IOSR Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM)
e-ISSN: 2278-487X, p-ISSN: 2319-7668. Volume 21, Issue 3. Ser. VI (March. 2019), PP 28-32
www.iosrjournals.org

Quality Management from the Customer's Perspective in Fashion System

Mostaria Amin Mitu, Hafijur Rahman
Fashion design & Engineering
Zhejiang Sci-Tech University, China

Abstract: *In recent time many of the available literature on quality management is based on management's perspectives and very few studies examine issues of quality management from the customer's perspective. Customer perspectives are very important for every organization in delivering a superior customer experience. And it is very common that customer's needs are typically being neglected in the study of the quality movement. That's why this research was conducted to ascertain the relationship among Product.*
Quality Characteristics, Process Quality Management, Employee Competence, Client Focus, and Infrastructure and Facilities toward customer perspectives initiatives. A set of questionnaires was administered to 162 customers. Its results indicate that Product Quality Characteristics, Process Quality Management have a significant relationship with a customer focus. The aim of this research is to explore the knowledge and perspectives of customers about companies QMS.

Key Words: *Quality Management, customers Perspectives, Product quality characteristics, Process quality management, customer focus.*

Date of Submission: 18-03-2019 Date of acceptance: 03-04-2019

I. Introduction

To improve product quality there are various perspectives which are followed, but customer's perspectives are most important among them. Because products are produced for the customers. To gain the depth of what customers expect from a product, it is important to an analysis of quality management from customer's point of view. And this understanding would help the managers of the company to adopt strategies and ideas that can enhance the satisfaction level of their customers. Customer satisfaction is usually accepted as the basic principle which are hidden from most of the discussions related to quality (Black and Porter, 1996; Ahire et al., 1996).

In general, it is accepted that quality stay in the minds of the users/customers and customer satisfaction from any product is a key element in quality management (see Glass and Card, 1990). The level in which the needs/demands of users/customers are satisfied is taken as a measure of quality (Hellens, 1997). All the definitions of quality which have been published, they basically are based on the phrase *'satisfaction of customer requirements'* (Xenos and Christodoulakis, 1997).

The importance of customer satisfaction has widely been acknowledged as a major factor contributing to competitive advantage which is actually gained through product and service quality. The Total Quality Management (TQM) philosophy is becoming popular by the growing consumer consciousness of quality and increasing international competitive environment (Kanji, 1990). And TQM has its origin in the manufacturing industry.

TQM concept highlights that a certain level of user/customer satisfaction is a measure of quality. Related to product quality management, the key elements of TQM areidentified, and they were the following: customer focus, communication and participation, process quality and standards like ISO, continuous improvement, leadership and management, measurement and analysis of data, organizational culture, technical innovations, and human factors such as co-operation, participation, training, empowerment, and team work. And continuous process improvement is one of the basic concepts of the TQM philosophy.

This concept implies that as the customer's needs, values and expectations are constantly changing and becoming more demanding, there is no acceptable quality level.

II. Literature Review on Quality Management

To ensure that a product, process or service sticks to the objectives and the purposes for which it is to be used, the organizational structure, activities, programs and actions were designed and Quality Management Systems (QMS) include this concept. In recent time one of the most important events in quality management

development and globalization is the conformation and application of standardized quality system models (Nabavi, Azizi, & Faezipour,2014; Rusko, Sablik, Markova´, Lach, &

Friedrich,2014) and companies have increasingly used Quality Management Systems (QMS) as a tool to obtain both internal and external benefits, such as customer satisfaction and loyalty (Rusko et al.,2014).

Standardized quality systems models are designed, which is used as a supplier–client–customer relationship regulation mechanism and as a part of an external quality management idea. To prove to the customer the company's ability to control properly all quality factors, which ensure the conformity of certain quality measures to specified requirements is the main purpose of quality system implementation.

Many researches from different countries have focused their attention on companies' perspectives of the QMS. They have underlined few aspects and those are- the majority of the companies expected stability and consistency from the quality systems, the production of constant-quality goods, the satisfaction of customer needs, a beneficial effect on the culture of the organization and an improvement of a team ethic between the various functions (Dordevic´, Coc´kalo, Ceha, & Gligorovic´,2014). On the contrary, analyzing the literature, customer perspectives remain relatively minimally considered. Based on this consideration, the aim of this study is to explore the knowledge and perspectives of customers about companies' QMS.

