

RELATIONSHIP MARKETING AND TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT: CASE OF JORDANIAN COMPANIES

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Abstract

TQM practices implemented by private service firms and their impact on relationship marketing will be examined in this study. Since private sector spending accounts for a large portion of GDP, it is critical. Organizational excellence was positively influenced by TQM practices involving leadership, human resources, process management, customer focus, and information and analysis. Private sector firms providing specialized services are the focus of this study for the first time. For private companies to improve their performance, it will serve as a model for TQM practices. It also serves as a framework for future research.

INTRODUCTION

The vitality of modern businesses (Grönroos 1994; Peeler 1996) has been effective through strong customer engagement (Fornell 1992; Mosahab et al. 2010; Oliver 1981). The strategy was used to add as many new consumers as possible to traditional marketing, advertisements and price increases (Slater and Narver 1994). It is suggested, however, that consumers are difficult to retain for long. Parasuraman (1998) pointed out that conventional marketing cannot prosper with increased competition. There will then be a customer-oriented approach. If one of these customers cannot return an order, the business will not survive for a long time (Goofin and Price 1996). Strong customer service simply means returning customers and sending them happily for a second purchase. Customers should be glad to receive positive transaction reports

from others (Kotler 2000). These potential buyers evaluate and become customers of the product or service they sell. They are loyal to the supplier (Boeselie et al. 2002; Hansemark and Albinson 2004). To this end, a company succeeds when consumers are satisfied and ready for a new purchase.

TQM has meanwhile been advocated in many literature for customer service and satisfaction. Therefore, faithful TQM customers must be complied with by default while using TQM. Although TQM has given better results in business implementation, TQM must also monitor the market success of companies if it is a genuine marketing medium. Consequently, this study aims to explore the role of TQM in marketing ties.

Customer Experience Innovations

Once in conventional marketing, a successful sales person can sell anything to everyone. The company's ability to still sell the same individual depends on the customer service approach (Oliver 1999; Zineldin and Philipson 2007). The nature of good customer service underlines the durability of good customer ties. However, it must be a relationship that the consumer needs (Kohli and Jaworski 1990). The relationships are often subject to different mechanisms, including business closeness, long-term relationship objectivity, technological and organisational boundaries and competitive advantages (Bitner et al. 2002; Edvardsson et al. 1989; Gummesson and Grönroos 1987). In addition, advice focused on business relations would require the establishment of long-term customer relationships and strategies. In comparison, management of customer relations will need its own way of generating value for the supplier and customer (Sila and Ebrahimpour 2005). Sharing market information between suppliers and customers, including trends and market guidelines, can allow both parties to make business decisions and to improve relationships and keep them in good time (Taleghani, et al. 2011). TQM may play a major role in developing and sustaining such relationships between companies and their customers in this regard. Therefore, the recent developments in customer service indicate a movement towards the convergence of strategy and the ties between providers and consumers.

The marketing and customer service concept

Researchers have been on the agenda for collaboration marketing and customer service in recent years. Ndubisi emphasised the importance of customer service and customer care (2003, 2006). Marketing partnerships offer long-term customer service focused on consumer loyalty from a specific viewpoint (Grönroos 1994; Murphy et al. 2005). In the meantime, researchers have sought to define marketing and customer service influences (Beetles and Harris 2010; Chattananon and Trimetsoontorn 2009; Gilaninia et al. 2011; Kavali et al. 1999). Consumer relations and services are far closer to consumer orientation than other literature (Heffernan et al, 2008; Mohammad et al. 2011; Patsioura et al. 2009; Wouters 2004). Thus, in some literature, customer relations and customer service are used interchangeably. In this review, however, these two are treated differently. While customer relationships are seen as a link between strategic alignments, customer service is also considered. Several researchers argued that the TQM concepts related to recent marketing conceptual shifts and so-called business orientation

(Gummesson, 1998, 2002; Day, 1994; Webster, 1994; Mohr-Jackson, 1998). In particular, TQM approaches and strategies have been established in order to facilitate greater marketing efficiency than is possible within the conventional marketing model (Edosomwan, 1993; Day, 1994; Johnson and Chvala, 1996). Other scientists have highlighted the increasing role of information management in marketing (Band, 1991; Hurley and Laitamaki, 1993; Kordupleski et al., 1993; Woodruff, 1997; Morgan and Piercy, 1998).

