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Human Resource Management in Total Quality Management

Mudit M. Saxena

Department of Mechanical Engineering, Indus University, Ahmedabad, India

ABSTRACT

The study reveals that building a quality culture would require a similar HR strategy, which would engage the TQM, the firm's way of working as well as the HR policies and practices. In relation to this, the literature of TQM often has a hidden implied agenda, which beg a top down method for the accomplishment of TQM. This could undervalue the difficulties, there are in gaining a commitment to continuous improvements in the current pluralistic industrial relation culture. The study reveals the diverse roles of the TQM and reveals that the accomplishment of TQM has created quite a lot of HR challenges to HR employees such as, encouraging knowledge workers, getting employees contentment, controlling communication problems, solving problems linked with hugeness of the firm.

KEYWORDS: HRM, Human Resource, TQM, TQM and HR, Roles of HR.

I. INTRODUCTION

Advancement in products, technologies, laws have made necessary for Indian companies to search for new strategies. Declining markets, rising demands, and altered customer attitudes, regulations, as well as the increasing global competition in current years, build up the causes of transform in the markets on which Indian companies are competing. As a result, enormous firms focus on products for niche markets in its place of selling ordinary mass products. Improved product quality and a superior degree of accountability towards customers no longer remain a meager possibility but are necessary if market shares are to be maintained and developed. According to Oakland (1993, p. 3), quality management is driven by the competitive environment and is universal for all types of firms. Dean and Bowen (1994) have investigated the TQM literature, stating that the main points of TQM are those of customer focus, continual improvements, and teamwork. Oakland (1993, p.2-3) describes TQM as the method for the management to improve effectiveness, flexibility, and competitive advantages for the firms as a whole since it fulfill the internal and external customer needs. The interest of management in quality using quality as a main factor in the fight for competitive advantages is of present date. Oakland (1989); states that following the industrial revolution, and the computer revolution in the starting of the 1980's, we are at the present in the middle of a quality revolution. Studies conducted by different firms have shown an increase in quality activities. These comprise the activity best known as total quality management (TQM); this has been extensively acknowledged as a chief innovation in management theory (Ishikawa, 1985).

II. HR MANAGEMENT APPROACH

The management has changed their ways of working with their personal policies. Ulrich (2003), claims that TQM shall act as a tactical partner for the firm. This means the TQM ought to contribute to the firm's achievements by translating all of the general strategies into HR practice. Walker (1992, p. 2) " *The task for the HR function is to ensure that all HR activities be focused on the organization requirements. All HR activities should therefore be adjusted towards the organization demands and be reflected in the HR strategy. The HR strategy should in this connection be adjusted towards the organization strategy*".

III. THE DIFFERENT TASKS OF HRM.

The different Tasks of HRM are as follows.

Selection: Efficient staffing is significant, and definite media for advertising and formulations should be chosen with a view to employing staff. Practical and exact job advertisements which would encourage candidates to reveal their abilities in context to the particular job while selective methods in the firm should examine applicant abilities in problem-solving and teamwork (Bowen and Lawler, 1992).

Performance: Some researchers have claimed that performance control plays a key role in the improvement, communication, and gauging quality standards (Deblieux, 1991). Improvements be supposed to occur by alters of processes rather than by control of the workers; As per Deming this is the key to develop cooperation teams (Evans and Lindsay, 1999). Deming says that it is hard to get any sort of cooperation if the management focuses on blaming the individual worker. Deming further says that this would produce a work conditions of fright in which the people would elude any type of risk while merely focusing on short-term one's performance.

Development: Training and development are accepted by most researchers as being necessary in an execution of TQM. The literature of TQM also focuses intensively on management training in quality tools and techniques.

Rewards: A major element in the cycle is that of rewards in order to retain and motivate the staff, especially in work areas facing main rivalry. In the effort to keep hold of employees, rewards such as cash may play a significant role. In the literature of TQM, the subject of rewards such as cash is contentious. There is, however, a general agreement that result-based output systems may demolish staff commitment and motivation towards quality enhancements. Predominantly Deming is in opposition to rewards such as those of cash. As mentioned above, he states that it is the recognition that quality works that is the reward. Few TQM researchers have stayed that the path towards developing a quality culture goes through public recognition in the firm and mention of the use of a reward system as a way to produce successful performance or outcomes.

