

Strategic Quality Management in the Arab Higher Education Institutes: A Descriptive & Analytical Study

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Abstract

Education is the concern of governments and states as well as individual persons. Good quality education aims at achieving learning outcome of high value. This is the main objective of any good educational institute or educational program. Provision of educational services is intended to satisfy the needs and wants of clients, who might be students, parents or organization. However, providing good education, presupposes the existence of good institutions, which are keen to apply modern technologies and hard rules in teaching, to achieve high standard in graduates learning outcome. TQM was-basically- implemented to develop profit-making organizations, but its application has also proved to help in solving internal and external problems in educational institutes at near and distant times. This paper sheds light on total quality management as a tool that can help in achieving the objectives of educational institutes in such a competitive modern global economy. Arab Educational Institutes have achieved poor ranks among world universities with little share in business worldwide, due to poor research contribution and poor learning outcome. We have analytically traced the TQM philosophy since Edward Demings & Joseph Juran. Our findings proved the critical and practical need for applying TQM in our Educational Institutions in the Arab world.

Keywords: quality management, quality assurance, Arab education, university ranking

Introduction

Most Organizations have recently shown great concern with quality management strategies in their enterprises in order to achieve strategic objectives, in this time of technological explosion, and huge expansion in higher education institutions. The Increasing demand for the services of these institutions makes dealers look for goods and services, which are provided by these institutions, to be of best quality and best price. The aim of this paper is to discuss the mechanism of applying quality management strategies, in order to achieve the goals of educational institutions in (internal & external environment), by taking the nearest road and spending the least money and efforts to provide quality service, that does not only satisfy customers, but also fascinates them with new innovations at every moment.

Rationale behind topic choice

The TQM (Total Quality Management) has close relation with strategic management as well as some other disciplines, which all work together to help in achieving the objectives of the various institutions of higher education, through holistic view of the whole aspects of management processes in the organization-based on principles and scientific measures.

Research problem

As the researchers are by profession university teachers, they are deeply involved in educational concerns that aim to in achieve national or personal educational objectives. We have noticed that some higher educational institutes in the Arab World lagged behind because they have not -yet- adopted the new trends in implementation of modern technology and knowledge, to develop their business especially in the field of education. We aim to catch up with this knowledge-society and adopt new strategies, to improve our teaching and help graduates to grasp the essence of knowledge, from these think-tank facilities - higher education institutes. So the research problem stems from the need of higher education institutions in the Arab World to long-term strategic planning, adopting operational process based on comprehensive quality standards, in order to reach the highest goals as soon as possible.

Hypotheses

- 1-We assume that there is a significant correlation between TQM and strategic management.
- 2- There is a positive relationship between TQM and the strategic objectives of the institutions of higher education in the Arab World.
- 3- There is a relationship between the principle of continuous improvement and strategic objectives.

The Significance of the study

This research is an attempt to investigate the applications of contemporary quality management strategy in higher education institutions in the Arab World. The study aims at addressing professors, managers, rectors and workers who are considered as one unified body, aims to achieve the total objectives of their educational institutes, each in his place and profession, and each works with his utmost efficiency, effectiveness, full power and talents to benefit his school or college.

Objectives of the research

- 1-This research aims to explain the strategic application of quality management in higher institutions.
- 2-It seeks to define how higher education institutions will achieve strategic objectives.
- 3-It will help to recognize the importance of applications of quality management and strategic advantages.

Methodology

The researchers adopted an analytical and descriptive approach, by covering the topic through its historical development, by referring to relevant literature in the field. Although the subject is tackled in different manners, but most of the TQM research and studies used to focused on profit making organizations in industry and service organizations, which mincingly aim to make profits through their business activities in the market. But our attempt here - among a few other attempts – is to apply the concept of TQM in a new field of research that is the applications of TQM in educational arena, with special reference to Arab education institutes. So since the area is new, the previous studies and research are a bit limited. It is no wonder that we have consulted a limited number of articles written in this field, in the Arab world concerning TQM in education.

I: Total Quality Management

According to Dheeraj (2011), the concept of Total Quality Management (TQM) was developed by W. Edwards Deming, after World War II for improving the production quality of goods and services. The concept was not taken seriously by Americans until the Japanese, who adopted it in 1950 to resurrect their postwar business and industry, used it to dominate world markets by 1980. Dheeraj (2012) added that most U.S. manufacturers had finally accepted that the nineteenth century assembly line factory model was outdated for the modern global economic markets. The concept of TQM is also applicable to academics. Many educators believe that the Deming's concept of TQM provides guiding principles for needed educational reform. According to Bonsting in Dheeraj (2012), outlines in his article, "The Quality Revolution in Education,") the TQM principles which he believes are most salient to education reform. He calls them the "Four Pillars of Total Quality Management."

