

TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT AS A STRATEGY FOR THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (CASE STUDY OF MINNA METROPOLIS, NIGERIA)

Introduction

Since the inception of the systematic re-direction from neo-liberalism in the late 1980s, the United Nations, through the World Bank's annual development reports, has given research based attention to Poverty Alleviation (1980), General Development Policy (1991), The Environment (1992), Health (1993), Infrastructure (1994), Labour Market Integration (1995) and from Planning to Market growth (1996). These reports had raised fundamental issues about the relations between the State and the Society, culminating in the 1997 annual development report: "The State in a changing world" (World Bank, 1997). These reports had highlighted the success of social sector programmes significantly as largely dependent upon the competence of a State in policy development and technical proficiency (Pugh, 1997).

In this context of the realisation of this critical role of the State in the social sector affairs of the people (housing, education, health, poverty alleviation, etc), the World Bank Millennial Theory of the State was articulated. This theory aims at improving development performance and declaring its instrumentality to growth and welfare. Specifically noted and to be addressed are the spheres which influence the qualities of achievement in the socio-economic development including education, health, pro-poor programmes and macro-economics reforms (Saoud, 1997).

At the dawn of the new millennium, world leaders gathered in New York under the auspices of the United Nations in September 2000 to deliberate on the challenges of the millennium, establish series of goals for humanities, formulate strategies and action plans to address them. The world leaders pledged at the millennium summit and committed themselves to launch a concerted attack on poverty, illiteracy, hunger, unsafe water, disease and urban and environmental degradation by adopting a blueprint. This blueprint has become known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGS) targeted over a period of 2000 -2015. At the millennium summit, the world leaders made the following declaration:

"We must spare no effort to free all humanity and above all our children and grandchildren from the threat of living on a planet spoilt by human activities and whose resources would no longer be sufficient for the needs " (National Tribune, 2000)

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A 'road map' was established with a framework of 8 specific global goals and 18 targets which are to be measured through 48 indicators towards the Millennium Development Goals were adopted. The goals are:

- (i). Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- (ii). Achieve universal primary education
- (iii). Promote gender equality and empower women
- (iv). Reduce child mortality
- (v). Improve maternal health
- (vi). Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases
- (vii). Ensure environmental sustainability
- (viii). Global Partnership for development.

The MDGs specifically target the developing world, with goal number eight, calling on rich countries to relieve debt increase and give poor countries fair access to their technology.

This work is a modest contribution to contemporary efforts to achieve the United Nations Development Goals in the developing countries in particular. The objectives include the following:

1. To determine the degree/extent of awareness and assess the level of understanding of the principle of Total Quality management.
2. To examine the level of commitment to quality improvement by the masses.
3. To integrate Total Quality Management into entrepreneurship schemes and consumers taste.
4. To inculcate the sense of Total Quality as a way of life into every citizen.
5. To establish the relationship between Total Quality Management and the MDGs.
6. To recommend dynamic patterns by which Total Quality Management can be implanted into the people.

Developing countries are countries with a relatively low standard of living, undeveloped industrial base and moderate to low Human Development Index (HDI). The term has tended to edge out words defined as third world (Wikipedia, 2006). Developing countries are usually characterized by certain phenomenon. According to Udu and Agu (1998) these phenomenon include under-utilization of national resources, under-employment and unemployment, rapid

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population growth, low-level of technology, poor infrastructural facilities, low income per capita, low-level of manpower development, problem of social and cultural institutions, political instability, illiteracy, civil war and pestilence.

The developed countries did not rise to the present level in a day. They passed through some difficult stages to attain development. Development according to Wikipedia (2006), entails a modern infrastructure (both physical and institutional), and a move away from low value added sectors such as agriculture and natural resource extraction. In line with this, a country's well being depends on its economic development. Economic power is the source of strength to all other determinant of state power, namely, the military, population, infrastructural base, solid services such as education, health, scientific knowledge and technology, political stability or even territorial integrity. The most and influential countries in the world today, as Ilesanmi (2000) stated are mostly the richest ones, viz, the countries of North America (U.S.A. and Canada), European Union, Japan, Australia and New Zealand to mention a few. These are the first generation countries, while the second generation countries include China, Malaysia, Philippine, Thailand, Indonesia, South Africa, Brazil etc. The patchy developing countries are in Africa, Central America etc where 76% of the world belongs. Countries actually announce for themselves whether they are developed or developing countries but recognition depends on the decision making policies and provisions compliance.