For the ISO 9001 certification, many studies have considered what motivates an organization to be certified, the benefits derived from it over time, the impact on the economic, financial and marketing performance or the barriers to the implementation of it (Abdullah, Razak, Hanafi, & Abu Bakar,2012). Some authors in their surveys (Nabavi et al.,2014) have reported that in most cases companies do not care to analyze the expectations and the perceptions of customers in relation to the ISO 9001 standard. Most studies have investigated consumer perspectives towards green practices in the industry and have generally shown that environmental practices are positively related to performance through the mediating effect of higher customer satisfaction and loyalty.

When organizations communicate to employees that certain issues are important, the intensity of the issues is elevated. Customers do evaluate the ethical practices of companies, and researches in marketing ethics have shown that some customers are aware of the importance of environmental issues, level of service quality and other responsibility issues that impact the purchasing and consumption of products. Examining customers from the perspective of a stakeholder orientation provides an opportunity to better understand the importance of customers in shaping the ethical conduct of the firm.

These advantages include higher levels of efficiency in operations, higher levels of commitment and loyalty from employees, higher levels of perceived product quality, higher levels of customer loyalty and retention, and better financial performance (Merli et al.,2015)

III. Customer Perspectives about Quality Management

Before making a major purchase, some people check consumer magazines that rate product quality.

During the period 1980 to 1988, the quality of the product and its performance ranked first, the price was second and service was third. During the period 1989 to 1992, product quality remained the most important factor.

Customer perspectives refer to an individual's opinion or view of any business by evaluating their experience with that company -- from their offerings, to their branding, to their service.

AccordingtoareportbyWalkerInformation, customer experience will leave behind the price and product as the key brand differentiator by 2020. Even till now product quality is the main issue for any product. In other words, we're not far from a world where *customers' perspectives* of both brand and quality of product could take precedence over traditional competitive advantages like pricing, features, or usability.

An American Society for Quality (ASQ) survey on end user perspectives of important factors that influenced purchases showed the following ranking: Performance, Features, Service, Warranty, Price, Reputation. The factors of performance, features, service and warranty are the parts of a product or service quality. Therefore, it is evident that product quality and service are more important than price to the customer.
Based on a thorough survey of relevant literature, I found that the fashion product quality can be measured with the help of five dimensions: Product Quality Characteristics, Process Quality Management, Employee Competence, Client Focus, and Infrastructure and Facilities. Each of these dimensions is now examined.

3.1 Product quality characteristics

Most people base their estimates of a product's quality on its functionality, efficiency and appearance of user interface. The quality of clothing can be estimated by some attributes such as- comfort, durability, colorfastness etc.

Comfort describes ―how materials interact with the body and addresses how the body's functional environment can be expanded‖. When any company uses good quality of fabric for their products and introduce good design which when customer buy, give them comfort to wear and that's actually fulfill the comfort zone

for it. Colorfastness relates to appearance retention and can be described as ―how consumers use textile products and include factors that may cause colorants to change color or migrate from one material to another‖. Durability evaluates ―how various materials used in a product perform when subjected to different conditions‖. There are many ways to assess garment durability, including strength (tensile, tear, and bursting), abrasion, snagging, dimensional stability and pilling.

3.2 Process quality management

Managers should focus on ‗Process Management in order to achieve improved customer satisfaction and quality performance. There are five sub-factors that are essential for process management in a garment manufacturing industry. These are organizational culture, management practice, quality standards, benchmarking and employee training.

3.3 Customer focus

Customer focus is one of the pillars under quality management that lead into customer satisfaction. Profit is derived from revenue and market share, which in turn depends on customer satisfaction. Efforts to improve quality can lead to growth of market share and profitability through customer satisfaction. Japanese companies have shown how competitiveness can be achieved by giving extreme attention to customer needs, and meeting these needs *'in-time',* all the time. Many studies agree that the meaning of quality can be enshrined by the phrase, *'satisfaction of customer requirements'* (Li et al., 2000). Adam et al. (2001) concluded that customer focus would lead to improved quality irrespective of the countries and their culture.