1. Principle #1: Synergistic Relationships.
2. Principle #2: Continuous Improvement and Self Evaluation
3. Principle #3: A System of Ongoing Process
4. Principle #4: Leadership.

But according to Lunenburg (2010), TQM is a systematic approach to education reform based on the philosophy of Edward Deming. Deming's work is not merely about productivity and quality control; it is a broad vision on the nature of organizations and how organizations should be changed. The concepts of TQM carry visions and perspectives of the intellectual pioneers of this science. Many of these concepts demonstrate the importance of the philosophy of this discipline about new management that can help solve problems of industrial enterprises and serve in both: the near and distant times, through regulations and principles.

According to Sallis (2002), quality in the technical sense is largely a relative concept. The relative definition views quality not as an attribute of a product or service, but as something which is ascribed to it... quality in this sense is about being measured against criteria. It is not an end in itself, but a means by which the end product is judged as being up to (or not up to) standard.

The key word in this definition is 'relative'. So according to Sallis: (2002) quality products or services in this relative or ascribed definition need not be expensive or exclusive. They may be beautiful, but not necessarily so. They do not have to be luxurious or special. They can be ordinary, commonplace and familiar. [But] what allows the label of quality to be ascribed to any product or service is that it meets the standards set for it.

The total quality management in education as an administrative process strategy is based on a set of values. It can be defined as an integrated strategy for continuous improvement. It is the responsibility of all elements of the university system of books, library, students, professors, buildings, laboratories, computer electronic and others. It must post all leaders, professors and workers in the educational organizational, who all work towards achieving the goals of the university. Any glitch will affect the development opportunities and the ability of competitiveness.

Abdeen (1992), sees TQM as a set of properties or attributes that accurately reflect the comprehensiveness of the essence of education and status, including (inputs, processes, outputs, near and far with feedback) as well as including interactions lead to achieve the appropriate desired objectives of a given community. Abdul-Aziz:(1999) believes that the overall quality means positiveness of educational system, that the output of the education system is good, through its inputs, outputs and through the objectives and needs of the community for development and growth.

Other theorists have distinguished between three concepts in the definition of overall quality in educational institutes e.g. the (design quality), (performance quality) and (quality output). The quality of the design is concerned with specifications and characteristics which should be taken into account in the planning of the work, selecting the quality of performance as doing business in accordance with specific standards. Quality of output means obtaining product and educational services in accordance with expected characteristic specifications.

So quality management in this context is a philosophy of administration, based on a set of basic principles that help to understand the different processes in the organization, in order to increase its competitiveness and increase production efficiency; to achieve customer satisfaction as well as excelling competitors and increasing productivity for each element of the organization. It aims to maintain flexibility in the organization to deal with environmental variables quick change.

In this context TQM, according to Farag:(2007) is about the overall continuing improvement strategies of all sectors, at all levels of the organization. TQM is a management strategy aims to achieve stability and satisfy the wishes of the customer, to get the service at the lowest possible cost, through the optimal use of each individual, working in the organization. TQM in this sense is a method with which we achieve efficiency and effectiveness, required for the application of processes and systems that lead to superiority, errors prevention and stresses reduction, where each activity in the organization is linked to the needs of the customer.

But despite the difficulty in determining the concept, attempts have been tried to develop the features of this concept and its associated concepts, as this is still a relative concept that varies according to the objectives, time and place; such attempts are of (Morrison) as mentioned in Farag: (2007), where he offered a number of concepts including the following:

1. effectiveness in achieving the objectives of the organization.
2. effectiveness of internal and external communication.

3. effective manner of resources management.
4. providing high quality and reliable product or service.
5. understanding the needs and estimates of the client.
6. achieving general satisfaction to consumers and employees in the institution.
7. identification of system and institutions.
8. developing and supporting workers capabilities.
9. reduction of financial resources
10. ability to work.
11. resilience and proactive planning in initiating research projects on high expected degree of efficiency.