Quality as a Strategic Weapon

Exchange of goods and services is an integral economic activity that ensures socio-economic and political stability. Goods are therefore imported and exported to ensure trade relationship between countries. Depending on the state of development, a country may import more than its export and jeopardize its balance of payment, (Iido et al, 2001). One of the strategic weapons in the global market place is "quality". Quality is value conformance to establish specification or standard, excellence or meeting and/or exceeding customers' expectations. American companies were once acknowledged world leaders in productivity. However, they became complacent and failed to see the changing needs of the global market, which increasingly demanded quality products. This complacency and lack of foresight enabled competitors, especially from Japan to use this Haw to increase their market shares (Weilrich and Koontz 2005:74).

The people in the developing countries are humans and do appreciate beauty, quality, excellence and superbness. There is just the need to revolutionize the mode of thoughts about quality and ignore the old philosophy of 'anything goes' syndrome by the masses, and that customers have no choice, whatever is found in (the market they buy, because profitability is the essential thing that matters to them and not customers' satisfaction. Maintaining quality and standard has become a powerful weapon that the developing countries cannot feign to be unaware. Hellriegel, Jackson and Slocum (1999) described quality as how well a product does, what it is supposed to do - how closely and reliably it satisfies the specification to which it is built. In recent times, computers have significant implications for management control in the areas of computer aided design and 'computer assisted manufacture', this has become increasingly common in production industries. Yishay (2002) noted that these techniques involve not only design and manufacture but testing, inspection, assembly, packaging and dispatch. In line with this, the continuity in the production line of technology in the developing countries will enhance me advocacy for TQM.

The MDGs are a test of political will to build stronger partnership. Developing countries have the responsibility to undertake policy reforms and strengthen governance to liberate the creative energies of their people. In achieving this there must be new aid commitments and equitable rules. MDGs offer the world a means to accelerate the pace of and to measure results. Hence the MDGs can have fulfilment in Quality Management. In that view, a lot of policies, schemes and programmes are being established to achieve the Millennium Development Goals in Nigeria, for instance, the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy, (NEEDS). A Complementary extension of this strategy to the States is known as SEEDS and LEEDS in the Local Governments. The Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN), currently serves as vanguard for rural industrialization, poverty reduction, job creation and enhanced sustainability livelihood. It is charged with the responsibility of stimulating, monitoring and co-ordinating development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Sector (MSMES). A lot of training programmes are embarked by the agency. There is need to inculcate quality management right from onset into the training scheme. In entrepreneurship and enterprise development, the quest and impartation for Quality should be brought together. It must be emphasised that Quality Management is an answer to all the MDGs.

A Glimpse at Quality in Nigeria

The developing countries are mainly victims of circumstances arising from their background such as lack of exposure or socialization in the Dark Age before colonization. The orientation received made most people in these countries to lack the sense of value which still lingered in Nigeria even after over four decades of independence. This negative trend continued as the military regime, that has no respect for civil and fundamental human rights persisted in governance, coupled with the political oppression that would rather eliminate an opponent through any vices than sit together to exchange views. Moreover, the problem of poverty, mass unemployment, oppression, nepotism, tribalism and the embezzlement of public funds by rulers has set a precept of corruptions in the youths. The quest for money and efforts to make ends meet created in an average citizen the desire to cheat, amass wealth, and defraud public funds. Getting into Nigerian markets, there are a lot of counterfeit products, pseudo articles, phoney materials and fake services and that at the price of originals. Even though, these factors could constitute a barrier and resistance as Hassan (2002) noted that all of the forces which contribute to instability in personality or social system can be perceived as resistance. In view of this, practical steps should be taken to rid these barriers and ensure that every citizen comprehend and embrace quality as an achievable point for the MDGs .

Possibilities through Total Quality Management

Total Quality Management (TQM) is a force that can promote a country, give a better face-lift, a focus, fulfilment of the MDGs and a prospect when given attention. Producing high-quality goods and services, and successfully offering these products to the outside world results in certain benefits to the country. Extreme poverty and hunger will be eradicated as there is market for whatever is produced because of its zero-defect. Universal primary education will be achieved as the training must include sensitisation, education and inculcation of quality in every citizen. Definite, functional and conspicuous differences discovered in beneficiaries of the basic education will obviously advertise, pose challenges and willingness in others for learning. These can feature more in entrepreneurship schemes in the developing countries with the training embracing both men and women without regard for any type of discrimination. Available opportunities should be given to women also. Women themselves will become "quality" as well as offering quality services and

producing quality products. Maternal health will be improved as mortality rate are reduced. Mothers can then assess quality that is good for them and reject non-quality in terms of choice of hospital, drugs, shelters and feeding.

The HIV prevalence in Nigeria had been on a consistent increase from 1.8% in 1991 to 5.8% in 2001. No state or community is spared of the epidemic. No fewer than 1 million persons are in dire need of the retro viral drugs to manage their conditions. Some efforts made include provision of drugs, prevention strategies of Behavioural Change Communication (HCC), mother-child transmission prevention and blood safety practices (Guardian News Paper. February 12, 2007). All these efforts can be culminated in quality management. The menace is in the insufficient quantity/incomplete dosage that boil down to insufficient quality to combat the monster in the blood. Two factors are responsible, first, workers siphoning drugs and administering expired drugs. Second, ignorant patients void of the knowledge of expired drugs and would not even complete the normal dosage have their own remote part to play. When Quality Management becomes a way of life, the problem of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases will be successfully combated.

