TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND SERVICE DELIVERY OF THE GLOBAL PROGRAMS FOR RESEARCH AND TRAINING ORGANIZATION IN KENYA

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# TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND SERVICE DELIVERY OF THE GLOBAL PROGRAMS FOR RESEARCH AND TRAINING ORGANIZATION IN KENYA

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**ABSTRACT**

*This study investigated the relationship between the total quality management practices of leadership skills, employee training, technology use and the service delivery of the Global Programs for Research and Training Organization working in Kenya. It has been noted that poor service delivery by many non-governmental organizations across the world has become rampant leading to the collapse of many of them. As a result, there is now increased focus on management and boards to ensure that they always act in the best interests of their organizations. Through Total Quality Management, all stakeholders are part and parcel of all the organizational activities geared towards ensuring the continual improvement of the goods and services they provide. The study was a descriptive one and the target population were the fifty seven (57) respondents who comprised of all the staff of Global Programs for Research and Training in Kenya. Primary data was collected using questionnaires and the response rate in this study was sixty five percent which was appropriate for making conclusions. Quantitative data was analysed using percentages, frequencies, mean, standard deviation and regression analysis. Results of analysis were presented using figures and tables. The findings of the study demonstrated that the studied Total Quality Management practices had a positive and significant effect on service delivery in Global Programs. It is therefore critical for the Global Programs for Research and Training organization in Kenya to continue investing in their leadership, employees as well as technology to support good service delivery.*

***Keywords:*** *Total Quality Management, Service Delivery, Leadership Skills, Employee Training and Technology Use*

## INTRODUCTION

Total Quality Management (TQM) is an approach that began in the 1950s leading to the organization of a company's processes to provide customers with goods and services that satisfy their needs (Oakland, 1995). The competitiveness of organizations in the market is affected when they provide poor quality goods and services leading ultimately to low productivity and eventual failure. For organizations to survive and thrive in the cut-throat markets that exist, they must be able to adequately meet the needs of their customers, be proactive in determining the evolving needs of their clients and continually improve their products and services (Choudhary, Akhtar and Zaheer, 2013). Quality has become a key strategic issue that senior managers are increasingly becoming cognizant of, thus leading to a push for it to be implemented within their organizations (Oakland, 2011).

According to Oakland (2011) an organisation should make a strategic decision to adopt a quality management system based on the organisation's strategy, objectives, structure, size, products and services offered and this applies to all sectors including the health sector. Implementing quality management systems is therefore regarded as a critical approach for success and survival and in turn leads to good operational performance (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1985). By focusing on improving the products and services they deliver to their customers, organizations become agile in a competitive market thus ensuring quick adaptability and response to the evolving needs and demands from their stakeholders. Quality management aims at improving the working culture and employee empowerment and participation in presenting clients with the goods and services they desire (Oakland, 1995). For good operational performance and success, the implementation of quality management systems becomes a key tactic to be deployed by the management (Parasuraman, *et al* 1985). Through TQM, all organizational efforts become geared towards ensuring long term customer loyalty and customer satisfaction by meeting and even exceeding client expectations.

The United Nations generally defines Non-Governmental Organizations as independent, not for profit and non-political groupings set up to carry out activities for the greater good of society (Willetts, 2006). International NGOs (INGOs) are often established in the developed world and carry out their operations in places outside their country of origin. Local NGOs on the other hand, are established in the same country as where they carry out their operations. INGOs coming from the developed world generally have the advantage of coming from strong economies and therefore have more established and rigorous management and governance systems. Many developing countries owe the improvement in the lives of their citizens to the work done by INGOs with funding received from various donors.

In Kenya, a study by Ochieng and Price (2009) observed that weak governance was one of the key challenges to the success of organizations resulting in poor service delivery and the near collapse of key civil society organizations. The leadership styles, structure and culture among many organizations does not have a standardized approach. Remuneration among the employees is often skewed towards loyalty and sycophancy. Training and development as a capacity building initiative for the employees is not adequate and, in many places, not considered a critical factor of success. The use of technology among many NGOs has been enhanced but many are not open to public scrutiny as there are still challenges in governance, transparency and accountability within them. This has affected service delivery among the NGOs with most employees ending up being poorly motivated leading to high staff turnovers and misappropriation of funds which ultimately leads to stagnation and poor implementation of projects.