In terms of the reciprocal quality effect, Morgan and Piercy (1998) pointed out that marketing could not play a key role in the quality strategy. According to Kordupleski et al. (1993) the relative lack of marketing interest in the TQM programme may be linked to the conventional marketing 'customer focus,' which meant that marketers did not consider TQM to be especially new; in fact, marketers could even see TQM as a challenge to their traditional 'territory.' Other studies examined the role of quality standards in marketing, such as ISO 900. (Oakland, 1999; Bond and Fink, 2003). Service literature includes a large number of studies on the different relationships between marketing and efficiency (Zeithaml et al., 1990; Christopher et al., 1991, 2002), while customer value studies are the primary point of contact between domains. This is a little odd, since the importance of consumers for quality and marketing is such a crucial joint factor. As Webster (1994, p. 67) noted:

Quality gives superior value to the consumer... Marketing is a mechanism used to describe, build and deliver value.

Customer value

The literature on marketing and efficiency underlines the importance of customer satisfaction (Band 1991; Christopher et al. 1991; 2002; La and Kandampully, 2004). In 2000, et al. et al. The perceived value, Zeithaml says (1988, p.14), is a thorough evaluation by the consumer of the utility of a product based on 'what is and what is given,' although other writers accept that the balance between the customer's practical solution and the customer's sacrifice for a solution is essential in achieving this objective (Ravald and Gronroos, 1996; Christopher, 1996). Woodruff (1997) indicated that the definition of worth varies depending on the position of the user.

The idea of customer satisfaction is increasingly common as a key strategic consideration for the achievement of competitive advantages (Woodruff, 1997; Ulaga, 2003; Gale, 1994; Webster, 1994; Day, 1998; Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004). Ulaga and Eggert (2006) have continually defined "relationship values" as an antecedent of the nature of relationships and their behavioural outcomes.

The topic of customer satisfaction is a subject of great interest in literature. The distribution of value was suggested by Bower and Garda (1985) in the following phases: collection of value, transmission of value and interaction with value. In similar processes, Webster (1992) witnessed the value-forming mechanism: value description, value formation and value distribution. Christopher et al. (2002) suggested a similar relationship value structure: value determination, value formation, value distribution and value evaluation. Several authors have noted that every step involves specific organisational actions at each level (Piercy, 1998; Baker,

1999; Nijssen and Frambach, 2001).

Customer Support and TQM

The concept of market orientation is widely promoted because of its effect on customer service. In the meantime, TQM also helps to shape the company's orientation towards customer service. Many researchers have tried to reflect these contexts in a meaningful way. For example, Kohli and Jaworski (1990), Jaworski and Kohli have tried to establish a conceptual and empirical market orientation framework (1993). Slater and Narver (1990) have also developed other versions (1995, 1999). Business orientation in these literatures is related to the approach taken by companies and consumer services in relation to customer needs.

In some literature, TQM and business orientation have some common dimensions (Chadam and Pastuszak 2005; Davig et al. 2003; Mandal, 2000; Moreno et al. 2005). One such aspect is the awareness and, finally, fulfilment of the needs of customers. Ishikawa (1985) emphasised that companies need to understand the needs of their consumers and to establish an optimal level of products and services. Kanji and Asher (1993) believed that customer satisfaction was the only proof of the organization's success. As a consequence, a TQM organisation can easily be believed to support the business growth of its customer service.

Relationship Marketing has been an important subject in academic and practical debates in recent years (Aijo, 1996; McKenna, 1991). This concerns consumer loyalty and shows that holding consumers alive leads to improved profitability rather than to transactional marketing policies (Jackson, 1985; Palmer, 1996). While much is published in customer loyalty and RM, few scholars have addressed these separate issues related to the implementation of RM in industry. Customer loyalty demands perfect supplier efficiency, and advertisers must recognise that their responsibilities must be met. Total Quality Management (TQM) methods and strategies should be strategically combined with RM as a solution.

