Identifying the Obstacles to the Application of (TQM) In the Business Management Departments in Jordanian Private Universities

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Abstract
The overall objective of the study is to identify obstacles and problems faced in the application of total quality management in private universities in Jordan. This has been reviewed in the first section of previous studies. In Section II the field study was conducted and included the hypothesis of the study. Meanwhile, the last Section has included a summary of results and recommendations emerging from the results. The main obstacles facing the application of total quality management in the accounting divisions in private universities of Jordan:
1. Weakness of financial support for scientific research.
2. The lack of objective criteria to measure performance.
3. Weak channels of communication between divisions and divisions of the university.

The study has the following suggestions: supporting academic research financial and morally, raising awareness about the importance of changing for the better and removing the fear that comes with change, and lastly, using modern methods for teaching and lecturing instead of old ineffective methods that are no longer suitable for our current time.

1. Introduction

The world has lately been witnessing a deep interest in the concept quality and quality assurance; different institutions are aiming to achieve a competitive advantage especially with the huge invasion of globalization, as they cannot maintain their competitive position unless they fulfill the overall quality requirements in all fields of operation. The concept of Total Quality Management (TQM) is one of the latest concepts that emerged in higher education; the concept is based on a procedural process that states that the process of improving quality is characterized by the continuation of all educational levels in an ongoing basis, and since higher education is a tool for change used by societies, it is clear to see that the quality of education is the main goal of higher education institutions, therefore quality has become a phenomenon that everybody aspires to achieve, comprehensive quality management became the framework to enhance the outputs of different educational settings as it begins and ends with learning and developing ways to accomplish businesses more efficiently; and to apply the concept of comprehensive quality management effectively in the educational setting the obstacles facing the application must be determined and eliminated.

“To help educational institutions achieve satisfactory results and achieve comprehensive quality a broad base of information and indicators should be put forth to enable managers and decision makers to stand on the weaknesses and strengths within the institution” (Taylor & Bogdan. 1997).

From there, the researchers focused on determining and classifying the obstacles facing higher education institutions in the application Total Quality Management, a group of private Jordanian universities were selected for a field study to measure the availability of obstacles, it is expected that

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from the results of this study recommendations will be made to help academic leaders overcome obstacles that comprehensive quality faces.

2. Theoretical Background

The theoretical background is best demonstrated by asking the following questions:

1- What are the obstacles facing the implementation of total quality management in private Jordanian Universities?
2- How can the obstacles facing the implementation of overall quality management in the Jordanian private universities be classified?

Hypotheses

The primary hypothesis of this study is represented in the following: “There are a range of obstacles facing the implementation of TQM in private Jordanian universities.” From that the following sub-hypotheses are derived:

1- There is statistical significance in organizational aspects as obstacles to the implementation of TQM.
2- There is statistical significance in leadership as an obstacle to the implementation of TQM.
3- There is statistical significance in education and knowledge as obstacles to the implementation of TQM.
4- There is statistical significance in scientific research as obstacles to the implementation of TQM.
5- There is statistical significance in community service as an obstacle to the implementation of TQM.

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to accomplish the following objectives:

1- Identifying the obstacles and problems facing faculty members in the business management departments which impede the application of TQM in private Jordanian universities.
2- Identifying the point of views of faculty members about the aspect of this research.

Significance of the Study

Comprehensive quality management standards represent one of the most important elements that heavily affect the job performance and outputs of the educational process therefore a dedicated management department should allow for the efficient application of these standards.

The importance of this research comes from dealing with some of the most important factors affecting the outputs of private Jordanian universities, particularly because universities use quality management standards to recruit foreign and domestic students because students are the main revenue generators for these universities. Therefore the importance of this research stems from being a starting point for other researches to develop and build upon this study’s findings to further improve the overall educational process.

3. Methodology of the Study

To reach the goals set out for this study, the following analytical methods and approaches will be used:

1- Practical approach: by using a questionnaire specifically built for this study’s objectives and collecting the information retrieved from the study sample.
2- Descriptive analysis: this method involves using tables to display statistical data, arithmetic means as well as deviations and other statistical measures.
3- Advanced analytical interpretations: this will be done by using a Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

**Procedural Definitions and Terminology**

The following definitions are included to help readers better understand the concept of Total Quality Management:

*Quality*: Is the degree of fulfilling requirements expected by the service user (Source: National Committee for Quality Assurance and Accreditation 2004).