According to Olimat: (2004), we can reach a set of conclusions of these concepts that deals with the concept of total quality in educational institutions that:

1. One of the TQM properties is to achieve expected results at the lowest cost, with less effort and in the shortest possible time.
2. The process of achieving the needs and desires of the client is the most important principle of TQM.
3. TQM focuses on avoiding errors and deviations rather than looking for curing them.
4. TQM means quality inputs, processes and outputs.
5. Application of TQM provides opportunity for discussion and fruitful constructive dialogue to contribute to overcoming fear and hesitation.
6. The worker according to the definition of total quality is not just a specialist in a particular field, but [s/he] is also aware of other workers' roles, in order to achieve good communication through mutual interaction. Total quality does not recognize separation between departments and systems within the organization, but confirms the strong interaction and exchange of information.
7. Comprehensiveness of total quality means three things.
 - a. it includes all operations within the university not just teaching.
 - b. it includes all jobs, not only those who teach students.
 - c. it includes everyone in the college or university. Each individual is responsible for quality in his work.
8. Continuous assessment of efforts and identification of the shortcomings of important elements in total quality.
9. Quality aims at continuous improvement and not to stop at a certain level.

Based on these conclusions, we can define the concept of total quality as a set of criteria and characteristics that must be met in all elements of the educational process in educational institutions, in respect of inputs, processes and outputs to achieve the desired goals of the individual, the institution and the community as well; based on the physical and human potentials. So from the above, it is clear evident that TQM is closely tied with strategic management in terms of coverage, continuity and evaluation. It is also tied with the setting of specific targets, through the input and the continuous improvement, in order to reach good outputs to meet desires according to what was planned in the long run.

According to Farag:(2004), the following are the main axes of the concept of total quality in educational institutions:

1. Linking the definition of total quality with objectives:
 1. that means education can be defined in terms of objectives to be achieved, so that any educational institution that achieves full objectives can be considered good institution.
2. Linking the definition of total quality with inputs processes: that means achieving goals depends on many factors; coming in the forefront is the human and material inputs that are used, and the ways to use and invest them to achieve highest standards.
3. Quality as standard term: That refers to standards as deemed with (excellent, good or bad) in term of quality rather than *only* giving normative and descriptive names, but it can also be a combination of descriptive and normative.
4. Quality has comprehensive direction: in this respect education can embody a wide range of human traits such as: respect for other nations, the spirit of the education institute, the desire to maintain world peace, contributes to the human culture and the defense of human rights.
5. Quality versus quantity: good education is a balance between quality and quantity.

So based on the above, the overall quality in education can mean according to Darias: (1994):-

- a standard of excellence that can be achieved and measured.
- it is a standard through which the educational organizations seek to offer their best to customers in order to appease them and win their trust. The organization shall depend on the excellence of the scientific rules as there is no room for chance or guessing .
- the organization is accurate to provide the desired service at the lowest cost.
- the total quality is standard for assessing success in everything, viz a viz, the educational institution can recognize through total quality standards the quality of production and the wishes of the customer.
- total quality in education is a monitor of the degree of objectives achievement.

Total quality management from another angle can be considered as an administrative process, based on a set of values. It derives its energy and movement from information, which creatively employs the talents of workers and invests their intellectual property at different orders, to secure continuous improvement of the institution to reach students' satisfaction. It can also increase clients' confidence and improve the educational organization's status at local and international arena, by increasing its share in the labor market. So, through the above concepts of total quality management in educational institutions, it could be argued that this approach or contemporary management philosophy is the way to achieve the goals and objectives of higher education institutions. It is the way to achieve the goals of clients (students, parents, etc) and the overall quality standards, with the highest efficiency and effectiveness, taking into account the internal and external factors of the environment of the institution, in the near and long term.

Deming 14 points and its application in Education

W. Edwards Deming was an American statistician who was credited with the rise of Japan as a manufacturing nation, and with the invention of Total Quality Management (TQM). Deming went to Japan just after the War to help set up a census of the Japanese population. While he was there, he taught 'statistical process control' to Japanese engineers - a set of techniques which allowed them to manufacture high-quality goods without expensive machinery. In 1960 he was awarded a medal by the Japanese Emperor for his services to that country's industry.

According to Cohen :(2012), Deming did not use the term Total Quality Management in his book, but it was credited with launching the movement. Most of the central ideas of TQM were contained in "Out of the crisis". The 14 points [seemed] at first sight to be a rag-bag of radical ideas as Cohen puts it, but the key to understanding a number of them lied in Deming's thoughts about variation. Cohen sees that variation was seen by Deming as the disease that threatened US manufacturing. The more variation - in the length of parts supposed to be uniform, in delivery times, in prices, in work practices - the more waste, he reasoned.