Today, business conditions are characterised by increasing market saturation, shifts in the nature of competition and increasing urgency for consumers and their needs. At the same time, consumers are becoming more diverse and demanding. Relationship marketing is designed as a technique to maintain key consumer relationships in a changing business environment. Berry (1984) was recognised as a market engagement tool in the early 1980s to improve productivity and customer loyalty. Previous work and literature appeared to focus on business-to-business relationships from the point of view of supply chain management and the network. However, some researchers may argue that RM elements have always been present and important to marketing, since the organization's purpose is to create and retain customers. The basic aim of marketing is to acquire and support consumers. (Drucker, 1963) However, marketing collaborations have gained considerable attention over the last decade and a half, have been revamped, developed and refined. Evans and Lasking have more recently described this as the mechanism by which a company establishes long-term relationships with current and prospective customers to achieve mutual goals for both the buyer and the seller (Evans & Lasking, 1994). These authors suggest it is important that an organisation recognises the needs of consumers, considers customers to be friends and ensures that workers meet the needs of

customers. This means that consumers are presented with the highest possible expectations in compliance with their individual requirements. Other authors have tried to expand the marketing model by drawing attention to other collaborations that are important for a company to respect its customers (Hunt & Morgan, 1995).

In this larger context, the management of all business connections must take into account the marketing relationship (Buttle, 1996). This includes all the relationships that a business can have with people who can have an effect and promote customer loyalty, as well as with people who can actively refer to or share businesses.

This is evident from the 'six-market model' (see Christopher et al., 1991). Gummesson's '30Rs' also outlines 30 main business relationships that extend beyond the relationship of the customer. These include: contacts with suppliers; government and its agencies; non-profit making; internal organisational ties, including functional areas and staff; customer relations, including corporate relationships. Sales intermediaries and, eventually, side partnerships to partner with rivals. These later ties with rivals add a new dimension to the competitive policy review, implying that certain companies 'co-operate' to succeed (Hunt, 1997).

From this wider point of view, Hunt and Morgan argue that RM applies to all activities aimed at establishing, maintaining and sustaining good relations. Customer loyalty in complex business environments is the secret to a successful marketing relationship. Consequently, the speed and direction of the transformation in such circumstances are largely unknown. Companies therefore need to learn continuously about their consumers' ever-changing needs and desires and to be able to strengthen their relationships by reducing the importance of their learning. It is assumed that RM deviates from conventional marketing tactics, including the control of the marketing mix. Strong declaration that Gronroos transitions from a 'marketing mix to a marketing relationship: a paradigm shift' (1994). Consequently, RM encourages producers, processors and consumers to demonstrate love, confidence and loyalty. Wissema (1989) stressed the importance of privacy in establishing creative and highly respected partnerships between suppliers and their customers. McKenna (1991) states that participation, connectivity and innovation require a marketing partnership to ensure that customer expectations are integrated into the strategic planning process. Hunt and Morgan argue that the effectiveness of marketing collaborations lies in establishing and building trust and commitment between partners. You describe "trust" as "will rely on an exchange partner in whom one has "as" confidence and loyalty.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Research Objective

Marketers must understand that the organisation must deliver on its promises in order to maintain customer loyalty. RM's strategic implementation may benefit from the tools and techniques of total quality management (TQM). Today's business environments are characterised by oversaturated markets, shifting competitive dynamics, and a pressing need to learn more about customers and their wants and needs than ever before. Additionally,

customers' needs and expectations have expanded as well. Managing the essential processor-customer relationship in a changing and ever-changing business environment is made possible by the use of relationship marketing. Thus this study will help the private sector know that what is required for a relationship marketing to be effective enough while making sure of total quality management of the products in Jordan.

Research Design

TQM is most closely related to optimal management through the inclusion of internal and external stakeholders of an organisation (Motwani 2001). In the meantime, marketing also looks at the quality of a company's sales assurance activities. At this point, several researchers agree that marketing ties between suppliers and customers are critical for ensuring a strong foundation for businesses to continue (Appiah-Adu and Singh 1988; Liu 1995; Pit et al. 1996; Slater and Narver 1994). It is strongly advocated that TQM mediates the marketing strategy of companies through its customer-oriented framework (Mele 2007). In this sense, this research tries to understand the world behind TQM's application in marketing relationships to customer service. The companies are shown in Table-1.

Table-1: List of Companies Studied

S No.	Company Name	Industry
1	ABS network	Consumer services
2	Al Khalidi Medical Center	Health care
3	Aqaba Railway Corporation	Industrials
4	Arab Bank	Financials
5	Arab Bridge Maritime	Industrials
6	Bank of Jordan	Financials
7	Jordan Petroleum Refinery Company	Industrials
8	Jordan Phosphate Mines	Industrials
9	Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Organization	Industrials
10	Rubicon Group Holding	Consumer services

While the companies selected are deemed to incorporate both categories of the award, the research methodology was selected to unearth the different approaches followed by each company and then induct the learning points for the application of TQM for customer service in marketing relationship.