IV. WORK ENVIRONMENT AND JOB DESIGN

Oliver (1988) characterizes TQM as an alteration in the management policy according to which the organization will abandon a strategy of direct control in favor of a strategy of independent liability and control. He considers that in the effort to develop staff commitment towards TQM, the firm will need to change the conventional implementation techniques of TQM. According to him the work performance environment is created by four elements.

- *Explicitness:* Need of having undoubtedly defined and specified job responsibilities because the individual employee will be more inclined to see a liability if job responsibilities are/remain unclear.
- *Revocability:* A condition in which there would be not as much of or no control of individual job performance – in which the person would feel a superior degree of liability for the job.
- *Publicity:* The position in which individual actions, and the consequences of same, would be observable to other people, hence rendering the people more personally responsible. The argument is one of social pressure and of personal need of recognition.
- *Volition:* A situation in which the person would feel that he/she has control over personal actions, and also on the aspect of his/her own level of potential.

4.1 EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT

TQM literature shows that people are forced to comprehend the process in incessant improvements and must be vigorously involved (Crosby, 1995), (Deming, 1982). Ishikawa (1985, p.112): *The management and the middle managers have to be courageous enough and delegate as much liability as possible. This is the way to build respect for the humanity in your management philosophy. A management system in which all staff, from the top to the bottom, will participate, and humanity be fully respected.*

V. THE HR DEPARTMENT IN TQM

As for the significance of the HR jobs in the accomplishment of TQM, it is relevant to make certain which jobs HR people would be assigned in this context. They are likely to be engaged in the design and in the implementation

of the new HR policies to carry the change. Such policies seem like critical symbols of the change so the HRs department part is one of the noteworthy areas of TQM. The HR department has; however, for a long time been recognized as an unclear function the contribution of which to firm aims could be hard to estimate. HR people may also find it hard to evidently define their meticulous expertise for generally all managers are concerned about the management of the employees. However, in current years a stronger profile of the HR jobs in the firm has came out but it does not essentially lead to a stronger profile of the HR department, just because the employees and the management show a superior degree of attention and liability to the jobs of the HR department. (Storey, 1992). In fact, some jobs would be considered very important to leave for HR department attention in view of the limited attention devoted by HR staff to the real jobs of the firm, the lack of management faith in the function, as well as its own lack of skills/competences and / or self-confidence (Bowen and Lawler, 1992).

The research conducted by Wilkinson and Marchington (1994) contributes to the comprehending of the HR jobs in the framing and in the implementation of TQM.

- The first role is of the *Facilitator*. It was observed in all the studies involving the HR department in the implementation of TQM, especially at the operational level. Involving training of the middle management, elaboration of newsletters and other communication related jobs. Yet this role is seen as necessary as per the survey, it really involves no more than regular practice in a HR department.
- The second role is of the *Internal Contractor*. It did involve the HR department in setting aims and standards for the HR policies addressing internal customers. In their study, the obvious example was that of a software company. They had set goals for the HR department services targeting internal customers, evaluating these with internal customers. Further, Bowen and Lawler (1992) have offered their report of how the *Internal Contractor* role could work in respect of TQM. As per them, the HR department be supposed to endeavor to make things right the first time in order to shun conversion of failure training programs or rewards. There ought to be clear focus on customer requirements with customer-oriented programs instead of ordinary programs. This would engross the customers, at the level of middle management or employees, in the specification and design of the product.
- *Change Agent* the third role who keeps a high profile and works at the strategic position. In extreme cases, the HR department may play a key role in framing the TQM program, improving its foundation with a vision to developing a quantity culture and assist in the control of the program. TQM is thus observed as identical with an organization change, and the human resource department as a part of the firm which will be best placed to define and lead the process.
- Further, the *Hidden Persuader* is the fourth role is of HR department will play a strategic role in the beginning of the work with TQM, for example as a critical participant in management discussion regarding the implementation of total quality management. Opposite the *Change Agent* we find the *Hidden influencer* role, not particularly noticeable to middle managers and employees but acting rather as a guide for the management.