Moreover, environmental sustainability can be ensured when Quality Management is adopted as the principle of sustainable development and integrated into policies and programmes, the loss of environmental resources will be reversed when Quality Management is accepted as part of the human nature, and it will be easy to develop a global partnership for national development. There will be an open, rule-based, predictable, unsuspecting, non-discriminatory trading and financial system.

In addition to the benefits it gives to the MDGs, Total Quality Management has these other advantages. First, it affords the opportunity to compete favourably with other producers of similar goods and services globally. Second, it will redeem the poor image of such country because the products will speak for it. Thirdly, the book of proverbs says, "see a man that is diligent in his work, he shall stand before kings and not before mean men", such a country will be given its due regard anywhere since the quality is crystal clearly and proved without any controversy. Fourthly, goodwill is gotten by such country. A reputation for high quality products creates a positive image for such country. Exporters from developed countries will easily submit to recruitment. Fifthly, sales will increase which will consequently affect the National Income and income per capita. The lifestyle of citizens will in turn improve and the foreign

reserve base will grow. Sixthly, it helps in obtaining credit facilities from lending agencies which will boost production. Seventhly, the economic status of the country will change from a mere consuming economy to a manufacturing economy, which is of a high advantage. Finally, it lowers costs and secures higher market share. Improved performance increases productivity and lowers re-work time, scrap cost, and warranty costs, leading to increased profitability and decreased product liability. Akanya (2006) stressed that for a country to promote quality in non-quality market, it had to design and implement standards to regain competitiveness at domestic and international needs. In support, TQM should be a conscious focus for rigorous pursuit by the developing countries.

Total Quality Management is an organizational philosophy and strategy that makes quality a responsibility of all employees. Hellreigel, Jackson, and Slocum (1999) further explained TQM as the continuous process of ensuring that every aspect of production builds in product quality. That is, quality must be stressed repeatedly so that it becomes second nature to everyone in every organization and its suppliers. Moreover, the emergence of entrepreneurial education in the present curriculum for the tertiary institution is an opportunity to inculcate TQM into this generation. Producing high quality goods and services is critical to the economic growth of a nation and an organisation. There is an inter-relationship between quality, cost, productivity and profitability. Today's current younger generations can rightly be referred to as the twenty-first century generation because they are going to be the most entrepreneurial generation since the Industrial Revolution. In addition, approximately two million Nigerians below 34 years are actively trying to start their own businesses while one-third of new entrepreneurs are below 30 years of age (Oyenuga, 2004).

The present study is aimed at looking into problems and prospects of TQM in selected industries in Minna metropolis of Nigeria. The research questions in focus include:

- i. Are the government organizations knowledgeable about the Total Quality Management?
- ii. Is there a general awareness of the principles of TQM?
- iii. Can quality be definitely integrated into entrepreneurship schemes and consumers' taste?
- iv. Are there differences in males and females sense of value for quality as a way of life?
- v. Can Total Quality Management have a place in the MDGs?
- vi. What is the influence of education on people's commitment to quality
- vii. Can differences in age affect the level of understanding of quality management?

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Experimental Design

This research will basically be embarked on in Minna, Nigeria the giant of Africa. Minna (9.38N, 6.33E) is the capital of Niger State. It is selected for this experiment for many reasons such as its proximity to Abuja, the Federal Capital of Nigeria; Its reputation and social status. It lies along the middle-belt zone drawing its residents from various ethnic groups; from the North and South of the Country. It's a good representation of the nation in terms of its content facilities and development such as government institutions, organizations parastatals, private sectors and entrepreneurial activities. It is a city of significance and tagged 'Power State'.

The population of the study will comprise all the staff of the selected government organizations and entrepreneurs in Minna. Proportional stratified random sampling will be employed to enhance equal distribution of information on quality management on goods and services.

Null and alternative hypotheses will be drawn from the research questions for testing. The instruments to be used to access data will be questionnaires, interviews, observation and review of relevant literature. Pilot study will be conducted to validate the instrument. Data collected will be analysed and interpreted for acceptance and rejection of the hypothesis. The result will be reported in sufficient details and intelligent conclusions drawn. Appropriate recommendation will finally be postulated. This work will be achieved within 12 months of diligent and concentrated search. The financial cost of this work will range from €400,000 - €500,000.

Whatever the findings are, they will be of immense assistance as a way forward for the developing countries. Nigeria can stand as a good sample for West African problems and beyond.