

INTERFERENCES BETWEEN TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

Amalia Venera TODORU¹

ABSTRACT

This paper approaches a present-day issue of great interest for the public sector organizations, revealing the inter-conditionings between TQM and the new paradigms of public management. The objective of this paper consists in analysing the opportunity of implementing Total Quality Management in public administration and, in identifying the general conditions which must be fulfilled in institutions and public authorities in order to obtain TQM success. The increasing need for a good governance calls for new approaches to make Total Quality Management operational. The paper also presents a comparative analysis between the old and new TQM approaches specific to the current context in the public management field. The research of the study is based on documents and reform strategies purchased on the internet, having as sources the official sites of certain public institutions.

KEYWORDS: *quality, innovative, new public management*

JEL CLASSIFICATION : *H83, H80, M10*

1. INTRODUCTION

In the ongoing step to build an efficient public administration, transparent and oriented to citizens, the interest in promoting and introducing the Total Quality Management as a mobilizing strategy to achieve long-term success is more and more remarked.

The Quality Management has a number of features (Moldoveanu & Dobrin, 2003): the objective is to gain the customer satisfaction; quality is defined by the customer; it affects all the activities of the organization, whether they are or not directly related to the service or product; customers are external; it closes the control activities, but it primarily involves managing the entire organization; everyone is involved in its application; this participation is determined by conviction; methodology goes especially for prevention; things are aimed to be made well "from the beginning"; responsibility and involvement of everyone within the organization.

Moreira (2000) defines TQM as an administrative system oriented towards the citizens in order to permanently increase customers-citizens satisfaction and reduce actual costs.

Total quality is a systematic approach that starts from high-level strategy which requires the involvement of all employees and favours learning and adapting to changes, which is an important factor that drives the organization to success.

Bilhim (2000) refers to TQM as a set of principles, tools and management processes necessary to improve and modernize public services while giving them a high efficiency.

Bilhim (2000) shows that more and more people claim more rights, while caring for the issues to be resolved as quickly as possible and at lower costs. He also believes that raising the awareness of citizens and the growing level of education are new challenges for public administration.

¹"Constantin Brâncuși" University of Targu-Jiu, Romania, amalia_venera@yahoo.com

Ferreira (2004) concludes that local administration can find the TQM very attractive in the sense that it helps public institutions to understand the community needs and to worry about a real improvement in the quality of services provided to citizens.

TQM applications are multiple and varied, from reducing costs in public administration to strategies redirected towards the provision of some public services which meet public needs as efficiently as possible.

There are a number of features that create the opportunity to implement TQM in public administration. Primarily, due to increased competition and the alternative services provided, it was imposed to public organizations to reconsider their position and to focus on efficiency and effectiveness in the work that they carry.

Secondly, quality is defined by consumers who, from the public administration point of view, are divided into two groups: citizens, in general and groups of interest. The third change is the fact that now the public official has the power to make decisions in accordance with the principle that the worker is more likely to make things right, if it follows instructions clearly.

TQM can be applied to both the private sector and the public sector, but it is necessary to develop some different strategies to cope with the new realities.

2. THE NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT AND TQM APPROACHES

We must consider that the new public management is not a uniformly applied current after a clear standard in all Western countries. (Nicolescu et al, 2010). Each and every government chose a specific approach for the political system that addresses and considers various historical, administrative, economic and social factors. What should be noted is the extent of this process which included practically all Western countries and influenced and influences, essentially, all the reform programs of the current public administration including the one in our country.

The implementation of this trend means fundamental changes in the mindset and behaviour of public officials, in the exercise of management and execution, but also in the orientation of public organizations to the market and, implicitly, to the customer (Androniceanu, 2008).

The most radical expression of NPM is the model that supports the transformation of the public sector in a set of internal markets in which bidding and short-term contracting in production and supply of goods and public services should replace the Weber bureaucratic hierarchy. (Matei, L&Matei, A. 2011) Therefore, competition between producers and negotiation between manufacturers and suppliers of goods and services could be stimulated, and the freedom of action and discretion power of public managers would increase, since they would be evaluated according to the degree of fulfilment of the organization's objectives.