3.4 Employee competence

Competitions in between the workers can improve the quality. If any worker gets higher wages for their quality full productivity in a company, then all become active in their work, which will result the good quality of product at last.

3.5 Infrastructure and facilities

High motivation levels and competent workforce alone do not create good quality. The improvement of support facilities (infrastructure) is also an essential element of successful business strategies in organizations (Jones, 1998).

Quality (of products/service) also depends on good tools, good materials, good methods and management techniques, and latest technological developments (Li et al., 2000).

Bahrami and Evans (1997) argue that by providing facilities and comfortable physical environment, the motivation and productivity of employees can be enhanced.

IV. Method

As any field work couldn't be done, secondary data were taken from different sources.

That study utilized questionnaires adapted from several researchers. There are several sections in the questionnaire. Section A is on respondents' demographic information, Section B is on product quality characteristics, Section C is on process quality management, Section D is on customer focus, Section E is on employee competence and Section E is on infrastructure and facilities. There is a total of 32 items in the questionnaire. The reliability of the questionnaire ranges from 0.7–0.8 which indicates that they are appropriate for use. The mean value for all dimensions shows that most respondents agree with the statements offered in the questionnaire. Table1 shows the Cronbach alpha value, mean and standard deviation of the variables use in this study.

This study is a cross-sectional study conducted among customer. They are chosen as a sample as they are the contributor of perspectives about the quality. The sample size is 162.

Table 1 Reliability coefficients and mean value for major variables

Variables	No of items	Cronbach alpha	Mean	Std deviation
product qualitycharacteristics	7	0.84	3.66	0.57
process quality management	6	0.76	3.52	0.56
customer focus	4	0.72	3.96	0.60
employee competence	8	0.82	3.69	0.54
infrastructure and facilities	6	0.80	3.59	0.59

Notes all items used 5 likert scale (with 1=strongly disagree and 5= strongly agree)

The study consists of 47.8 % male, 52.2 % has graduate education, and most of the respondents are in between 26-40 years old. The details of respondents' demographic factors are shown in Table 2.

V. Results

To obtain a glimpse of the relationships among the dimensions (factors), a bivariate correlation analysis has been performed. The results of the analysis are summarized in Table 3. Most of the correlations are found to be statistically significant at a level of 0.01. It is to be noted that all the correlations are positive. The high correlations among the factors indicate a high degree of interdependence among the factors. The high correlations among product attributes (PA), process quality management (PQM), customer focus (CF), employee competence (EC) and infrastructure and facilities (IF) indicate that these five factors collectively constitute the quality management system in the garment industry, according to the perception of the customers/users.

Table 2 Demographics of respondents

Characteristics	Percentage (*n*=162)
Gender	
Male	47.8%
Female	52.2%
Age	
Less than 25	1.2%
26-40	43.8%
41-50	40.7%
51 and above	14.2%
Education	
diploma	2.5%
Bachelor	30.1%
Master	43.2%
PhD and above	24.2%

A multiple regression test was conducted to understand the predicted power of the factors that affect customer perspectives toward the garments industry. Durbin-Watson of 1.747 indicates that there is no multicollinearity among the variables. The result shows the adjusted r2 to be 0.579, with a different weighting of the standard coefficient. Among all, product qualitycharacteristics and process quality management are significant with standard coefficient of 0.500 and 0.296, respectively. Therefore, management commitment contributes 50 %, while quality improvement exhibits
29.6 % in explaining customer perspectives as shown in Table 4.