To which level the HR department would take over on one or several roles in an accomplishment of TQM is not just a matter of a decision made by the HR department. A lot will depend on three important factors. The first factor is that of the current status and style of the department; a department which so far has performed only basic staff work will probably not have the necessarily knowledge and reliability required in order to assume a strategic role in the accomplishment of TQM. The second factor is that the HR department will regularly point to initiatives unlike from those of the production department, and may thus risk being marginalized in the firm. The third factor is that of the history of quality management. Since the previous system-based method applied in quality management is acknowledged to have failed, this may in fact offer the department an opportunity to assume a more strategic role. The role of the HR department does not necessarily have be permanent because of the continuous processes in TQM which will provide for the HR department an opportunity of being involved in a large-scale or smaller extension with time. The HR department could be highly involved in the design and implementation phase; subsequently, the department may step “back-stage”, and from this point encourage the firm to demonstrate liability towards quantity. Also, the HR department might be every so often involved in process assessment such as reflected in surveys, analysis, and training.

5.1 TQM AND THE FUTURE HR DEPARTMENT

It is the aim that the HR department ought to go towards the part as an *Internal Contractor* for production line middle manager as those who would define customer needs and would keep open the option of rejecting the services offered or the proposals made by the HR department. The HR department would have to accept the circumstances and values set by production line middle managers. Yet, Fowler (1993) claims that the role for the HR department should not be restricted to please production line middle managers. As per Fowler (1993), the role of the HR department is to contribute to the realization of the overall aims of the firm. If the HR department is to keep its professional honesty, they will need to go beyond the narrow *Facilitator* and *Internal Contractor* role and take on a rather additional strategic role. Fowler (1993, p. 29) states in that context that an effective HR department will have three qualities:

- Work understanding and expertise.
- Efficacy on the demands from the organization to attain general short-term and long-term objectives.
- A positive approach, suggesting changes and alterations rather than just acting on the strength of views held by other parties.

Now the issue is; if the HR department actually has the three qualities stated by Fowler. First, he states professional knowledge and expertise. A research by Millard (1992) revealed that only 54 % of the British industrial HR managers had the professional qualifications related to their job. Their number has been rising in the early 1980's but has been lessening in recent years. As a result, it must not be taken for granted that the HR department will really have the professional knowledge and expertise essential. To which level the personnel department has proved its relevance in relation to organization short term and long-term goals, and in respect of their ability to be active proactively, may also be questioned. Purcell and Ahlstrand (1994) studies of HR department effect on the firm strategies showed that the HR department would normally only get involved in the accomplishment and on matters and subjects which would hardly ever be of any major importance. Additional functions, such as those of finance and technology, proved to be critical to the selection of strategy. As per this, the HR department would have but inadequate influence on the strategy level, as evaluated with that of the other departments. Their study demonstrated that no proactive initiatives in fact creating a change in the firms resulting from the HR department. Storey (1996) claims, that even though the HR department may be marginalized in major firms, the other departments will recognize the importance of the HR department in the process of transform.

VI. THE ROLES OF THE HR DEPARTMENT

The roles of the HR department at different stages of the implementation of total quality management are as follows.

I. Envisioning: The HR department plays a central role in creating and communicating the TQM vision of the company to the effect that the company *attaches great significance to the quality concept as an integral part of the entire firm and considers quality assurance a decisive parameter for continued growth of the Group.*

II. Preparing:.. The introductory stage is critical as it covers the way for prospect total quality management activities and sets the speed. Through this stage, the HR department acted in close coalition with the TQM group.

III. Implementing: The role played by the HR department in the implementation phase was as follows:

- *Creating quality awareness across the organization*
- *Developing management support*
- *Organizing quality workshops*
- *Concentrating on quality in strategies, procedures, systems, etc*
- *Change in mind set*

IV. Sustaining the momentum: When a firm begins a new program, staff must be trained how to get used to of behavior patterns to get benefitted from the program. In this situation, training is of chief significance because it will make easy learning of the required skills and knowledge to make the program winning as well as to maintain the momentum. Also, effective communication is likewise responsible for the success of the program.