Deming went to Japan but when returned to the US he spent some years in obscurity before the publication of his book "Out of the crisis" in 1982. In this book, Deming set out 14 points which, if applied to US manufacturing industry, he believed would save the US from industrial doom at the hands of the Japanese. He set out his 14 points for management, which are to be paraphrased here to suit educational objectives to improve the quality of higher institutes:

1. create a continuing need for university education.
2. adopt the creation of a new philosophy of continuous improvement.
3. prevent the need for 100% inspection.
4. do not build college decisions on the basis of costs.
5. adopt the application of the philosophy of continuous improvement.
6. pay attention to continuous training in all university functions.
7. provide leadership of university conscious and democracy.
8. eliminate fear among university leaders.
9. remove barriers in communication between workers and leaders.
10. prevent slogans and focus on achievements and facts.
11. prevent the use of performance limits (no limits for excellence).
12. encourage the expression of pride and confidence.
13. apply a continuous improvement program in every university.
14. manage to get on to the different aspects of the work switch.

Joseph Juran:(1904–2008)

Juran as Desai;(2009) puts it is considered one of the Quality Gurus of 20th century for his Trilogy of [a] Quality Planning [b] Quality Control & [c] Quality Improvement. Juran believed that quality can be improved project by project and in no other way. He popularized four phased journey for such improvement projects namely [1] Defining the project [2] Analyzing the symptoms, [3] Remedial journey & [4] Holding the gains. This methodology is known as (JQI) :Juran Quality Improvement.

Juran –like his native citizen Deming- was also invited to Japan in 1954 by the Union of Japanese Scientists and Engineers (JUSE). His lectures introduced the management dimensions of planning, organizing, and controlling and focused on the responsibility of management to achieve quality and the need for setting goals. His works in TQM are well known among planners and strategists. Juran defines quality as fitness for use in terms of design, conformance, availability, safety, and field use. Thus, his concept more closely incorporates the viewpoint of customer. He is prepared to measure everything and relies on systems and problem-solving techniques.

Unlike Deming, as Ross;(2012) puts it, Juran focuses on top-down management and technical methods rather than worker pride and satisfaction. Juran's pointed 10 steps to quality improvement which be applied in educational institutes. They are:

1. build awareness of opportunity to improve.
2. set-goals for improvement.
3. organize to reach goals.
4. provide training
5. carry out projects to solve problems.
6. report progress.
7. give recognition.
8. communicate results.
9. keep score.
10. maintain momentum by making annual improvement part of the regular systems and processes of the company.

For more details see:(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_M._Juran)

Philip B. Crosby (1926-...)

Crosby was born in Wheeling, West Virginia in 1926. He served in the Navy during World War II and again during the Korean War. In between, he earned a degree from the Ohio College of Podiatric Medicine. His first job in the field of quality was that of test technician in the quality department at Crosley Corporation in Richmond, Indiana beginning in 1952. He contributed to TQM by included four major principles:

1. The definition of quality is conformance to requirements (requirements meaning both the product and the customer's requirements).
2. The system of quality is prevention.
3. The performance standard is zero defects (relative to requirements).
4. The measurement of quality is the price of nonconformance

(Crosby) emphasizes continuing education, quality measurement and the development of individuals.

Howard Malcolm Baldrige, Jr. (1922 – 1987)

Baldrige began his career in the manufacturing industry in 1947 as a foundry hand in an iron company in Connecticut and rose to the presidency of that company by 1960. During World War II, Baldrige served in combat in the Pacific as Captain in the 27th Infantry Division. He was born in Omaha, Nebraska to H. Malcolm Baldrige, and graduated from Yale University with a bachelor's degree in 1944. Baldrige worked during his boyhood as a ranch hand and earned several awards as a professional team roper on the rodeo circuit. Baldrige died July 25, 1987, in a rodeo accident in California at the age of sixty-four when his horse in calf-roping competition fell on him. Baldrige believes that the size matter or nature of the organization is not of great importance. His criteria are seen as a guide toward performance excellence.

They can help organization align resources; improve communication, productivity, and effectiveness; and achieve strategic goals. The Criteria work as an integrated framework for managing an organization. They are simply a set of questions focusing on critical aspects of management that contribute to performance excellence. So his philosophy is focused in the quality of university education as based on the following Criteria for Performing Excellence.

- Leadership
- Strategic planning
- Customer focus
- Measurement, analysis, and knowledge management
- Workforce focus
- Operations focus
- Results

Olimat:(2004) believes that the quality of quality university must be comprehensive and comprehensiveness means three things:

First: It includes every process within the university not just teaching.

Second: It is comprehensive for each job, and not those who teach students.

Third: it is comprehensive that everyone at university and that each individual is responsible for quality in his work.

