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## ASSESSMENT OF TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT (TQM) IN J&K TOURISM

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### Abstract:

*Total Quality Management (TQM) has been widely accepted as a means of improving business competitiveness and customer satisfaction. The business organizations across industry sectors aspiring to become customer-oriented, emphasizes on quality of services will have to implement the TQM concepts. The effective implementation of TQM hinges on the identification of key TQM practices; it is interesting to know a set of TQM practices which will make improves company performances. The research paper undertakes an empirical study of TQM with regard to their implementation in hotels in Kashmir valley. Employees of hotels with more than one year of work experience have been included to gauge their views on various aspects of implementation of TQM practices in their organizations. A total number of 220 respondents have been included for the purpose of the present study. The data has been collected on TQM practices like Customer focus, training and education, employee involvement, HRM, Employee encouragement etc through a well designed questionnaire. The data collected has been analyzed with relevant statistical tools. From the result analysis has been revealed that overall TQM practices have very much importance in sample study organizations.*

### KEYWORDS:

TQM, TQM practices, Hotels, Kashmir valley.

### INTRODUCTION

TQM is a culture maintained by an organization that is committed to customer satisfaction through continuous improvement based upon meeting or exceeding their customer expectations (Kanji and Wallace, 2000). Deregulation and globalization have increased competitive pressures, helps to bring down prices and to improve the quality of services provided by professional tourism organizations. Quality management began to be viewed as an overall process which involves everybody from top management down to junior staff rather than just to do with concentrating on the employee-customer interaction. New approaches such as TQM and the continuous improvement programs began to be applied by an increasing number of service industries (Souty, 2003; Lockwood and Guerrier, 1989). TQM practices are those critical factors that must do well to ensure success in achieving special and continual attention, to bring about increased performance in the service industries (Talib et al., 2011).

The complexity and globalization of today's tough competitive business environment and technological challenges have made total quality management (TQM) as one of the most important managerial technique to achieve competitive advantage for the hospitality industry (Kumar et al., 2011; Eraqi, 2006; Saunders and Graham, 1992). Due to the popularity of TQM in manufacturing and service

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sectors from past two decades, the hospitality sector continues to adopt TQM related principles and practices and are heavily involved in them (Sila and Ebrahimpour, 2003). Several important managerial practices such as top-management commitment, customer focus, continuous improvement and innovation, training, information, process management etc which have showed positive associations with quality services in service industries, which can be related to TQM in the hospitality industry. TQM should be integrated organization-wide and in order to be successful in promoting organization efficiency and effectiveness (Rawlings, 2008). The research paper involves a survey-based empirical approach to study the TQM practices in hotels of Kashmir valley.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The emphasis on TQM in hospitality industry is evident by many studies. Many research academicians have investigated TQM implementation and strategies (Narangajvana & Hu, 2008; Claver-Cortés et al., 2008; Prajogo and Sohal, 2006; Yang, 2006; Brotherton, 2004, the relationship between quality management and business results (Camison, Flor, Cr Uz, Kuster 1996; Sila & Ebrahimpour, 2003), Service quality Lau, Akbar & Fie, 2005) and Customer satisfaction (Poon & Low, 2005; Sit, Ooi, Lin, & Chong 2009).

An extensive investigation over the TQM practices have been done in relation to manufacturing and service sectors, but the number of studies devoted to hospitality industry is relatively less especially in Indian context particularly in J&K tourism industry. Though many TQM researchers have examined the practices of TQM commuted to hotels and tourism industries covering different objectives (Claver-Cortés et al., 2008; Eraqi, 2006; Camison, 1996; Partlow, 1996; Keating and Harrington, 2003), the identification, and analysis of implementation of TQM practices have not been examined in the JK hospitality industry. The research paper aims to study TQM practices in hotels operating in Kashmir valley

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Extensive literature reveals more than 15 TQM practices studied across industry sectors. The present research study undertakes 10 TQM practices to study their implementation in hotels in Kashmir Valley. The TQM practices include 1. Top management commitment (TMC) 2. Customers focus (CF) 3. Training and education (TE) 4. Employee encouragement and involvement (EEI) 5. Quality systems (QS) 6. Human resource management (HRM) 7. Benchmarking (BM) 8. Team work (TW), 9. Product service and design (PSD) and 10. Communication (COM). The data on these TQM practices have been collected on self administered 5-point Likert scale.

The sample frame for the purpose of the research study has been hotels in Kashmir valley. The respondents have been employees (from top management to level) of hotels and the respondents were selected on the basis of their work experience. The employee with more than one years of work experience has been considered to be fit to comment on the TQM practices in their organization. Simple random sampling method has been used to collect data through a well structured questionnaire.