*Quality Assurance*: an ongoing structured process for measuring the quality standard in accordance with the standards of deficiencies identified, in order to analyze and take action to improve and develop performance and quality measures (Source: Khoja 2004).

*Quality Control*: a part of quality management that determines if quality requirements are met (Source: National Committee for Quality Assurance and Accreditation 2004).

It is also known as the administrative process in which actual performance is measured in comparison with the expected performance to take corrective actions based on the difference between the two (Source: Khoja 2004).

*Quality Improvement*: a coordinated operation that defines selective opportunities to improve products or services, it also aims at achieving a low level of variation to ensure the stability of a process (Source: Khoja 2004).

*Quality management system*: policies and objectives to control the institution in terms of quality (Source: National Committee for Quality Assurance and Accreditation 2004).

*Total quality management (TQM)*: “Witcher” (1990) divided total quality management to the three concepts:

- Total: meaning that it includes all people affiliated with the corporation.
- Quality: achieving the demands of consumers accurately
- Management: having a management that is committed to providing high quality products and services.

In the educational sector:

“Harvey & Knight” introduced five points in 1996 regarding quality:

1- Quality in the field of education can be looked at as a special investment that can meet the highest standards.

2- Quality in education can be seen as a state of compatibility between administrative and educational processes through uniting matrices to reach zero defects.

3- Consider quality from the perspective of the purpose of the product or service (Crawford 1991).

4- Quality is eventual financial value arising from efficiency and effectiveness.

5- "Quality is an integrated approach that is applied in all branches of the educational process that provides the opportunity for individuals to satisfy the educational needs of students” (Alawna 2004)

**Previous Studies**

1- Tian,xiushu;liu,yingna;liu,dongmei;liyuhong;yang, ming (2010) discussed the development of higher education to build quality awareness, creating the idea of quality assurance in higher education, they also talked about the difficulties and challenges facing the establishment of quality assurance in higher education system in China.
2- The Tartouri’s study in 2009, discussed the problems facing higher education in the Arab world, notably low productivity, increased costs, lack of financial resources along with the usage of ineffective methods to achieve objectives and low levels of job satisfaction. The study also suggested that facing these problems is a vital factor in boosting quality delivered.

3- Al-hakari’s study in 2007 aimed to recognize the possibility of applying TQM in community colleges in Jeddah to identify the most prominent difficulties faced by community colleges in the application of the concept. The researcher used a descriptive analytical approach to display his findings which include:

- The possibility of applying the principles of TQM in community colleges with a high degree of effectiveness.
- The importance of applying TQM at community colleges.
- The moderate existence of obstacles to the implementation of TQM in community colleges.

4- Al Dawood’s study in 2007 showed general obstacles to the proper application of TQM in higher education institutions, the results can be summed up in the following:

- Not having a solid commitment from higher management departments.
- The focus on specific methods in TQM but not looking at the system as a whole.
- The lack of participation by all employees in the application of TQM.
- Not transitioning from the training phase to the implementation phase.
- Methods adopted in implementing TQM were not compatible with the privacy of an enterprise.
- Resistance to change by some managers and employees.
- The expectancy of immediate results.

5- Ahmad and Hamdoon’s study in 2007 focused on the challenges facing companies in the UAE in implementing TQM. Their study was conducted on Sharjah University; the study has proven that the obstacles facing TQM are real challenges that come in the way of the proper implementation of the concept.

6- Al Ghamdi’s study in 2005 showed numerous aspects including the obstacles facing TQM in Saudi Arabian universities, in addition to showing the most important strategies to effectively implement TQM. At the end of the study the most important steps in implementing TQM were displayed.

7- Al Khawli’s study in 2007 went in depth in the attempt to clarify the importance of TQM in Arabian educational institutions. He used the University of Qatar as his study sample; he then interviewed the faculty members at the university on their understanding of the concept, its implementation and its importance to achieving the goals of the university.

8- Abu Naba’ and Massa’ad’s study in 1998 listed some of the obstacles facing the implementation of TQM and the proper techniques of implementing TQM in the Jordanian private universities.

9- Al-Alawi’s study in 1998 pointed out the factors that hinder the progress of TQM in higher education institutions in the Arab world, these factors include:

- Sticking to old methods of management and the fear of adopting newer methods.
- The existing system overcame new innovative ideas
- Reliance on centralization which weakens the role of working groups.
- The dominance of the administrative sector on the academic sector.
- Lack of efficient administrators and academic leaders.
- Fear of change
- Using ‘memorization’ as the main educational tool instead of innovation.
- Using academic research as solely as means to better academic ranks and financial gains.

