

Impact of Top Management Commitment on Implementation of Total Quality Management in an Organization.

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ABSTRACT

Adoption of any management strategy needs a framework as a blue print for its implementation and usually driven by the management. Therefore, this paper is aimed at presenting the role of top management commitment on implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM). This management philosophy is mainly concerned with continuous improvement in an organization, from high level strategic planning and decision-making to detailed execution of work elements on every level of the organization. An investigatory survey research approach (ISRA) method was adopted for the quantitative and qualitative data collection and collation from Shirror Hydroelectric Power Plant PLC. of Nigeria. It was ascertained that top/middle management commitment is a fundamental factor to be considered by an organization to implementation TQM.

(Keywords: TQM, top/middle management, commitment, leadership, organization, performance)

INTRODUCTION

Over three decades ago, researchers such as Crosby (1979), Ishikawa (1985), Saraph *et al.* (1989), Juran and Gryna (1993), Deming (1994), Flynn *et al.* (1995), and Ahire *et al.* (1996) had developed certain propositions in the field of TQM, which had gained significant acceptance throughout the world. Their insights provided a good understanding of the TQM philosophy, principles, and practices. Therefore, from their research, TQM is then defined as: A management philosophy for continuously improving overall business performance based on leadership,

supplier quality management, vision and plan statement, evaluation, process control and improvement, product design, quality system improvement, employee participation, recognition and reward, education and training, and customer focus. The management must keep in mind the TQM way of thinking when managing a company.

Hackman and Wageman (1995) presented that TQM strategy is rooted on four related assumptions:

- (i .) Quality is less costly and essential to long-term organizational survival.
- (ii .) People naturally care about the quality and have instinctive drive for precision, beauty and perfection.
- (iii .) Organizations are systems of interdependent parts and the problem is to face invariably cross-traditional functional lines.
- (iv .) Senior management creates the organizational systems and the employees' work effectiveness is a direct function of the quality of the system.

According to Hackman and Wageman (1995), TQM has both 'hard' and 'soft' sides. However, McKenna and Beech, (2002) and Wilkinson (1999) argued for greater emphasis on the soft aspects of TQM.

The 'hard' side includes methodologies and tools, such as statistical process control (SPC) and the basic quality management tools, respectively.

However the 'soft' side of TQM is related to human recourse issues and cultural changes (Wilkinson, 1999).

Sila and Ebrahimpour (2002) found that the following factors were most frequently addressed in the study of TQM and these are referred to as the 'soft' aspect of TQM:

- (i .) Customer focus and satisfaction
- (ii .) Employee training
- (iii .) Leadership and top management commitment
- (iv .) Teamwork
- (v .) Employee involvement
- (vi .) Continuous improvements and innovation
- (vii .) Quality information and performance measurements.

According to Martand (2008) for a successful implementation of TQM depends upon the following key factors:

- (i) Training
- (ii) Bench marking
- (iii) Customer satisfaction survey
- (iv) Recognition and rewards
- (v) Management commitment

The objective of this paper is to discuss the role of Top/Middle Management commitment in implementation of TQM in an organization focusing on their leadership and participation, learn new strategy and implement, Empowerment of Employees and purist of long term benefit.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

An investigatory survey research approach (ISRA) method was adopted for the quantitative and qualitative data collection and collation. This achieved through a well structure Questionnaires and interview were used to obtain first-hand information from the Top/Middle Management of

Shirror Hydroelectric (SHE) Power Plant. The questionnaires contained multiple choice questions with a range of possible answers which were designed to reflect different shades of opinion. Open-ended questions, which allow respondents (the Top/Middle Management) to express their views in a more precise manner, were employed. These questions were measured on a five point Likert scale. Respondents were asked to evaluate the practice their firms usually adopted and tick one appropriate rating scale. The response were given a number from 5 (Absolutely Agree), 4 (Agree), 3(Undecided), 2(Disagree) and 1(Absolutely Disagree). The results are shown on Figures 1 to 4.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The participation of Top/Middle management at Shirror Hydroelectric Power Plc, Nigeria were found to produce the following results of the field survey are presented in Figure 1 to 4, showing the percentage responses.

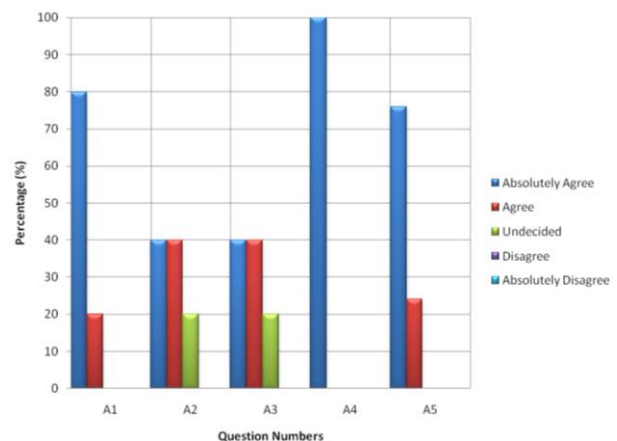


Figure 1: Percentage Responses of Top/Middle Management on Leadership & TQM.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The results of Figure 1 shows that the Top/Middle management of SHE, plc absolutely agreed that they were actively involved in quality management, in its concept and skills, encouraged employee involvement in quality management, discussed quality related issues and pursued long term success of the organization.