Data collected on various aspects of TQM practices have analyzed using SPSS. Statistical measures like mean, correlation etc have been used to examine TQM practices implementation in hotels operating in Kashmir valley. Cronbach's/s alpha was used to find out the reliability of the scale items (Nullay, 1978). The reliability coefficients (alpha values) of 10 TQM practices exceeded the minimum acceptable level of 0.60 (Black and Porter, 1996). The Cronbach's of TQM practice exceeds 0.70 as shown in table (2).

### RESPONDENTS PROFILE

ASSESSMENT OF TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT (TQM) IN J&K TOURISM

Characteristics		Respondents percentage
Gender	Male	62%
	Female	38%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>
Management position	Top management	30%
	Middle management	42%
	Lower Management	28%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>
Work experience	1- 5 years	23%
	6-10 years	37%
	10-15 years	21%
	More than15 years	19%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**RESULT FINDINGS**

**Correlation Analysis**

The correlation matrices has been done to analyze inter-correlation between TQM practices as shown in table (1). The correlation has been done at  $p < 0.05$ . The results in the table shows that highest correlation has been 0.79 between training and education (TE) and customer focus (CF) followed by product service and design (PSD) and customer focus (CF) at 0.75.

**Table (1) correlation matrix of TQM practices**

TQM Practices	TMC	CF	TE	EEI	QS	HRM	BM	TW	PSD	COM
<b>TMC</b>	<b>1</b>									
<b>CF</b>	0.69	<b>1</b>								
<b>TE</b>	0.66	<b>0.79</b>	<b>1</b>							
<b>EEI</b>	0.56	0.63	0.46	<b>1</b>						
<b>QS</b>	0.71	0.70	0.57	0.63	<b>1</b>					
<b>HRM</b>	0.66	0.59	0.71	0.55	0.70	<b>1</b>				
<b>BM</b>	0.71	0.78	0.68	0.067	0.64	0.70	<b>1</b>			
<b>TW</b>	0.67	0.60	0.47	0.66	0.61	0.69	0.61	<b>1</b>		
<b>PSD</b>	0.59	<b>0.75</b>	0.70	0.67	0.59	0.60	0.59	0.45	<b>1</b>	
<b>COM</b>	0.68	0.67	0.70	0.29	0.49	0.23	0.67	0.65	0.70	<b>1</b>

Correlation is done at  $P < 0.05$  level of significance.

The results in the table (1) shows that TQM practices in hotels of Kashmir valley are inter-related. It is evident that customer focus (CF) has received much attention which indicates that organizations are customer centric and are offerings services as per the requirements of customers.

**SURVEY FINDINGS**

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Table (2) statistics of TQM practices in hotels.

TQM Practices	Cronbach's alpha	Mean score	SD	t-value	p-value
TMC	0.79	4.17	1.369	-2.562	0.031
CF	0.82	4.77	0.892	2.173	0.000*
TE	0.78	4.13	0.623	2.036	0.043
EEI	0.80	4.01	1.963	3.469	0.001*
QS	0.77	4.29	0.562	3.012	0.000*
HRM	0.73	4.11	0.471	-2.272	0.004
BM	0.79	4.00	0.986	3.714	0.003*
TW	0.70	4.08	0.336	2.019	0.027
PSD	0.76	4.36	0.952	2.917	0.003*
COM	0.81	4.03	0.126	3.632	0.000*

Note: SD= standard deviation, n=220, p<0.05, \*P<0.01

From the findings in the table (2), it is evident that the hotels organization in the Kashmir valley emphasizes on customer focus, communications, top management commitment, quality systems. There is good communication from top management to their sub ordinates and vice versa. Besides there is good competition between the industry players in implementing TQM practices and are quality centric.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Adopting TQM has become attractive to organizations world-wide for competing in the local and global markets (Pun, 2001; Pun, 2002). TQM is an approach that helps improving the competitiveness, effectiveness and flexibility of a whole organization. It is a way of planning, organizing and monitoring each activity, and depends on each individual at each level. It involves the application of quality management principles to all aspects of the organization, including customers, suppliers, and staff. It requires that the principles of quality management should be applied in every branch and at every level in the organization with an emphasis on integration into business practices that leads to balance between technical, managerial and people issues (Oakland, 2003).

The research paper "Assessment of Total Quality Management in J&K Tourism" examined implementation of TQM practices in hotels operating in Kashmir valley. 59 scale items have been used on a 5-point Likert scale represented ten (10) different TQM practices. From the survey findings, it has been revealed that TQM practices are highly correlated. The practices have been indentified important in guiding values among employees and maintaining organization culture. Besides, quality system, training and education have been identified as an essential part of TQM practice; also the hotels are keeping pace in implementing TQM practices in the region. The organizations are focusing on employee involvement while designing products and services and gives proper education to their employees. To sum up, TQM practices are very well implementing in hotels of Kashmir valley and are competing with other players in sector.

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