The need of the application of total quality in higher education:

It is a pity that higher education institutions are the factories where learning and knowledge are made through their research facilities, it is very sad that these institutions are lagging behind other organizations in the implementation of TQM. Fitzgerald:(2012), sees TQM as a philosophy and system for continuously improving the services and/or products offered to customers. Now that the technologies of transportation and communication have replaced national economic systems with a global economy, nations and businesses that do not practice TQM can become globally non-competitive rather rapidly. The potential benefits of TQM in a school, district or college are very clear:

1. TQM can help a school or college provide better service to its primary customers--students and employers.
2. The continuous improvement focus of TQM is a fundamental way of fulfilling the accountability requirements common to educational reform.
3. Operating a no-fear TQM system with a focus on continuous growth and improvement offers more excitement and challenge to students and teachers than a "good-enough" learning environment can provide. He adds that in a TQM school or college, improvement teams and individuals are constantly working on improving service to customers. The concept of a service being "good enough" is considered inadequate.

It is here we need to mention that the TQM as principles and philosophy has been a field of active reach in America, Europe and other parts of the world. Such people like: Salmon, V R (1993), Scharge, F P (1993), Taylor, L J (1993), West-Burnham, John (1992), Essex Roberts, A. (1992), Sallis, Edward (1992), Loder, Cari (1991) and Parsons, Carl, (1994) among others- all have written about the implementation of TQM in education. However, the TQM in education is still in need for many efforts in the Arab World, as a limited number of researchers have tackled the topic focusing on profit-making organizations rather than education institutions. In the next few pages we will go through these efforts of researchers in the Arab World who show interest in TQM in higher education in particular. The importance of the application of quality in higher education institutes is an urgent need so as to keep up with the current changes. We have to mention here that most of the references are in Arabic, so some translation is needed.

According to Atartorri:(2006), we can determine the justification for the requirements and benefits of the application of total quality management in universities in the following points:

1. creating a comprehensive system of quality control in universities to enable it evaluate, review and develop curricula.
2. helping focusing on efforts of universities to follow the real needs of the markets they serve.

3. finding a common set of organizational structures that focus on the quality of education in universities leading to better control and order.
4. evaluation and removal of all non-productive aspects in the university educational system as well as developing the performance measurement standards.
5. developing a marketing tool that gives the higher education facility competitiveness in the labor market.
6. transporting or transferring of authority and responsibility to working levels, while retaining the same time the central and strategic management.
7. leading the development of teamwork through working groups, and giving them more opportunities to develop and strengthen their abilities.
8. using effective means of communication within and outside the university.
9. changing the culture among employees.
10. providing better services for students that revolve around the total quality in universities.

According to Ziad:(2007), there are some indications in the field of education that can work towards integration to improve the educational process; they are:

1. Standards should be associated with students in terms of admission and selection and in term of the ratio of the number of students to teachers, and the average cost of the individual and services offered to them in addition to students' motivation and willingness to learn.
2. Standards should be associated with faculty members in terms of size, professional culture, as well as respect and admiration of teachers to their students, beside the staff contribution in community service.
3. Standards should be linked with curriculum in terms of originality of approach, standard of quality and content, the manner and method relevance in addition to curriculum reflecting personal and cultural nationalism.
4. Standards should be associated with management: In terms of leadership's commitment to quality and good human relations as well as the selection and training of administrators.
5. Standards should be linked with educational administration in terms of educational leadership's commitment to quality decentralization, delegation of authority, change seniority system, good human relations in addition to the selection and training of leaders.
6. Standards should be linked with the physical potential flexibility of the building and its potentiality to achieve the goals, and how students would benefit from the library and other devices.
7. Standards should be related to the relationship between university and the community: that the university should secure the needs of the surrounding community and participate in its solving problems. It should connect-disciplinary nature of the community with its needs in addition to enforcing the interaction between the university intellectual and human resources with the community productivity.
8. Faculty members should deal with different types of learners.
9. Services should directly and indirectly be provided to students.
10. Students should stay in the program for a period sufficient to achieve educational goals.
11. Learners should show progress towards becoming competent with skills that enhance their educational goals.

II: Strategic Management

The concept of strategic management

According to Johnson: (2012), strategy is the direction and scope of an organization over the long-term: which achieves advantage for the organization through its configuration of resources within a challenging environment, to meet the needs of markets and to fulfill stakeholder expectations. Riley: (2012), says that strategies exist at several levels in any organization - ranging from the overall business (or group of businesses) through to individuals working in it. To him corporate strategy is concerned with the overall purpose and scope of the business to meet stakeholder expectations while business unit strategy is concerned more with how a business competes successfully in a particular market. But the operational strategy as he believes is concerned with how each part of the business is organized to deliver the corporate and business-unit level strategic direction. Operational strategy therefore focuses on issues of resources, processes, people etc. A strategy is basically a military term , but is used now to mean a comprehensive plan intended to control the military situation, the economic and political communication during a war. But strategy from the political point of view is setting of goals and identifying harmful forces to determine their main direction of movement.

