employees. The secondary data for the present study is based on the previous studies.

**Hypotheses, Test and Results**

**Hypothesis - 1**
There will be no significant difference between gender and six major factors focusing on TQS (customer, process, prevention, compensation, decision making and feedback) of the respondents.

From the data analysis presented in the table 1 (refer appendix), there are significant difference between gender in terms of major factors focusing on the process, compensation, decision making, feedback and overall TQS of the respondents of the study. There are no significant difference between customer and prevention and TQS of the respondents of the study. However, by considering the overall six major factors focusing on TQS of the respondents, there are significant difference between the gender and six major factors focusing on TQS of the respondents of the study. Hence, the formulated null-hypothesis-1 is rejected and overall concluded that “there are significant difference between gender and six major factors focusing on TQS of the respondents” of the study area.

**Hypothesis - 2**
There will be no significant difference between marital status and TQS (customer, process, prevention, compensation, decision making and feedback) of the respondents.

From the data analysis presented in the table 2 (refer appendix), there are no significant differences between the independent factor (marital status) and the dependent factors (six major factors focusing on TQS) of the respondents of the study. Hence, the formulated null-hypothesis-2 is accepted and retained as it is and overall concluded that “there are no significant difference between marital status and TQS of the respondents” of the study area.

**Hypothesis - 3**
There will be no significant variance between age and TQS (customer, process, prevention, compensation, decision making and feedback) of the respondents.

From the data analysis presented in the table 3 (refer appendix), there are no significant variance between customer, process, prevention, compensation, decision making, feedback and overall TQS of the respondents of the study. Hence, the formulated null-hypothesis-4 is accepted and retained as it is and overall concluded that “there are no significant variance between age and TQS of the respondents” of the study area.

**Hypothesis - 4**
There will be no significant variance between educational qualification and TQS (customer, process, prevention, compensation, decision making and feedback) of the respondents.

From the data analysis presented in the table 4 (refer appendix), there are significant variance with respect to factors focusing on customer, process, prevention, decision making, feedback and overall TQS of the respondents of the study. Hence, the formulated null-hypothesis-6 is rejected and overall concluded that “there are significant variance between educational qualification and TQS of the respondents” of the study area.

**Hypothesis - 5**
There will be no significant variance between occupation and TQS (customer, process, prevention, compensation, decision making and feedback) of the respondents.

From the data analysis presented in the table 5 (refer appendix), there are significant variance between prevention, decision making and overall TQS of the respondents of the study. There are no significant variances between customer, process, compensation, feedback and overall TQS of the
respondents of the study. However, by considering the overall six major factors focusing on TQS of the respondents, there are no significant variance between the occupation and TQS of the respondents of the study. Hence, the formulated null-hypothesis-7 is accepted and retained as it is and overall concluded that “there are no significant variance between the occupation and TQS of the respondents” of the study area.

Hypothesis - 6
There will be no significant variance between monthly income and TQS (customer, process, prevention, compensation, decision making and feedback) of the respondents.

From the data analysis presented in the table 6 (refer appendix), there are significant variance between customer, process, prevention, compensation, decision making, feedback and overall TQS of the respondents of the study. Hence, the formulated null-hypothesis-8 is rejected and overall concluded that “there are significant variance between the monthly income and TQS of the respondents” of the study area.

Hypothesis - 7
There will be no significant association between community and factors determining TQS (customer, process, prevention, compensation, decision making and feedback) of the respondents.

From the data analysis presented in the table 7, there are significant association between customer, process, prevention, decision making, feedback and overall TQS of the study area. However, by considering the overall six major factors focusing on TQS of the respondents, there are significant association between community and factors determining TQs of the respondents. Hence, the formulated null-hypothesis-9 is rejected and overall concluded that “there are significant association between community and factors determining TQS of the respondents” of the study area.

Hypothesis - 8
There will be no significant relationship between six major factors focusing on TQS (customer, process, prevention, compensation, decision making and feedback) of the respondents.

From the data analysis presented in the table 8, there are significant relationships between customer, process, prevention, compensation, decision making, feedback and overall TQS of the respondents of the study. Hence, the formulated null-hypothesis-11 is rejected and overall concluded that “there are significant relationship between six major factors focusing on TQS of the respondents” of the study area.

GENERAL FINDINGS
- Fifty three percentages of employees is in the age group up to 25 years and the least count is eighteen percentages of employees in the age of group of 36 years and above.
- Ninety percentages of employees are male in SMEs sector.
- Seventy percentages of employees are belonging to BC community.
- Forty two percentages of employees got secondary education and fifty six percentages of employees are unmarried.
- Ninety four percentages of employees are working as a labour/worker in the SMEs.
- Forty four percentages of employees are earning Rs. 40,000 and above as their monthly salary.

HYPOTHESES RELATED FINDINGS
- There is no significant difference between gender in terms of factors focusing on customer and prevention.
- There is no significant difference between the marital status and the six major factors focusing on TQS.
- There is no significant variance between age and the six major factors focusing on TQS.
- There is significant variance between educational qualification and TQS with respect to all the six factors.
There is significant variance between occupation and TQS with respect to factors focusing on prevention and decision making.

There is significant variance between monthly income and TQS with respect to all the dependent variables.

There is significant association between community and factors determining TQS with respect to factors focusing on customer, process, prevention, decision making, feedback and overall TQS. But the variable compensation is not associating with TQS as it is significant with more than its calculated value.

There is significant relationship between the six major factors focusing on TQS.

SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS
The following suggestions are pointed out to improve the TQS of employees in SMEs.

- Set productive capacity to match quantity of work of employees with their work ability.
- Automated labour tasks should be provided to the employees to reduce loss of time and energy.
- SMEs should upgrade their equipment and system of working for better Quality Service.
- Training of employees should be considered as a mandatory factor to develop the skills of the employees.
- Leverage less-skill employees through expert systems.
- Service process redesign is highly recommended.
- Establishing an environment with service is challengeable, recognized and rewarded and poor service is rectified.
- Regularly meeting the employees to discuss on service elements.
- Ensure that the staffs feel that they are component of the organization success.
- The SMEs should do things regularly to improve the workplace, by adhering to housekeeping practices.

In considering the important contribution of SMEs, research work is framed to recognize the current level of TQS implementation among SMEs and large companies. This research has pointed out the areas lacking in implementation in the TQS programme. It is suggested that further research to be carried out on those organizations that are willing to participate in the development of a suitable framework for SMEs. The study reveals sources and attributes of employees which should be used as a guide to frame polices for employees betterment.

REFERENCES