- **Training:** TQM initiatives have stressed on need for training employees (Rainbird and Maquire, 1993), (Detoro and McCabe, 1997), (Marchington and Wilkinson, 1997), (Singh, 2000). Training plays a significant role in creating awareness (Palo and Padhi, 2003), developing an encouraging culture (Brown, 1993), building quality skills (Caudron, 1993), encouraging team building (Smith, 2003), and pledge to quality policy and strategy (Palo and Padhi, 2003).
- **Assessment.** The training needs of each employee are to be identified and assessed regularly, and training will then be arranged to put forward and enhance skills and compensate for lack of knowledge. The HR department conducts periodic surveys department-wise, grade-wise or position-wise with a view to identifying training needs for the staff. In doing this, they will distribute questionnaires among the employees for self-assessment of training requirements, amongst reporting officers and reviewing officers for recognition of training needs of employees working under them, as well as among all those concerned with evaluating training needs for efficient discharge of functions. Such evaluation of training needs will then be compiled, codified, and pursued.
- **Planning.** This Phase finds when and where the training will be done, and will encompass matters such as:
 - People need to be educated or trained
 - The competencies required
 - How much time training will take?
 - The expected advantages of training
 - How many people will undertake the training?
 - The resources needed, e.g. money, accommodation, etc. Normally, the company will plan its training program annually according to the needs of the staff and of the industry. It will distribute a list of on hand courses well in advance of the training schedules. The strategic training plan will be backed up by yearly budgeting and planning system.
- **Implementation.** This involves the real delivery of the training. Training and development center and the HR department both will organize the training programs frequently.
- **Evaluation.** This one of the most critical steps in the training process. In this, the overall efficiency of training is assessed, giving feedback for the trainers, senior managers, the trainees themselves, as well as future upgrading of the program.
- **Communication:** Efficient communication is a crucial component in attaining business success, be it statement of the organization goals, vision, strategy and business policies, or the communication of facts, information and data (Collins and Porras, 1994), (Larkin and Larkin, 1994), (Purser and Cabana, 1997), (Yingling, 1997). Regular two-way communication particularly face-to-face with employees is identified as a considerable factor in setting up trust and a sense of being valued/appreciated (Mumford and Hendricks, 1996), (Fourtou, 1997). These schemes include:
 - *Workplace communication schemes, communicating the personnel executive/shift in charge directly with workshop workers.*
 - *Shop-floor interaction sessions*
 - *Participative forum of unions*
 - *Internal department sessions*
 - *Open house session with CEO*

All these communication exercises enable a continuous dialogue between the individual employee and the management. A typical list of HR department responsibilities for effectual communication to achieve total quality includes issues such as:

- *meeting people on a regular basis*
- *Improving trust and avoid stressing on power differences between themselves and their subordinates*
- *making sure that people be briefed on key issues in language free of technical jargon*

- communicating candidly and as fully as possible on all issues affecting their people
- encouraging people to suggest novel ideas
- persuading team members to discuss company issues and provide upward feedback

Team building: Initiating firms place great emphasis on the worth of people working together in teams. Study shows that when part of a team, people will be motivated and work better . Teams will also achieve more by integrated efforts and problem-solving (Katzenbach and Smith, 1994),(Milliken, 1996), (Robie, 1997).The team-oriented work setting is an important factor for the success of TQM (Woods, 1993), (Dean and Bowen, 1994). Team building is done in different areas of functioning by the work of custom-made workshops, technology, and teamwork, improving management efficiency, etc.

Employee Involvement: It is assumed that total quality is the job of quality specialists. However, this belief is imperfect and detrimental to realization of total quality. If it is believed that the handling of TQM will rely solely on specialists, the firm would be attempting to pull itself up by tugging at its bootlaces (Wakhlu, 1994).

6.1 HR DEPARTMENT SUPPORT TO OTHER DEPARTMENTS.

Affiliation between the HR department and other departments is necessary to support TQM progress. TQM does not limit itself to any functional specification but fairly to the whole business of the firm. HR department plays the role of facilitator, internal contractor, and hidden persuader in the implementation of TQM in the firm. On such type of attempt, HR staff will partner with other departments to carry total quality management. As a partner, they are preached the TQM concept and practice it themselves in their own work areas, according to HR assistant, Susan Jacobsen. Companionship is the fundamental approach to be taken on by the HR department to distribute the TQM message.

6.2 HR DEPARTMENTS AS INTERNAL CONSULTANTS

The HR department also served as internal consultants to other departments to facilitate enhanced implementation of TQM. The items of action taken by the HR department as outlined below, depicts their role as internal consultants.