**Summarizing Previous Studies**

1- There are some factors affecting the proper usage of TQM in higher education previous studies’ point of views on that can be summed up as follows:

   - Some of the studies suggested that TQM has interconnected terms that are hard to differentiate and often used interchangeably.
   - Some of the studies focused on measuring performance while others provided suggestions for improvement but the majority of them lacked field applications.
   - Some of the studies only focused on specialized kinds of obstacles facing TQM while neglecting others.

   2- There are five different classifications of aspects that obstruct the proper implementation of TQM:

   - Leadership aspects.
   - Organizational aspects
   - Educational and cognitive aspects
   - Scientific research aspects
   - Community service aspects.

   3- None of the previous studies mentioned above did a detailed field study to include all five aspects mentioned above; therefore one of this study’s objectives was to consider all five of these aspects from the point of view of administrators as well as faculty members.

**Framework of the Study**

This research includes three topics that are as follows:

- Fits Topic: represents the general framework and theoretical framework for this study, it contains the introduction, theoretical background, objectives, significance, methodology, terminology, and previous studies.
- Second Topic: includes the field study, analytical processing and other testing.
- Third Topic: contains the results and recommendations.

**Study Population and Study Sample**

The study sample contains all faculty members and heads of the faculty of Business Management in Al-Bqaa’ Applied University and the Amman College of Banking and Financial Sciences. The study sample totals to 72 faculty members distributed according to their job title.

The researcher handed out 74 questionnaires, but after revising the responses 2 entries were disqualified and 72 questionnaires were accepted as the final study sample which makes for a 97.3% participation rate.

By reviewing the properties of the study sample the following can be noted (This data is displayed in table 1):

1- Approximately two thirds of the sample are males, 25% of the sample’s ages ranged from 20 to 30, while 45.8% of the sample’s ages ranged between 31 to 40 years

2- 54.2% of the sample had Master’s degrees while 42% had PhDs.
3- 38% of the sample had work experience ranging from 1 to 5 years, 29% had experience ranging from 6 to 11 years. It’s also noted that 63% of the sample had the job title of Lecturer while 25% had the job title of Assistant Professor.

| Table 1 (Relative Distribution of the Members of the Study Sample) |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Main Characteristics** | **Number** | **Percentage** |
| **Gender** | 72 | 100.00% |
| Male | 48 | 66.7% |
| Female | 24 | 33.3% |
| **Age** |  |  |
| 20-31 years | 18 | 25.0% |
| 31-40 years | 33 | 45.8% |
| 41-50 years | 18 | 25.0% |
| 50 years or older | 3 | 4.2% |
| **Academic Qualification** |  |  |
| Bachelor’s Degree | 3 | 4.2% |
| Master’s Degree | 39 | 54.2% |
| PhD | 30 | 41.7% |
| **Experience** |  |  |
| 1-5 years | 27 | 37.5% |
| 6-10 years | 21 | 29.2% |
| 11-15 years | 15 | 20.8% |
| More than 15 years | 9 | 12.5% |
| **Job Title** |  |  |
| Lecturer | 45 | 62.5% |
| Assistant professor | 18 | 25.0% |
| Associate Professor | 6 | 8.3% |
| Professor | 3 | 4.2% |

**Data Collection**

To reach the goals of the study the researchers decided to choose to distribute a questionnaire for numerous reasons including:

- Sensitivity of the subject and its relationship to the overall quality.
- Questionnaires are common methods of data collection. Most previous studies used questionnaires, making it easier, and also lead to increased credibility and stability.

The questionnaire consisted of two parts as follows:

First part: included personal information, like gender, age, academic qualification, as well as job title and work experience.

Second part: consisted of 22 elements to represent the obstacles facing TQM in private Jordanian universities (Leadership aspects, Organizational aspects, Educational and cognitive aspects, scientific research aspects, Community service aspects.)

**Data Collection Testing**

The questionnaire was shared with educators and experts in the business management field to oversee the appropriateness of language and terminology used, as well as checking the questionnaire for completeness and clarity. As a result the questionnaires were pre-tested on some of the study sample, the
pre-test was collected and responses were evaluated to help produce a better final version of the questionnaire.

**Stability Testing**

In order to test the reliability of the study and the internal consistency coefficient of the scale as a whole Cronbach's alpha test was used, the results showed a Cronbach standard of 75% which is higher than the accepted value of 60% which enabled the researcher to rely on the responses in the analysis process.