Table 3 Inter correlation of the variables in this study

	product quality characteristics	process quality management	customer focus	employee competence	infrastructure and facilities
product quality characteristics	1.000				
process quality management	0.637**	1.000			
customer focus	0.603**	0.588**	1.000		
employee competence	0.676**	0.698**	0.719**	1.000	
infrastructure and facilities	NS0.187	0.437**	0.202*	0.237*	1.000

∗Significant at 0.05 level, NS non-significant ∗∗Significant at 0.01 level**p< 0.01

Table 4 Multiple regression result

Variables	*B*	t-value	Sig.
product qualitycharacteristics	0.500	7.806	0.000
process quality management	0.296	4.567	0.000
customer focus	0.280	0.601	0.549
***P*<0.01			
F value	4.945		
r2	0.587		
Adjusted *r2*	0.579		
Durbin Watson	1.747		

VI. Conclusions

These studies suggest important role of product qualitycharacteristics and process quality management in attaining customer's satisfaction. As for process quality management, the finding suggests that the organizations should give a serious attention to process quality management of their product to the customers to improve product qualitycharacteristics.

Practically, the result of this study helps industries to recognize the important of product quality characteristics and process quality management in customer perspectives. Support from the industries is important to ensure the industries move toward certain goal.

Limitation and future research

This study was conducted by the secondary data collected from different sources related to this topic, where previously researchers have done different analysis. It's just shown that, this type of analysis can be done with this type of data from their works to analyseits criteria. The primary analysis couldn't be done by collecting data from the real survey. That's why this result isn't also accurate. May be in future, actual analysis can be done, collecting data by conducting survey. And find the actual result from analysis.

Reference

[1]. Ahire, S.L., Golhar, D.Y., Waller, M.A. 1996. Development and validation of TQM implementation constructs. Decision Sciences, **27**:23–56.
[2]. Abdullah, S., Razak, A. A., Hanafi, M. H., & Abu Bakar, A. H. (2012). Organizational behavior barriers in implementing ISO 9000 within the Malaysian local governments. Elixir International Journal, 52, 11287–11296. Retrieved from http://wwwelixirpublishers.com/articles/1352271832_5220(2012)201128711296.pdf
[3]. Black, A.S., Porter, J.L. 1996. Identification of the critical factors of total quality management. Decision Sciences, **27**:1–21.
[4]. Bahrami, H., Evans, S. 1997. Human resource leadership in knowledge based entities: shaping the context of work. Human Resource Management, **36**:23–28.
[5]. Dordevic´, D., Coc´kalo, D., Ceha, M., &Gligorovic´, B. (2014, October 9–10). Corporate social responsibility and sustainable development. IV International Conference, Ecology of Urban Areas, Zrenjanin, Serbia. ISBN 978-86-7672-237-2.
[6]. Glass, R.L., Card, D.N. 1990. Measuring Software Design Quality. USA: Prentice Hall.
[7]. Hellens, L.A.V. 1997. Information systems quality versus software quality—A discussion from managerial, organizational and engineering view point. Information and Software Technology, **39**:801– 808.
[8]. Jones, C.R. 1998. Customer focused performance improvement: developing a strategy for total quality.
[9]. International Journal of Technology Management, **16**:494–504.
[10]. Kanji, G.K. 1990. Total quality management: the second industrial revolution. Total Quality Management, **1**:3–12.
[11]. Merli, R., Preziosi, M., & Massa, I. (2015). Social values and sustainability: A survey on drivers, barriers and benefits of SA8000 certification in Italian firms. Sustainability, 7(4), 4120–4130.
[12]. doi:10.3390/su7044120
[13]. Li, E.Y., Chen, H.G., Cheung, W. 2000. Total quality management in software development process. The Journal of Quality Assurance Institute, **4**:5–41.
[14]. Nabavi, V., Azizi, M., &Faezipour, M. (2014). Implementation of quality management system based on
[15]. ISO9001:2008 and its effects on customer satisfaction case study. International Journal of Quality &
[16]. Reliability Management, 31(8), 921–937. doi 10.1108/IJQRM-04-2013-0064
[17]. Rusko, M., Sablik, J., Markova´, P., Lach, M., & Friedrich, S. (2014). Sustainable development, quality management system and environmental management system in Slovak Republic. Procedia Engineering,
[18]. 69, 486–491. doi:10.1016/j.proeng.2014.03.016
[19]. Xenos, M., Christodoulakis, D. 1997. Measuring perceived software quality. Information and Software Technology, **39**:417–424.

Mostaria Amin Mitu. "Quality Management from the Customer's Perspective in Fashion System." IOSR Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM), Vol. 21, No. 3, 2019, pp. -28-32.