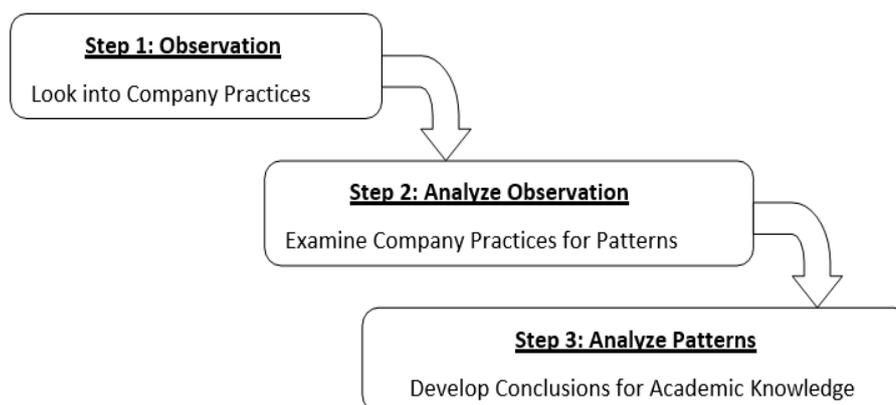
Research Methodology

Since this study is focused on learning from experience, the research methodology employed is an inductive research technique (Figure 1). Data collection: interviews and review of documents. A total of 42 in-depth interviews were conducted with respondents in key marketing and/or TQM roles (14 with respondents in marketing positions; 21 with respondents who were responsible for quality; four with respondents who had responsibility for both marketing and quality; and three with positions in new product development). Documentary analyses contained corporate records and materials from magazines, books and websites.

Analysis of results

The information was then categorized, analyzed and entered into a case-study database. The study of many case studies was based on "replication logic," i.e. cases were viewed as one qualitative theory experiments rather than as an empirical consolidated basis for meaningful quantitative analysis. Following a separate study in each case to determine the methodology of a particular firm with regard to the management of the examined phenomenon, a cross-case studying has been carried out to identify similarities and differences and to define best practices (Yin, 1994; Goffin and Fresh, 2001). Thus, as an exploratory and inductive research approach, this research aims to observe companies' activities in the application of TQM to customer service with respect to marketing relationships. The research has attempted to create trends that can typically justify TQM's application in marketing relations for the sake of customer service. Finally, there is a conclusion which compiles the observations and trends into academic knowledge.

Fig. 1: Research Methodology



While the research methodology followed is stated in Figure 2, the study points utilized were:

- Customer span
- Marketing strategy (Old type and TQM based (Game Changer Strategy))
- The applied change model (change in market orientation) and
- The results achieved thereafter (either market share or customer satisfaction index)

RESEARCH OBSERVATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The partnership between suppliers and consumers is an important business feature. The wishes of both parties (suppliers and customers) therefore do not always align. Many businesses have a wavering stand on their suppliers or clients in such a situation. The truth is that the path the

supplier or consumer takes is incompatible with the other party. This makes partnerships between suppliers and consumers short-term. In the meantime, TQM encourages long-term partnerships between provider and client. This essence of TQM is therefore regarded as essential to effective business in modern business management practises. Aligning the approach between supplier and consumer is extremely necessary to ensure that the journey is compatible over a longer period of time. The first finding in this research is therefore how suppliers have developed an adaptable business strategy for their customers.

Research Observations

Table 2 explains how each organisation has approached the establishment of a supplier-customer long-term partnership in this report. Table 2 indicates that the form of customers is diversified for each supplier. Which means that the Single Marketing Plan cannot be of use to all customers. This is because not all consumers have the same desires. It is also observed that all firms have a great deal of variability to deal with customer services. This variance is seen as regards the customer duration, the business strategy follows implemented models of change and the performance achieved. The specifics of these are discussed in this manuscript's research review part.