**Statistical Analysis**

- A 5 point Likert scale was used to analyze responses as follows: 1 indicated strong disagreement 2 indicated a disagreement 3 indicated a neutral response 4 indicated agreement while 5 indicated strong agreement.

- As displayed in table 2, all arithmetic means were higher than the acceptable value of (3), and despite the convergence between means, a difference can be noticed when looking at the degree of acceptance (from responders), the overall arithmetic mean for all paragraphs was 4.04 and a standard deviation of 0.416.

After comparing and analyzing the results the following was noted:

1. The community service aspect was the highest ranked with a mean of 4.22 and a standard deviation of 0.579
2. Organizational aspects had an arithmetic mean of 4.10 and a low standard deviation of 0.460
3. The scientific research aspects had a mean of 4.05 and a standard deviation of 0.493
4. Leadership aspects and educational and cognitive aspects had arithmetic means of 3.97 and 3.87 and standard deviations of 0.725 and 0.702 respectively.
5. The community service aspect came in first with a mean of 4.22, the topic titled “the non existing relationship between universities and the market” had a mean of 4.42, the topic titled “lack of communication between universities and recruiting agencies” came in second place with a mean of 4.17 and the topic titled “the lack of effective methods to solve society problems” with a mean of 4.08.
6. In the organizational aspect the overall mean was 4.10, the topic titled “Faculty member selection” came in first place with a mean of 4.33, the topic titled “The lack of objective criteria to measure performance” came in second place with a mean of 4.25, and the topic titled “continued training for faculty members” came in last place with a mean of 3.79.
7. In the scientific research aspect the overall mean was 4.05 while the topic titled “lack of financial support for academic research” came in first place with a mean of 4.33, the topic titled “Increased teaching load at the expense of scientific research” was placed second with a mean of 4.04, while the topic titled “the lack of qualified human resources in research centers” came in last place with a mean of 3.83.
8. The overall mean for Leadership aspects was 3.97, the highest ranked topic was “the lack of assured academic leaders in the importance of TQM” with a mean of 4.08, the topic titled “the absence of academic leaders selection” came in second place with a mean of 4.00, while the topic titled “the lack of clear strategies to implement TQM” came in last place with a mean of 3.83.
9. The overall mean of the educational and cognitive aspect was 3.87, the highest ranking topic was titled “using traditional and old methods in teaching and education” with a mean of 4.25, the second ranking topic had a mean of 4.13 and was titled “lack of modern educational methods”, the least ranking topic had a mean of 3.54 and was titled "neglecting to encourage students to acquire self-knowledge”

After reviewing the results in table 2, were the T and P values were 0.000 were less than the value of \( \alpha \) which is 0.05, thus the null hypothesis will be rejected which states that there are no obstacles facing
the application of TQM in private Jordanian universities. As a result the accepted hypothesis is that “there are a range of obstacles facing the implementation of TQM in private Jordanian universities”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects</th>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>Obstacles</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Arithmetic Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>T-Value</th>
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<td>Faculty member selection</td>
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<td>53.135</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lack of communication between different departments</td>
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<td>0.895</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Delays in processing higher academic rankings</td>
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<td>0.985</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Unsuitable working conditions</td>
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<td>4.17</td>
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<td>51.091</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>continued training for faculty members</td>
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<td>3.79</td>
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</table>
4. Results

The following are a summary of the results of the field study conducted:

1- Despite the convergence between means, there are differences between them in terms of the degree of approval.

2- There are constraints facing the application of TQM in private Jordanian universities, it can be summarized as follows:
   - A non-existing relationship between universities and the market.
   - Faculty member selection methods
   - Lack of financial support for academic research.
   - Lack of assured academic leaders in the importance of TQM
   - Using traditional and old methods in teaching and education.

5. Recommendations

After looking at the results displayed above as well as the analysis done by researchers, the following recommendations were set forth to help avoid constraints facing the proper implantation of TQM:

1- Increasing the interest for universities to recognize the needs of today’s society, market and work force by having specialized committees to look over this process.

2- Forming a special committee that is in charge of determining the qualifications needed of faculty members in order to ensure accomplishing the university’s mission and objectives.

3- Focusing on providing moral and financial support for researchers as well as the fare treatment of all researchers to keep them engaged and motivated to carry out effective research.

4- Educating academic leaders and convincing them of the importance of change and progress to improve an organization’s performance, especially in universities in order to produce a competitive generation that’ll fulfill the needs of the market.

5- Revising the current educational methods currently used and replacing old traditional methods with newer, more advanced ones to improve the quality of education.

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