- *The HR department acted as facilitators and trainers in conducting quality workshops*
- *The HR department will act as internal consultant in the area of cost reduction and reduction of activity cycle*
- *The HR department will also suggest ways and means of improving the work climate*

6.3 THE CHALLENGES OF HR LINKED WITH TQM

It involved several HR challenges to them, including those of:

- *Encouraging knowledge workers*
- *Getting employee satisfaction*
- *beating communication barriers*
- *Enormity of the organization*
- *Encouraging knowledge workers:* Motivating workers with high recognition needs in the direction of TQM needs an extraordinary effort on the part of HR department.
- *Getting staff satisfaction:* Satisfaction of employees is very important to attain TQM. Staff satisfaction can be enhanced by various measures like those of reward and recognition schemes, an open door policy, a fair and non-discriminatory grievance handling scheme, suggestion schemes, incentive schemes to enhance productivity, group incentives, maintenance of good working and environmental conditions, etc. Further, attempts are to be made by the HR department to build up confidence and generate confidence in each employee so as to understand that the job he/she is doing will be worth the effort and will lead to the attainment of TQM.
- *Overcoming communication barriers:* In big firms with a very broad network of offices across the globe, the success of implementation of total quality management will significantly depend on a successful communication exercise. The human resource department has to take this up as a big challenge, and

consequently develop some communication exercises to communicate the TQM message to the organization network.

- *Vastness of organization:* TQM is the responsibility of every employee, and it has to be accomplished in all aspects of action and work in the firm. If any employee be unsuccessful to get total quality, or total quality has not been achieved in any activity or process, it has to be demonstrated that TQM is a failure in the firm. This would pose a challenge to managers, together with those of the HR department.

VII. CONCLUSION

This work has intended to add to the understanding of the TQM and implementation features of TQM. Particularly, the aims were those of analyzing the literature of TQM and of generating knowledge on the human resource management job with regard to an implementation of TQM.

7.1 EFFECTS IN BUILDING A QUALITY CULTURE

The research presented designed at studying the effects of the making of a quality culture. The text on organization culture offers some guidance on the implementation of total quality management but it does not only call attention to leadership, education, and recognition but also to HR policies and work environment in general. One hypothesis is that the implementation of TQM will require a matching HR strategy design, emphasizing quantity, flexibility, and commitment. This engrosses the TQM, the organization way of working, as well as the HR policies and practices. In the research, it was found that there were two different points of view on the variation in the firm performance, one focusing on control /management of the individual, the other emphasizing upgrading of the firm. Recent years have seen line of arguing for a balanced method, uniting these two points of view by focusing on the performance by the individual and by improving the system, which seems logical as HRM is a matter of much more than just avoiding to blame the individual, and it is in conformity with HR policies and practices to support the implementation of TQM, recognizing that the work environment generally bears on staff commitment to continuous improvement. In this connection, it was stated that a growth of a quality culture would often be a not easy and long-drawn process because the present organization culture might resist the change; also, it was questioned whether culture could be controlled in any way.

7.2 MAJOR DIFFICULTIES DUE TO IMPLEMENTATION

The result in the literature exposed a number of potential problems which could occur due to an accomplishment of TQM. The literature of TQM often has a hidden inherent agenda, calling upon a top-down method for the execution. This may undervalue the troubles of gaining a commitment to continuous improvement in the current pluralistic industrial relation culture.

7.3 THE TACTICAL TASK OF THE HR DEPARTMENT

HR department plays different roles as facilitator, internal contractor, and hidden persuader at different stages of the implementation of total quality management. They help the top management in aligning HR polices and quality policies, creating and communicating the TQM concept, preparing the firm as well as the employees for the accomplishment of TQM, creating quality awareness among the employees across the levels, functions, and departments, developing management support to quality action teams, organizing quality workshops, formulating quality friendly policies, systems and procedures, changing the conservative mind set of employees, organizing TQM training programs, planning different communication exercises, encouraging team building activities, promoting employee involvement by suggestion schemes, quality circles, and other participative types of forum.

In order to make easy the TQM advancement in the company, the HR department has to make a relationship with other departments. Numerous quality action teams have to be constituted in the company with managerial personnel from various departments, including the HR department. The company quality policy is also to be formulated in consultation with the HR department.

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