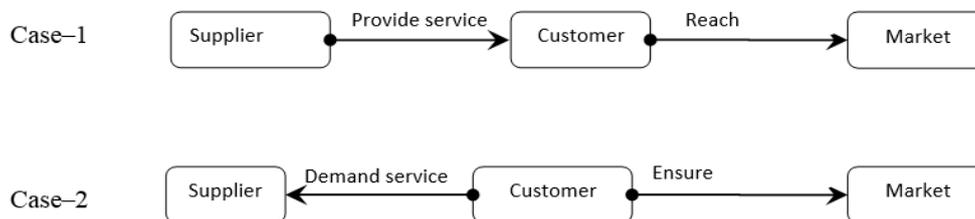
Table-2: Marketing Strategies Before and After TQM

S No.	Company	TQM Practices for Customer Service				Results Achieved
		Customer Span	Market Strategy		Applied Change Model	
			Old Type	TQM Based		
1	A	Diversified	Product based	Value based	Value chain management	Increased the share of its brand products from 11% to 34% in four years
2	B	Diversified	Market position	Service based	Customer service and outreach	Attained market share of more than 40% in four years
3	C	Diversified	Spot sales	Product and Service based	Product customization and Customer service	Customer satisfaction index has continually increased from 53.8% to 85.3% in six years
4	D	Diversified	OEM tied	Innovation based	Technological innovation and total quality	Attained a Customer satisfaction index of 96% from 76% in five years
5	E	Diversified	OEM tied	Outreach	Customized sales outlets	Acquired new sales business worth of \$11 million in just four years
6	F	Diversified	GOEM tied	Innovation based	Diversified technological innovations	Market share has continually increased more than planned
7	G	Diversified	Sales based	Service based	Customer service	Attained a market share of 48% from 18% in just four years
8	H	Diversified	Business volume	Overall business improvement	Strategic business management	Develop technology that have more than 50% market share
9	I	Diversified	-	Project based market success	Capacity improvement	Attained 49% market share in five years
10	J	Diversified	Structured service	Customized service	Stakeholders management	Dominated selected market shares by more than 10% for six consecutive years

Research Analysis (Pattern of Practices)

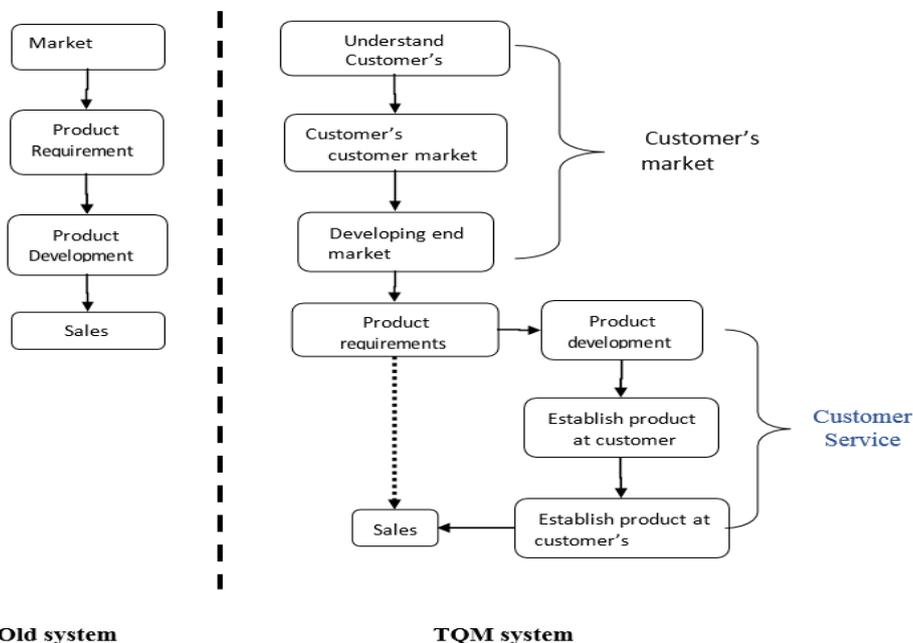
1. Customer span and handling. It is evident from the observation (Table-2) that all businesses have diverse customers under this analysis. The essence of diversity depends on the form of organization. It is noted that the essence and need of customers are not homogeneous with the same company. However, although the supplier companies have their own business goals and business processes, their business processes have been tailored in their TQM focused market strategies to satisfy each customer's needs in a specific way. The explanation for moving to such a model is that this type of customer needs different treatment. To enhance customer experience, providers needed to consider the customer's operational needs. It also needed to recognize important factors that would make the service to the customer appealing. These circumstances require a specific and personalized customer service. There were two reasons why a customer was provided with a personalized service by the supplier. The two circumstances in which such a specific and personalized service is needed are: (1) A supplier offers a custom service to a customer to meet the final achieved market (Figure-2, case-1). This is particularly relevant when the final market success (user end) is greatly influenced by the main customer's results. (2) The customer asks the supplier for tailored service in order to ensure attendance in the final market that may need additional help to the end consumer (Figure-2, case-2). This is so critical because the primary customer itself needs support to win the end market.

