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The motivation and the efficient communication both are the essential pillar within the building of the TQM (Total Quality Management) system within the Macedonian higher education institutions

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Abstract

This paper suggests a new methodology for building management teams in designing and implementing the TQM (Total Quality Management) system within the Macedonian higher educational institutions with all the advantages and disadvantages as well as its application in the practice. What is actually needed to create the top management in the Macedonian higher educational institutions is establishing management teams in order to embrace the changes that are about to entwine the flow of market operations in which quality education is a major prerequisite of winning clients and all interested parties. The rules of teamwork concerning the respect of a person, character, experience and knowledge will lead to a relaxed atmosphere, constructive conflict, creative tension and enthusiasm. This will provide a new access to a quality primary education and will also become embedded in each segment of the operation within the higher institutions, thus becoming able to introduce many new approaches that have not been reached so far.

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1. Introduction

Quality management is based on a team work but only with the proper skills and expertise everyone could become creative and contribute to the quality increase and the organization outcomes as well. Learning itself strengthens the team spirit because knowledge leads to understanding, trust and behavioral culture at work. Some individuals and experts could not affect the quality improvement if in case they do not follow the remaining ones. Investment into technology, equipment and process changes are important, but unfortunately they do not guarantee the work development and the being placed afore the rivals, without adequate investment and employees' contentment. The most developed countries base their strategy of development of the industry to knowledge and empowering.

2. Theoretical foundation and related literature

Modern organizations (Harung, 1996) are task-based organizations, while the dynamic competitive surrounding is imposing transition within the organizations that is value- based. The organization that is task-based is featured as an imperative and controlling hierarchy where a minor number of higher level managers do the decision making and develop the organizational policy. In those organizations the employees are getting promoted only if their job is done in a prescribed standard way. On the other hand, the value-based organization has an open frame for developing other values.

Evans (2003) considers that there is a new commercial reality occurring named as economy of knowledge that is actually changing the value concept. If the organization is striving to success, it is necessary to create a recipe for knowledge in order to gain a sustainable development. Further on, it is said that the intellectual capital is the future of all activities and it is the only means that could measure the potential energy of each organization and without investing into the intellectual capital there are neither innovations nor company's development. The knowledge that the organization deals with is mostly focused into the employees' heads.

The researches done in most of 700 appointed American companies have shown that 12% of the corporate skills are sent into the electronic database, 20% in the electronic documents and 43% into the employees' heads. The fact that shows that even 70% of the complete adopted skills is acquired through informal learning surroundings, should not be neglected. The corporative culture exists as a solid ground through which the positive climate created conditions for permanent learning, as of Smilevski (2000).

Motivation is not a subject of standardizing because each employee is non-standardized individual. Condo (1995) claims that it's hard to transfer the Japanese management style in other countries and different cultures. It takes a great deal of effort, time and creativity to implement the experiences from the developed countries within our country, all that because of our culture, tradition and people's characters. On the other hand, there are some mutual, generally accepted human factors that are to be the bases from working motivation. Motivation is attraction and not a pressuring in terms of achieving goals. The employees' expectations are growing regardless of the gained results of the organization. As for the employees to adjust their expectations with the results of the educational institution, it is necessary to be in track with its goals and to be involved for realization of them as well. Motivation is a result of a mutual action among employees and the condition (Robbins and Couter, 2005).

Teamwork can be an important factor that would initiate the change of organizational culture. The introduction of teamwork in building TQM (Total Quality Management) systems within the educational institutions is affiliated with emphasis on team learning. The educational process is rather long and applies to all employees regarding their work. It takes at least 70% of the employees to master the way of achieving quality in order to obtain the goal. The first stage is gaining additional knowledge followed by a change of attitude, change of the relationship of the individual with the surrounding environment as well as one of the team. Thus, it will result in a change of the attitude of the entire organization, which is also known as learning organization (Cepujnoska, 1993). The development of team work requires patience and nourishment of long-term processes in other to obtain long-term results, while top management's desire for quick results and forcing them suffocates the teamwork. All these leads to dissatisfaction among the team members who have conscientiously and responsibly accepted the task (James, 1996).

The ability to work creatively hence giving professional contribution as well as respect for personal opinion and attitudes, feeling of involvement in the management of the educational institution, the common spirit to succeed – all these are elements of a company culture and teamwork that will contribute to the developing of mutual trust and respect, commitment, expansiveness, patience and loyalty to one another and loyalty towards the company, according to Druskat and Wolf (1998). The strategic management in educational institutions should include their own human resources by the means of good will and persistence by forming teams from all professional profiles. Furthermore, by integrating their knowledge in order to achieve full conduct of quality in all business processes at the lowest cost of operation thus preventing possible complaints and eliminating the problems as well as removing the possible reasons which will be solved in a timely manner. The common fear of change and resistance are quickly overcome by a strong desire of changing the current situation by implementing a new approach to the quality education. This can be accomplished by applying the new philosophy of Total Quality Management (TQM) and application of the proposed methodology for building management teams in the Macedonian educational institutions (Mitreva and Filiposki, 2012).