Thus, within the NPM, the "office" would be taken by the firm type organizations, goals-oriented, characterized by high flexibility and adaptability that are geared towards efficiency and effectiveness.

The obvious changes in the public field contain specific elements for TQM which implemented in NPM try to offer more effective mechanisms for providing public goods and services and increasing the governmental performances.

NPM and TQM are regarded as being processes which have the same goal, satisfying the public interest due to an increased functionality and efficiency and organizational effectiveness.

Particularly suggestive is the comparative analysis between the concepts of NPM, TQM and the new TQM approach in Table nr.1:

Table 1. Comparative analysis between NPM, TQM and the new TQM approach

| No. | The New Public Management | Total Quality Management | The new TQM approach |
|------------|--|--|--|
| 1 | - A greater approach to the citizens-customers of the organization; | - Orientation towards the consumers; | - Orientation is allowed not only for immediate, direct customers but for all citizens; - the taxpayers are final determinants of quality; |
| 2. | - The organization is led towards performance, eliminating the rigid rules; - a greater attention is given to outputs and outgoing control; | - Quality requires a continuous improvement of outputs, but, just as important should be the continuous improvement of outputs and processes; - The creation of a fluent, continuous management process is essential; | - A strong focus on HRM; - Also, a special attention is given to outputs objectives and measurements; |
| 3. | - The use of performance criteria related to recruitment, hiring, promoting systems and the remuneration of staff; | - Efficient management that takes into account the human factors and also the organizational system factors; | - The new TQM approach can be the first step in introducing the efficient management; - The creation of an extrinsic motivation (individual rewards); |
| 4. | - displaying a commitment for the continuous improvement of quality (objectives, standards); | - Continuous improvement according to the cycle plan-do-check-act; | - Quality indicators should be defined in relation to the types of public services to create a common framework of quality understanding, of employees involvement and to realize continuous improvement; |
| 5. | - Defining objectives, targets and indicators specific for success must be expressed in quantitative terms; | - Quality data and reporting; - Measurement and feed-back on quality costs and customers feed-back; - The use of quality management tools and techniques to improve the systems performances; | - Focus on increasing efficiency and effectiveness in the conditions of some limited resources; - A tracking of quality services as well as of customers reactions using certain quantitative indicators; |
| 6. | - Flexibility and innovation; | - Involvement and teamwork; | - Empowered employees; |
| 7 | - Ethic public services; - A greater flexibility in hiring and remunerating employees; - The change of the management style; | - The change of culture; | - A stronger culture of quality, but taking into account that at present quality is not the only parameter of excellence; |

| No. | The New Public Management | Total Quality Management | The new TQM approach |
|-----|---|--|---|
| 8. | - An active organizational control, visible, and a performing planning; -Management and strategic planning; | -planning and organization; | |
| 9. | - Staff management; | - Education and training; | - Focus on HRM instead of management processes; |
| 10. | - Freedom in leadership; | - Commitment and leadership for top management; | |
| 11. | - Decentralization and abandoning the monolithic units and the creation of flexible units; - The competition between public agencies is the key to the provision of some low cost services and better standards; | - The development of the organizational culture that facilitates the staff participation and involvement, so that the organization to become more competitive; - Collaboration with stakeholders; | - The heterogeneity of personalized services allows the growth of choice possibilities; |

Source: adaptation after Vinni (2007), 112

3. INTERFERENCES BETWEEN NPM, TQM AND THE NEW APPROACH OF TQM

From the analysis of presented data, it is highlighted that, firstly orientation towards the consumer is important both for NPM and TQM. The new TQM approach argues that you must be more careful when deciding who the customers are and which their expectations are and should, therefore, be taken into consideration all the stakeholders expectations.