Fig. 2: Cases where customer service is required



- **Market strategy.** The businesses have adopted a strategy shift from conventional to TQM in the business strategies to integrate their customers' specific service. As Table 2 shows, most firms have modified their business strategies from a particular approach to generic approach. This has allowed them to meet various consumer expectations and to deliver personalized customer services. In both cases, TQM serves to establish trusting partnerships between the supplier and the customer as a methodology to achieve business interests. Figure 3 shows, for example, how one business changed its market strategy to include consumer needs.

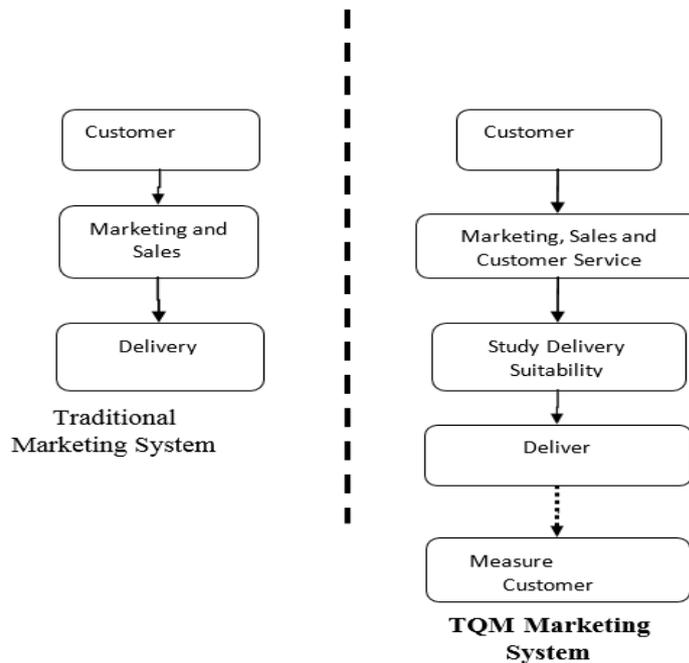
Fig. 3: Changing strategy to incorporate unique customer needs



Applied Change Model. The businesses have shown a change in strategy from short-term winning to long-term winning schemes. For example, one organisation has moved from an approach to bare value, which primarily considers the value of the commodity to the value chain management. This new approach focuses not only on the generated value, but also on how the value flows from the beginning to the end consumer. Therefore, the company will discuss the full value structure for the numerous customer bases that purchase its goods. The other businesses have implemented various models of change in their own contexts that best fit their business. However, the bottom line for both businesses was to move from a short-term market winning approach to a long-term marketing strategy that would be adaptable. Thus, TQM was critical as a forum for a full yet personalised approach to marketing strategies. This directly helps the supplier, suppliers of the supplier and customers. This is the whole business

Long-term partnerships. Figure 4 illustrates how the company revised its marketing strategy from a conventional short-term to a long-term marketing approach. The revolution is to introduce the Customer Service division to the conventional marketing structure and then add objective tasks to look at a long-term partnership with this division.

Fig. 4: Applied Changing Strategy at Example Company



- **Results achieved.** Table 2 demonstrates steady growth in the application of TQM to marketing activities over years. Although the results obtained are important, it must be remembered that it takes time to demonstrate this performance. The bottom line is that the consistency of success is ensured once those results are reached. This is for two reasons as shown in Figure 2. The supplier-customer partnership will always look at both potential scenarios. 1) In the final market, the retailer does not want to lose. Supporting its clients, who carry their goods to the final customer, is also mandatory. (2) Once the product/service is purchased, consumers buying products/services from vendors do not wish to be abandoned. They need daily monitoring from the supplier if they are to rely on the supplier to purchase the product/service again. In any case, TQM might not be beneficial when the goal of marketing is short-term performance. But if the aim is long-term, the partnership is mandatory and TQM may help a great deal.