3. Methodology

3.1. Objectives of the research

This paper presents an analysis in ten of the Macedonian higher educational institutions (Mitreva, 2010) regarding the measuring of the employees' contentment, the manners of communication and building a business climate. In terms of assessing the success of an institution, one of the parameters that constitute criteria for the results is leadership, which means behavior and measures taken by the top management in terms of inspiration, support and promotion of the TQM (Total Quality Management) culture.

3.2. Description of the instrument

A The most objective manner of measuring goes through anonymous questionnaire because it gives the real picture of the situation, while discussing with each employee or a group that deals with the same responsibilities creates a fear and insecurity to the employees to express their own working (dis) satisfaction. The data received from the research are processed with an adequate mathematical - statistical methods. In this regard, the Pareto analysis was used for frequency as well as for analysis in order to calculate the involvement of certain answers in percentages.

4. Results

As of the examinations here are the results:

- 50% of the researched higher educational institutions have responded that they make a detailed conversation with each employee and therefore they measure their contentment;
- 30% responded that the contentment is measured by making conversation on a group level;
- 10%, of them do not evaluate the contentment of the employees;
- 10%, of them evaluate the contentment by an anonymous questionnaire which is the most realistic method.

Bearing in mind the current conditions in Macedonia, it is clear that the top management should act in terms of increased respect and motivation of the employees and their deployment to proper positions that respond to their qualifications and their continuing promotion and the knowledge that would increase the content of the employees.

Whether there is a loyalty by to employees towards the higher educational institutions, here are the results:

- 50% of the examined higher educational institutions claim that there is a partial loyalty, which is due to the lack of effort of the managers to build up clear, accurate and decent relations with the employees as well as the professional relation towards the job, which is the base for establishing trust within the business processes. Therefore it points out that in those institutions the management and the existing of the organization itself is brought up as an issue;

- of the examined higher educational institutions 20% claim that there is no loyalty by the employees towards the institution;
- 30% of them claim that there is a loyalty.

In which manner does the higher educational institution care about the employees?

Whether there is an effective dialog with the employees and what the manner of communication within an educational institution is, here are the results:

- 10% of the educational institutions claim that there is a vertical and horizontal communication within their institutions that helps managers to evaluate the efficiency of their downwards communications and allows them to foresee their organizational issues;
- 90% claim that there is a formal communication and it goes from the top to downwards which shows the “tough” relation of the top management, without bearing the necessity for an effective upward communication, no need to hear others’ suggestions and the desires to improve the business processes in general.

All of this results as a partial loyalty by the employees towards the higher educational institutions, which is due to the lack of managers’ effort to build up clear, accurate and decent relations with the employees as well as to get a professional relation towards the work, which is defined as a base for establishing trust into the educational processes.

Speaking of educational institutions that have already gotten a build up quality system, they actually deal with procedures and manuals to realize business processes. Job descriptions and tasks are actually documents through which the top management communicates with the employees. Organizational culture as a value-system through downward communicating is being transferred to the employees and with the opposite communicating the top management seeks to hear the vox populi and gain the source, processed and synthesized data on the job. While the horizontal communication allows an exchange of information among the employees to a same level into the hierarchy, it is necessary for the coordination of the business processes as well.

The behavior of the leadership in ten of the Macedonian higher educational institutions was seen through the analysis of the way in which the top management creates a work environment in their institution. The following data were obtained:

- 50% reported that a working environment is built with strict labor discipline;
- 20% use motivation factor in building good working atmosphere;
- 20% reported presence of great trust and respect, as well as lack of fear in taking their own opinion which allows qualitative relations;
- 10% reported that a working environment is built with oversight of the employees.

Ensuring quality in the Macedonian higher educational institutions demands involvement of the top management and the correct choice of teams to solve the problems and improve the business processes.

The main problem in the Macedonian higher educational institutions is that managers believe that they do not need the training programs and thanks to their knowledge and skills are the positions to which they currently are set. The ability to participate in such programs is considered to be based upon a political background or doubt which arises from the credibility of the program.

On the question how the management team functions or what is the quality of the teamwork in regard to the management levels, the following data is obtained. The data indicates the malfunctioning of the management teams because:

- 80% of them believe that the management teams work with major problems;
- 10% of them believe that problems arise, but they can be successfully resolved;
- 10% of them responded that the teams are not successful.