Strategic Management is concerned with drawing the general policy of the institution, and determines its general direction. It is sometimes called the strategic plan or development plan. The clear strategic thinking is based on three questions:

- Where are we now?
- Where we want to go?
- How to get what we want?

But according to Yassin:(1998), a strategy should include the vision, the mission and the objectives which are expected to be achieved by the organization. It should also include performance indicators beside priorities and resources that are needed to implement the plan. The key element of the plan is realizing the needs of learners. The strategy should also include a collection of indicators that make up the total quality management system. Yassin believes that strategic management is an integrated related system of operations aims to analyze internal and external environments. This will help to formulate and apply appropriate strategy to make evaluation, based on analysis of the effects of the important variables, to secure achieving strategic advantage for the organization and maximize its accomplishment in various business activities.

The Importance of strategic management:

The importance of strategic management appears through the analysis of challenges facing the administration. According to Al-Bana:(2007) these challenges are:

a. accelerated quantitative and qualitative change in the business environment: The change can be clearly seen in the structure of the political, social and economic development of the world. It can be noticed in the development of technology and advanced software and in the advanced technologies of communication devices. So, the strategists must keep pace with the changes rather than confronting them, to gain more experience in management of change in effective manner, based on broad participation by all members of the organization.

b. increased competition: Competition is –now- a universal reality from semiconductors to cleaning services as economic globalization has changed the limits of competition. This image is clear in the emergence of new competitors, constantly increasing competition in domestic and global markets than those imposed on strategy makers. The challenge is evident in the formulation and development of strategic plans and efficient long-term treatment, aims to put the organizations in slow-growth markets, and in markets in which the organization status is critical.

c. universality of business: Limits of sovereignty has faded in today's business world between states and territories because of the increasing interdependence of economies, growth of foreign competition in the domestic market, the scarcity of natural resources and freedom of trade. These facts -among others- have made business more global and less local than ever before. For example, among the notable appearances at global business is the trend of Japanese companies looking for open strategic alliances, with other global companies so that each party would recognize the technical elements of power at the other end. (Toyota) and (GM), e.g. now share in the development of automobile manufacturing.

d) technological change: Most organizations depend on technology to achieve competitive advantages necessary for survival in the world business. And as technology is rapidly changing in all industries –including education- lagging behind with this change, will put the educational organization in the face of real threat. But the organizations managers usually make ready to face competitors by developing new ways to compete and take advantage of the technology. This philosophy can be traced by educational organizations that seek excellence and customer satisfaction.

e) lack of resources: Clearly, natural resources continue to drop all over the world. There are certain industries – today- that are facing serious shortage of raw materials and components of production system. This shortage requires long strategic management plans to get at the raw materials in a rational and economic way within the framework of social responsibility. This is also applicable to education organizations in the Arab World that witness severe shortage of qualified personnel, with higher qualifications to teach at the tertiary level.

f) The shift from industrialized societies to knowledge-based societies: "Knowledge is power" as Sinclair: (2012), recalls the English statesman and philosopher Francis Bacon's words- four hundred years ago. It's as true now as it was then, except that now the amount of information available to those seeking knowledge has multiplied to almost unimaginable proportions. So knowledge is becoming a strategic force. It is a strategic advantage in the field of management and technology. Knowledge is basic in the process of creating new products/service or developing existing ones, based on the ability to reach high levels of quality and technical innovation. Knowledge is necessary to implement management, marketing activities and management of human resources in a way that ensures efficiency and effectiveness. So the strategy makers are supposed to learn which knowledge management is a vital factor that likely determines the success or failure of their educational organizations.

g) instability in the market conditions: We can notice that commercial markets are in continuous instability, such instability is of currency exchange rates, instability of energy prices, increasing balance of payments, besides deficits in the third world countries and their debts. These factors are increasing the impact of the political changes in market conditions. They also place business organizations in high degree of risk during investment or during making long-term strategic decisions. So, as a result of the above-mentioned challenges, strategic management operations must be changed or they must witness constant adjustments. Strategic Management helps in the development of strategic thinking among managers – in this context university director. It can also help to identify the characteristics that distinguish one organization from another. Strategic management can also give university the possibility of owning a competitive advantage of available resources to increase efficiency and effectiveness in the credibility of its programs and learning outcome.

III: Strategy of Quality management

The quality management strategy redefines the concept of total quality in the light of competition, speed and global changes. Despite the newness of this concept, it has become of strategic imperatives for any educational organization that looks forward to achieving global position among other education institutes worldwide. The quality management strategy is not a substitute for strategic planning, but it is a complementary and essential link to the program of modernization and development of the system in the educational organization. This system must be spread at all levels. The success of strategy requires university managers- who may be different in their ideas and applications- to aspire towards innovation and continuous updating.