DISCUSSION

In this report, two big primary consumer situations have demonstrated how businesses have dealt with customer services. In the final analysis, however, it was necessary for supplier companies to ensure that their clients remain an integral part of their processes and therefore businesses continue in various circumstances. The conditions noted in this study reflected two customer doubts:

➤ **Customer’s fear of their business situation if there is change of leadership at the supplier.”** In this report, it is noted that suppliers have taken the initiative in consultation with their customers to analyse in detail the end market situation. This was done because consumers are willing to rely on one supplier for most of their business. In such conditions, consumers become unaware about what would happen to their company if the supplier side changes their leadership. It is noted that consumers experience a shift in the marketing regime as leadership changes take place, and sustaining prior relationships in the new regime becomes hard. In these conditions, consumers would like to ensure that their supplier is still present. For example, one customer receives 50% of its supply from one of the companies studied. However, this customer doubted the long-term business partnership situation. Three aspects were very important for the consumer if the supplier business changed its leadership.

- 1) Continuation of the quality principles by the new regime,
- 2) Pricing approach of the new regime, and
- 3) The continued status of the company as important customer by the new regime.

The consumer company therefore required the supplier to clear doubts about the customer issues. Thus the long-term partnership was based on a realistic basis for the establishment of joint ventures, price agreements on principles, the resolution of quality issues and the development of comprehensive bilateral relationship guidelines and standards. These steps also made the customer happier and more relaxed to be served by his supplier.

➤ **Outlet channels provide indifferent service as compared to competitors.** Customers are resistant to the purchasing of any substitute product offered on the market. This means that consumers swing between vendors, impacting sales goals. Close observation of the final market and how it operates are therefore mandatory for providers if they are to retain or improve their market position. For instance, one of the companies studied has produced improved products that can beat competitor products. Despite such a highly competitive product, consumer satisfaction remained poor. Two items were identified when a study was carried out to rectify the issue.

- 1) There was little or no difference between the company and its rivals in customer service on the end market and
- 2) No standard service operation was given by all the company's dealers

Thus, while there were quality goods on the market, there was no market exemption for the product. Consequently, the company agreed to expand its customer support activities to its vendors (customers) and end users (customers) to ensure that the two issues are resolved. This allowed the company to draw customer interest and establish a sense of connectivity to the source company. This has provided the company with outstanding market success and a trustworthy relationship with its customers.

CONCLUSION

It is important to remember that the leading divisions that communicate with consumers are conventional marketing, marketing and sales. Today, however, consumers need a lot of attention from their suppliers rather than simply purchasing and selling. As manufacturing companies work under the 'Source – Prepare – Make – Produce' cycle, customer service operations have to be integrated into marketing and sales activities. The role of these units is to link the "Deliver" with each customer's needs.

Unique technological and organisational support and a plan for improving customers' efficiency will assist suppliers in cultivating loyal and repeat customers who can provide them with a competitive advantage. Under these conditions, TQM will enable companies proactively to retain good business knowledge and constantly track their customers' innovations and

The markets with consumers. TQM can also help to build very successful customer services that can translate into relationship marketing equivalence.

This study of TQM and marketing relationships has major effects for managers, as it offers insights into how the marketing concept can be geared towards customer satisfaction, the core principle of the modern marketing model. Certain unique effects can be noted for managers. Marketing managers should aim for:

- be open-minded to share their consumer awareness with those in the organization;
- familiarize yourself with and apply the TQM principles and methods in your marketing efforts;
- Engage in an ongoing and mutually beneficial conversation with quality managers to "stay in contact" with clients;
- Interact with consumers to help them become consumer value co-producers.

Finally, marketing managers need to realise that marketing and TQM are incomplete in themselves and that the business is able to produce value for consumers and achieve strategic market advantage through the synergistic and complementary relationship between them.

LIMITATIONS

Although the content of this paper is focused entirely on corporate data, the study is fundamentally inductive. Patterns in organisations are viewed on the basis of each company's presentation. The interpretations of the companies can therefore be different from the understanding of the research trend in this study. Readers should also recognise that the understanding between companies and analysis can be different. The interpretation here is for academic purposes only.

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