The distribution of the results indicates malfunctioning of the teams in the surveyed institutions, because almost 90% of cases indicate that problems are identified and resolved in accordance with the current possibilities. The problem in the Macedonian higher educational institutions when it comes to employee involvement and team work is twofold:

- having a problem with our mentality, which is emphasized individualism and
- having a problem distinguishing between old habits and participation in solving problems, improvements and innovations.

Barriers in the work of management teams are different from team to team, but the barrier is crucial psychological moment, which can be linked to co-operation, work demotivation, vanity, inadequate financial support, lack of interest for continuous learning and improvement, or inadequate program for training.

5. Discussions

The key to successful teamwork is in readiness for cooperation within the team. When the team members share the same vision and are motivated to achieve, in most cases they are very cooperative and it leads to success. What is necessary for successful teamwork is support of all employees and readiness to cooperate with other teams.

Collaboration in a mature business team is of great importance for the interaction between the team members.

Based on the data we can see a lack of successful management teams that are real business potential, which would act positively on the improvement of the service quality. The survey showed poor communication between members of management teams and employees, non-existence of a high degree of trust and respect within the team and their relationship to employees which leads to poor results.

If between the members of management teams a mutual trust and respect exists, the following data are obtained:

In 90% of the examined institutions there is no trust and respect and it is seen through inaction activities to improve processes. These management teams follow the hierarchical chain to achieve the targets. The survey revealed poor communication between members of management teams and staff, low levels of trust and respect as the teams themselves and in their relationship with employees.

Examining how managers enjoy the confidence of employees the following findings are obtained:

Lack of confidence in 90% of the Macedonian higher educational institutions refers to the distance between the management teams of employees which again leads to constant conflicts and bad functioning of the management.

Between the managers and employees only in 10% of the companies have a positive feedback, because the success of the management teams depends on the trust and the engagement of both employees and managers. It is also necessary to make further efforts to build good business relationships with the employees.

The results showed that 10% of the respondents have reported that the managers enjoy the confidence of the employees as a result to their clear, consistent and honest relationship towards the employees.

This can be accomplished by applying the new philosophy of Total Quality Management (TQM) and application of the proposed methodology for building management teams within the Macedonian higher educational institutions.

6. Methodology for building management teams for designing and implementation of the TQM system within the Macedonian higher educational institutions

The modern interpretation of the importance of the quality system for the staff in order to achieve the objectives of the institution is presented through coordination between the systems and the employees. The capability of the top management to unite, motivate and to organize the employees will depend on the ability and the managerial skills.

Building management teams in solving problems is achieved through incorporation, authorization and encouragement of the employees in quality improvement as well as achieving effective dialogue with the employees by constructing an effective communication system. When a top management makes a decision to implement reengineering within the institution, the team approach in taking steps must be considered. It bears full responsibility for the execution of the reengineering business processes without having direct control over the employees who perform work because they become autonomous in their activities. The communication between the leader and the employees should provide a new working environment in order to improve their performance in the business and it will be accomplished only by a process of continuous learning. In addition, the employees must be trained and motivated to learn from the others, as well as to agree on updating their knowledge and experiences.

The role of management has great impact upon the staff planning which is based upon the policy and strategy of the institutions and presents a part of the strategic planning. In the process of building the managerial teams, the personnel revisions should be developed in such way to display the personnel's potential and its performance, but also to display the need of professional personnel of the organization. The hiring of new staff, the development of

their career, and their active involvement in the team work should be defined in a way to both enable and stimulate competence, creativity and involvement in the problem solving as well as decision making.

A special task in the development of staff is coordination of both the individual and team objectives derived from the combining of the strategic and operational tasks with the personal goals of each employee. The team should not be a place of suffocation of the individual initiatives or where they are adopted on behalf of the leader of the team. At the same time, the method of operation must allow an easy flow of decision making due to the excessive individualism, exaggerated expectations, lack of flexibility, as well as achieving a consensus in building attitudes.

6.1. Incorporation, authorization and encouragement of the employees in order to improve the quality of the educational process

The basic idea of use of the potential of the human resources presents a motivated involvement of the employees in creating solutions to problems and decision making. This strategy is based upon the logic that all employees are familiar with the problems. Hence, new and wider improvement opportunities are being created. The employees have the best possible position of finding the solution or the decision for improvement, especially if they are carriers of the improvement process. The incorporation, of the employees within the quality improvement presents a process where they are authorized or encouraged on behalf of the managers in order to solve the problems and reach decisions suitable to their institutional level (Prodanovska and Mitreva, 2012). This applies primarily to:

- problem solving and decision making for the realization of the operational activities within the scope of work, in accordance with established rules and procedures;
- reaching decisions and / or proposing improvements or innovations in the activities of the process that they carry or the performance results;
- participation in defining the strategy of the institution.