According to Adrarrakka:(2006), quality management strategy can be defined as the process that governs the long-term goals of quality by redefining quality. It is clear from this definition that quality management strategy focuses on the causes of failure and weakness efforts in the educational organization. As each product has a value associated with it, it is necessary to determine the processes that is associated and supporting the activity of each process or stage. Quality managers also determine the amount of the added value for each process. It is possible to use strategy of quality management in the following cases:

- In educational organizations which are seeking excellence and wishing to speed and break the barriers of competition, by activating the role of work tools and methods, which are integrated with the internal strategic planning.
- Future outlook for more memorable goals in a competitive market: It is a must to increase paying attention to the internal work environment and business climate to increase flexibility in operation. This is done by raising the level of awareness, through the development of administrative and technical skills to help skip failure, through knowledge management, network communications and through the proper use of technical knowledge of customer (students, parents, etc...) –
- requirements to determine the standards and elements of effective teaching and learning service at global standard: To redefine the quality it should be linked with customer requirements to become a key element of the strategic planning process.

The basic principles for the application of quality management strategy in education organizations:

According to Adrarakkah: (2006), quality management strategy is based on a set of principles, namely:-

- Continuity of development and improvement, especially at senior and middle management levels and its implementation to lower administrative units of the educational organization. There must be constant improvement efforts and constant change of the institute's operations in the framework of the internal and external environment of the project.
- Continuity of training, education and cultural growth of employees at all levels to bring harmony, solidarity and strategic administration.
- Supporting the strategic efforts to raise awareness and improvement of the workers' performance at all levels of management.
- Cooperation, participation and empowerment to support the efforts of the application and the continuity of development, despite the differing views between parties in the organization: This awareness will develop over time and break the barrier of bureaucracy and uncertainty.

Elements of the application process for quality strategy in higher education organizations

According to Adrarakkah, we can identify five elements for the application of QS as follows:

1. Developing a vision and mission of the education institute.
2. Developing quality objectives as part of the strategic plan
3. Spreading quality objectives at all levels of the educational organization.
4. Identifying and defining the place of resources.
5. Reporting work results for analysis and evaluation.

Quality strategy can be applied through dynamic balance by applying the concepts of quality to win customer satisfaction, who achieves the largest market share of the school or college, which increases the return on investment. The quality management strategy is one of recent trends that must be taken into account when applying TQM, in order to achieve the goals of the educational institution in the internal and external community alike.

Improving Education Quality in Arab World

According to Sawhel:(2012), that the 2012 report on global competitiveness indicated that most Arab states performed poorly with regard to the quality of their education systems. For example, Egypt came 135 in the world out of 142 countries and Yemen came last. And in the 2012 academic ranking of world universities, or ARWU, from Shanghai Jiao Tong University, only four universities from Arab states were included in the top 500: Cairo University (Egypt) and three in Saudi Arabia: King Saud University, King Abdulaziz University and King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals. No Arab university was ranked among the top 100. So in the light of these results experts from Arab countries recently concluded the fourth annual conference of the Arab Organization for Quality Assurance in Education, or AROQAE, by announcing the Cairo Declaration, in terms of which Arab standards for quality education similar to those achieved internationally were to be formulated. The Cairo Declaration called for improving education quality had as its theme "Methods for Consensus and Common Standards for Quality Assurance and Academic Accreditation in Arab Universities". The conference took place in Cairo from 2-3 September.

Abu Ghazaleh in Sawhel :(2012), called at the opening session of the conference for setting up an Arab plan for higher education to tackle problems of low quality and poor performance in Arab universities,. He called for setting up an Arab plan for higher education and pointed out that the existing consensus between education quality and accreditation systems, and the mutual recognition of Arab higher education institutions and their outputs, are among the main requirements for setting up such a plan. The conference agreed to adopt special mechanisms by establishing an advisory council comprising experts and representatives of Arab quality centers and councils. There was a call to promote cooperation between national accreditation bodies, quality centers and councils in Arab countries.(ibid)

Research and quality assurance in the Arab World: The National Commission for Accreditation and Assessment in Saudi Arabia

Arab states universities suffer from relatively low education quality, research productivity and low international ranking, as only two of 22 Arab states – Egypt and Saudi Arabia – were included among the top 50 countries, according to Scimago-2012 forecasting exercise by the research, evaluation and ranking platform See (<http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20120907133102383>)

