PREFACE

The quality concept has been the primary expectation of all us today. The concept has made deep enroads into our lives as customers of various products and services. As customers in the market we are regarded as the destiny of organizations world over. The organizations, on their part, are also subscribing to this fact. Various research studies and authority writings point out the customer focus, customer delight and satisfaction as focal indicators for organisations’ survival and excellence. On this premise quality is being talked and practiced today in reaching to customers and retaining them by the corporates across the globe.

The emergence and popularization of the concept of Total Quality Management (TQM) has been evident in the wake of facts mentioned. The practice of the TQM concept has evoked not only as a best way to maintain quality but also as a status symbol to the organizations. Before reaching to this broader philosophical approach, many concepts evolved in theory and practice. To name a few, ‘Quality Control Circles’, ‘Quality Management System’ and ‘Total Productive Maintenance’. Though each successive concept is an improvement over the other, TQM is considered to be more broader and comprehensive.

The concept of TQM was given to us by many experts in the past from different perspectives. Among them the first one who propagated TQM was Dr.W.Edwards Deming. He proposed 14 points for practicing TQM along with his popular principle Plan-Do-Check-Act Cycle (PDCA). Dr. Joseph M Juran, who proposed trilogy diagram for TQM, while Philip B Crosby stressed upon the definitions, the system, the
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performance standard and the measurements. He called them as 'Four-Absolutes of Quality'.

To minimize the demerits of each of the perspectives the organizations do go for an integrated approach today. Several issues have been raised to ascertain the level of awareness among the people responsible for quality and its presence in their respective organizations. On the evaluation front there are several parameters that are considered important. Some research studies concentrate exclusively on a few parameters and some touch up on others. In summary, the nature of TQM is that it encompasses entire organization, people, processes, systems and functions. While some people concentrate on the comprehensive study, the others prefer to have exclusive studies, leaving remaining as research gap.

The present study concentrated on two issues such as awareness and implementation effectiveness. This is a 15 - parameter study on TQM. The effort, energy and time taken in this academic endeavour were maximum and required the support of many other than the organization and respondents.

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(P. Jayarami Reddy)