Secondly, both NPM and TQM intend to measure performance and set standards and targets. The difference is that the classic TQM emphasizes the performances of the process besides improving the results while NPM considers mostly the results. The new TQM approach underlines the importance of the output objectives and their measurement, as well as the importance of HRM instead of the processes management, being so closer to the NPM than to the classic TQM. The development of the performance criteria is difficult, but possible in some specific services, such as, for example, the short-term services.

We can say that NPM and TQM have as common objective the continuous growth of the standards level. In doing so, both set targets and note the progress through the audit report and reporting the data about quality. Similarly, the new TQM approach involves employees in defining the quality characteristics of the public services, creating the commitment for a continuous improvement of the civil servants. The continuous prosecutions of the services quality and the customers feedback, characterizes the new TQM. All three approaches aim at reducing costs.

Further, the employees' empowerment is still practiced in NPM and in the new TQM approach, just as in TQM. (Involvement through cross-functional teams and the cycle of quality)

The change of culture is represented in both approaches, but we must consider that TQM emphasizes the relative culture change more than NPM. The new TQM approach highlights the cultural continuity, starting from the classic TQM.

Planning and organization are typical for NPM and TQM as the performances measurement involves establishing, clearly, the objectives. In NPM, the performance planning is important and the control is visible. In TQM, the organizational control can be subtle by a consensus trying from the employees.

Finally, HRM or the staff management is present in all the three approaches. They all use rewards, but in TQM the rewards are not necessarily financial (e.g. a special importance is the investment in education). TQM is actually very clear regarding the need for training and it also shows the role of managers in achieving the objectives. The managers must be the leaders of organizational performances improvement and motivate the staff through the pattern they create.

In conclusion, the main paradigms of NPM, such as: orientation towards the customer, increasing managerial freedom in the use of resources and in staff management, performances measurement, investments in human and technological resources and responsiveness as competition are represented in the new TQM approach.

4. CONCLUSIONS

This paper actually deals with the issue of how TQM fits different paradigms of public administration. The study aims to analyze the TQM sustainability in public organizations and to identify the general conditions which must be accomplished to achieve TQM success.

The new TQM approach could be applied in public institutions, interfering with NPM. A detailed analysis that includes the understanding of organizational and environmental variables and the techniques of the knowledge-based management is an essential condition to improve the initiatives in public sector. An understanding of the relationship between public administration paradigms and TQM may lead to a better match between public policies and their implementation and so to more effective governance.

REFERENCES

- Androniceanu, A. (2008). *Noutăți în managementul public*, Editura Universitară, București, 2008;
- Bilhim, João (2000). *Ciência da Administração*, Publicação da Universidade Aberta, Lisboa; http://www.iscsp.utl.pt/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=193, accessed 10.10.2012
- Ferreira, M.,P.,&Diniz, F. (2004). *Total Quality Management and Public Administration: The case of Vila Real*, Town Hall, 44 th European Congress of the European Regional Science Association – Regions and Fiscal Federalism, University of Porto, Porto, Portugal, 347, 1-23.
- Matei,L., Matei, A. (2011). *Administrative Reforms in South Eastern European States-Comparative Study in View Of Enlarging the European Administrative Space*, electronic copy available at <http://ssrn.com/abstract> ,accessed 04.05.2012
- Moreira, Kathia (2000). *A implementação dos princípios da Gestão da Qualidade Total nagestão dos recursos humanos: estudo de caso*, Dissertação de mestrado da Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Santa Catarina; www.trabalhosfeitos.com/ensaios/Principios-Da-Qualidade-, accessed 03.10.2012
- Moldoveanu. G.,&Dobrin, C. *Calitatea în sectorul public*, Editura ASE, București,2005
- Nicolescu, O., Verboncu, I., Profiroiu,M.(2010) *Starea de sănătate a managementului din România și ieșirea din criză*, Editura MEDIA10, București;
- Vinni, R.,(2007). *Total Quality Management and Paradigms of Public Administration*, International Public Management Review · electronic Journal at <http://www.ipmr.net>
Volume 8 · Issue 1, 103-131, accessed 01.10.2012