Quality management strategy in education Intuitions in the Arab World today is a headache for educationalists and education planners at all level, from school to college. Many conferences have been held all over the Arab countries and feverish race is taking place to apply these new trends in education. Many works are taking place within university units and departments to set visions and missions to colleges. A number of universities are seeking accreditations from international accreditation organization in Europe, America Canada or Australia. This race towards recognition, has yielded positive sprit towards establishing local accreditation organization, as a part of requirements to enter the world education market, through the realization of the programs provided by theses local universities. In this context we can trace here some of these attempts of establishing local standards of accreditation in the Arab world. We can mention here the efforts of the National Commission for Accreditation and Assessment in Saudi Arabia. The Mission of the commission is to encourage, support and evaluate the quality of post-secondary institutions and the programs they offer to ensure that:

- the quality of student learning outcomes,
- the management and support services provided within institutions,
- the contributions to research and the communities served by post-secondary institutions, are equivalent to high international standards.

See (<http://www.ncaaa.org.sa/english/acmspage.aspx?id=4>).

The Commission is committed to the following values which will be reflected in all of its activities.

1. Excellence: The Commission will strive to achieve the highest possible quality in all of its activities and will actively promote excellence in post-secondary institutions.
2. Independence: The Commission will act with total independence in developing processes and standards and making decisions, while working in cooperation with institutions and other agencies, and being accountable to the community through the Higher Council of Education.
3. Transparency; The policies and processes followed by the Commission and the bases for its decisions will be open to public scrutiny.
4. Impartiality; The Commission will be strictly fair and impartial in all of its dealings. It will treat all parties equally and exercise strict controls to prevent any real or apparent conflicts of interest.
5. Integrity: The Commission will consistently follow high standards of ethical practice in all of its activities, including its internal processes, its interactions with institutions, quality reviewers, government agencies and private enterprises, its students and staff, and members of the wider community. These efforts have yielded some positive results in higher education institutes in KSA as we can see in the position of King Saud University in the last global University Ranking. As according to 2012 webometrics ranking of the world universities, KSU has placed 236th globally. They also ranked it as the top university in the Arab world and 19th best in Asia. See (<http://ksu.edu.sa/Pages/default.aspx>).

The Saudi Model can be followed to achieve international recognition of the Arab world Educational Organizations. Of course we are now– feverishly- seeking accreditation by international organizations, but this should not be an aim in for itself towards which some Arab institutions are -vehemently -working. Total quality management & quality assurance if adopted by Arab education institutes, can automatically lead to international recognition. Then our schools and colleges could be easily realized through their participation in the international education and international research, where our scientists and scholars' efforts would find their way to be adopted as high quality products, by international business in industry or in educational organizations. Our learning outcomes must be of high value as universal products, having the ability to compete in the global market. But we believe that the application of quality management strategy in education intuitions can be hindered by the following difficulties:

- Chaos and lack of clear definition of powers and responsibilities.
- Centralization of power may not support the efforts of empowerment and delegation.
- Absence ownership of operations integration and cooperation between activities.
- Focusing on short-term goals rather than on client and environment.
- Shortage and weakness of existing information systems within the educational organization down to the smallest administrative unit.
- Lack of senior management involvement in efforts of projects development.
- Weak system of encouragement and effective incentives.

So if we are serious towards educational growth, we have to take new measures, criteria and use new effective instruments to carry out our tasks and help in attaining our objectives of providing high quality education.

Conclusion: Through our investigation of the issue of TQM application in higher education institutions in the Arab World, we have come to the following findings:

I: Results

1. It is proved here that there is a significant relationship between total quality management and strategic management.
2. The total quality management system is linked with the objectives of the educational institution and its strategic management as well.
3. The application of quality management strategy will help the attainment of long-term goals of the school or college.
4. The vision and the clear mission of any educational organization should lead towards achieving quality standards in the long run.
5. The system of quality management strategy realizes the consent of parties concerned [internal–external] at the highest efficiency.
6. The TQMS is a comprehensive system, its application can fit in all institutions of higher education.

II: Recommendations

1. All institutions of higher education should develop a vision and clear message about their role in attaining clear learning outcomes.
2. We recommend the application of quality management strategies in every higher education institution in the region.
3. All institutions of higher education should put into account the satisfaction of the stakeholders who are interested in education (students, parents, organizations..) in order to achieve highest efficiency and effectiveness with consideration to the internal & external environment.
4. Continuous improvement should be the most important principles as it helps in achieving the strategic objectives of any education organization.
5. Global accreditation and recognition by international organizations should not be the sole objective of our educational institutes, but application of total quality management and quality assurance should have priority at all educational levels.

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