Unlike the ruling institution confronting atmosphere where every idea is intentionally cut in the root, there is a need of organization which is ruled by an innovational climate of cooperation and communication, because even though every idea presents a potential for improvement or innovation it still generates new ideas. The participation of employees in building a TQM system in an organization can be both individual and collective.

The methodology in building managerial teams for designing and implementation of TQM system includes the establishment of (Mitreva, 2010):

1. Quality Board;
2. Process quality teams;
3. Control (field) teams for quality;
4. Quality workshops;
5. Involvement of all employees.

The service or quality board is responsible for all aspects of the TQM strategy in an institution. The work of this committee will largely depend on the design and the implementation of the TQM system. This committee is formed by the manager of the institution with a special declaration. The structure of the board of managers includes managers from all organizational units by default. The structure of the board quality will:

- present the meaning and importance of the quality of overall performance;
- provide a permanent link between the perpetrators and management;
- meet at least once a month to see the effects of implementation.

Responsibilities of the Board are:

- provision of a strategic guidance;
- adoption of the plans for the implementation of the TQM strategy for each area;
- establishment and evaluation of procedural teams (process owners);
- evaluation and revision plans for quality improvement.

The managerial board is led by management representative for quality. The work of the board can come to barriers, crises and risks. The most common barriers that undermine the functioning of the quality system are: unrealized needs, bad decisions, vaguely defined roles, interpersonal conflicts, poor leadership, lack of feedback or information, inadequate system of remuneration, lack of confidence within the team and being not prepared for changes. The core barrier is a psychological matter which can be linked to cooperation, work demotivation, vanity,

and inadequate financial support, as well as lack of interest for continuous learning and improvement, or inadequate training program. These barriers are omnipresent and require coordination through meetings where the employees are present in person. Furthermore, these meetings allow freedom of creation, define group norms, strengthen the sense of belonging, loyalty and promotion of team communication.

Process quality teams consist of employees who are part of the business process and are obliged to plan the standard operating procedures (SOP). Through SOP the rights and obligations of all employees is defined. The characteristics of these teams are as follows:

- mandatory attendance of the managers;
- ensuring top to bottom approach which involves all of the employees;
- meeting at least once a month before the meetings of service quality.

Responsibilities of the Management teams of quality are as follows:

- election of the projects to improve quality;
- determination of the realms of the project;
- election of the members of the team and the leader;
- evaluation of the project quality progress.

The characteristics of the workshops of quality are as follows:

- selection of people with knowledge and skills;
- selection of employees who are elected directly to confront with the problem that needs to be solved;
- meet regularly under supervision; to identify, analyze and solve problems related to quality.

Responsibilities of the all employees are as underlines:

- inclusion of a large number of employees;
- increasement of the motivation in order to improve the business processes;
- increasement of the awareness of the need to improve quality;
- improvement of the communication channels.

Building such an organizational structure would provide involvement of the staff as well as opportunity of expressing their personal ideas, ability to communicate with the others who have different aspects in regard of the proposed solutions. The top management must provide fast and competent evaluation as well as selection and implementation of the solutions in practice.

6.2. The necessity of teams for continuous improvement and innovation in the Macedonian higher educational institutions

Satisfied employees tend to improve the service quality or to increase their efforts in order to raise it to a higher level. Hence, one of the key factors is the instrumental and the material equipment in the workplace, especially the informational and communicational links that present another factor of effectiveness and efficiency of the business processes. The collaboration within a mature team is dependent on the interaction between the team members. The team will be able to provide both an effective and efficient decision if it is well structured in regard of the personnel. What is highly required is a cooperation with the Department of Personnel and Education in the selection of the associates for the team building, the profile of requirements and cooperation among themselves. The participation in such teams is not merely a tool for personal development, but also an opportunity to develop business processes and services. By comparing the results among the teams we can assess both the productivity and the efficiency or the effectiveness of a team able to assess their awareness of the results. The educational institution should be based upon the number of individuals and teams participating in the improvements and innovations, as well as the effects of those decisions. Top management teams are being set upon certain issues depending on the nature of the problems and effects to be achieved. Often the teams are being formed in the following manner (Mitreva, 2010):

- teams for improvement of a particular task after it has been performed;
- permanent teams to enhance the quality of the educational process;
- promoters of quality;
- individual schemes proposing improvement and innovation;
- teams for self-assessment.

7. Conclusion

Top management should initiate a special program to promote improvement and innovation by encouraging employees to engage in the internal presentations of the proposed solutions. These presentations must have a high level of importance, to be a special event in which the top management will participate. The process of authorizing and encouraging the involvement of the employees in finding new solutions and improvements of the educational process should be consisted of rewards for their taken initiative and displayed creativity in solving the problems as well as for the proposed and realized improvement and innovation. The top management must create a system for motivational rewards as it develops the process of involvement of the employees' potential.

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