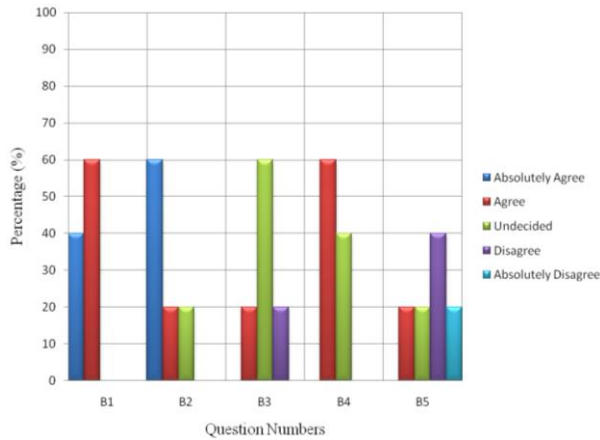


Figure 2: Percentage Responses of Top/Middle Management on Supplier Quality.

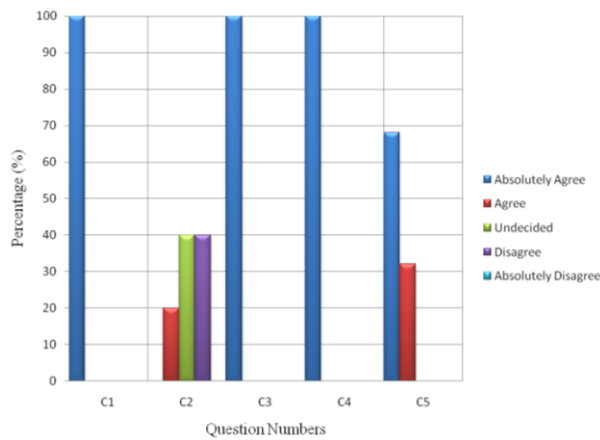


Figure 3: Percentage Responses of Top/Middle Management on Vision and Mission Statement.

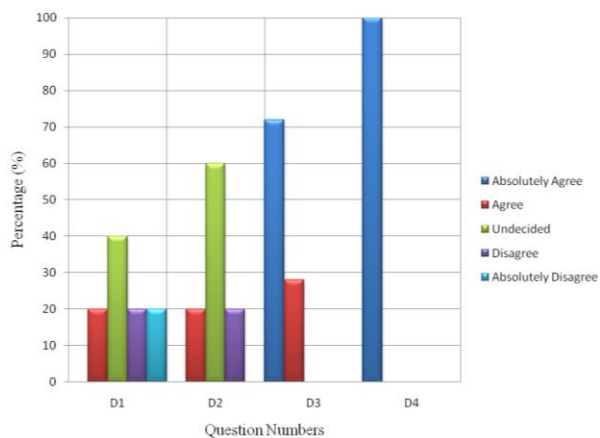


Figure 4: Percentage Responses of Top/Middle Management on Evaluation of Performance.

This enhanced management decision and organizational strategic management system on leadership of the organization. In addition, the results as plotted on Figure 2, showed that 40% of the management of SHE, Plc absolutely agreed that product quality was considered when selecting suppliers' while 60% of them only agree. It was also observed from Figure 2 that the management of the firm always participated in supplies' activities related to quality and they were undecided about suppliers' information and feedback on suppliers' performance; and the Top/Middle management disagree on regularly conducting supplier quality audit.

Figure 3 indicated that all the management of SHE, Plc absolutely agree that the company has clear long term vision and mission statement, quality policy detail goal and effective quality improvement plans. While 40% of the management staff of SHE, Plc were undecided and disagree on short term business performance plan. This showed that the firm had a well organized quality improvement plan for sustainable development of the organization.

The management of SHE, PLC. were undecided on the company to carryout regular quality audits and auditing of their various business strategies as represented on Figure 4. The management absolutely agreed that their firm used quality related data to evaluate performance of all departments.

CONCLUSIONS

It was found that management commitment is the first step and prerequisite for an organization to implementation TQM. It is the responsibility of the Top/Middle Management of any organization to take the initiative for implementation of TQM. Some researchers suggest the adoption of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis among the strategic tool for planning in an organizational management. However for successful implementation of TQM, the Top/Middle management need to play the following roles:

- (i) Improve their managerial and leadership abilities through continuous learning.
- (ii) Top managers must have profound knowledge of TQM, active participation

and more enthusiasm than their employees.

- (iii) Pursue long-term business success instead of short-term benefits.
- (iv) Empower employees to solve various problems and should rely on employees wholeheartedly
- (v) Encourage and serve as role model to the co-workers.
- (vi) Evaluation the organizational productivity through key performance indicator (KPI).

Finally for TQM to be effected in its entirety it is imperative that the Top/Middle management should be committed to empower the employees by delegating sufficient authority for them to make both individual and collective decision. However, employees need to be trained in order to have the required skills and knowledge.

When employees are sufficiently empowered through training it will definitely motivate them and will eventually lead to job satisfaction. There is need for the management to develop and communicate definitions in a clear terms for the understanding of the employee otherwise employees may develop their definitions and it may bring about undesirable outcome for the organization. Therefore Management must be on track for success of the organization in all its ramifications.

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SUGGESTED CITATION

Abolarin, M.S., A.A. Abdullahi, O. Adedipe, and T.S. Abdulrahman. 2013. "Impact of Top Management Commitment on Implementation of Total Quality Management in an Organization". *Pacific Journal of Science and Technology*. 14(2):263-267.

 [Pacific Journal of Science and Technology](http://www.akamaiuniversity.us/PJST.htm)