In Kenya, NGOs are regulated by the NGOs Coordination Board and have to comply to the Government regulations by improving their governance structure, enhancing accountability and

transparency and accounting for their work on the ground to avoid being deregistered. However, challenges still exist and many NGOs have undergone financial and management crises leading to failure to implement and deliver on their mandate as expected. The study by Ogutu (2011) showed that when organizations face difficult times, there ends up being more emphasis on covering fixed costs as opposed to maintaining systems and program quality. As a result, many NGOs service delivery gets affected and leading to collapse. A study by Omeri (2015) showed that over fifty (50) NGOs in the Western part of Kenya had collapsed due to lack of funding as a result of varied reasons such as donor withdrawal due to performance issues, accountability challenges and change of priorities. With the increased scrutiny of the donors on performance, accountability and value for money, many NGOs are facing difficult times and thus need to quickly adapt to the changing environment to enable them to survive and grow, (Carman & Fredericks, 2008).

The organization Global Programs for Research and Training (Global Programs) is an international NGO registered in Kenya in February 2014 as a wholly owned and controlled affiliate of the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF). Global Programs was established to facilitate UCSF and its affiliates expand presence and operations in Kenya (Global Programs website, 2018). Global Programs officially began operations in September 2015 and currently has two offices in Kenya - in Nairobi and in Kisumu - which provide support for all UCSF projects and studies in Kenya.

UCSF is a leader in advancing health globally through outstanding biomedical research, training and excellent patient care. UCSF is devoted to serving the public and goes beyond San Francisco, California to have an impact at national and global level. Key activities for UCSF include identifying innovative health care approaches for the vulnerable; training human resources for health and translating scientific discoveries into better health for everyone (University of California, San Francisco,

2018). UCSF is implementing over twenty projects in Kenya in the areas of Strategic Information, HIV/AIDS Care and Treatment as well as research projects. Global Programs provides all these research projects with technical, logistical, financial, administrative and operational support (Global Programs website, 2018). All these programs require quality management practices to be deployed so as to ensure that the set objectives are met. The stakeholders must be fully involved and engaged as well as new technologies being used to promote effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery.

Many studies done on TQM globally and in Kenya have focused mostly on other service sectors and not the NGO sector. The studies done on NGOs in Kenya have mostly focused on looking at the quality of selected components/operations of specific NGOs, performance issues, sustainability, HR, leadership and governance, training among others. A study by Rono (2008) showed that the sustainability of projects done by NGOs is influenced by having strong financial systems and stakeholder engagement from conception. However there seem to be less known about the influence of TQM practices on the overall service delivery among NGOs in Kenya. Therefore, this study sought to assess the effect of the total quality management practices of leadership, employee training and development and technology use on the service delivery in the Global Programs for Research and Training organization in Kenya.

**THEORETICAL LITERATURE REVIEW**
Deming's Theory of Quality improvement emphasized the role of management being responsible for changing processes and system to improve quality within organizations. Deming's 14 points for management continue to guide quality improvement actions until today (Deming, 1986). The Deming management method has had a great influence in organizations globally (Hodgson, 1987). This theory brings out the critical role good leadership and management play in the success of

any organization. Poor leadership and management is where the downfall of any institution begins. The four-step Shewhart cycle has been used to guide the continuous improvement of processes in any organization as teams go through the cycle of addressing problems and coming up with the right solutions for them in the workplace. Deming emphasised the role of strong leadership and management in continually moving an organization towards better performance and improved customer satisfaction. Good leadership leads to setting the vision, planning, making the right decisions, spearheading innovation, taking responsibility and all these lead to the provision of quality services.

Joseph Juran's Quality Trilogy (also known as the Juran Trilogy) is made up of the three processes of quality management namely quality planning, quality control and quality improvement in the year 1951. The theory postulates that to have successful quality improvement initiatives, all actions need to be carefully planned out and controlled. Quality problems can either be sporadic or chronic and they each have different approaches to address them. Sporadic problems are sorted out by quality control while chronic problems are a result on inadequate quality planning and therefore need a process of quality improvement. To achieve success in quality management processes and implement the trilogy successfully, Juran came up with 10 steps to Quality Improvement and training was one of them where he clearly emphasized the role of employee training and involvement from the beginning. Juran was clear that any training to improve quality needed to start at the top with the management and then come down to the rest of the teams. Investing in employee training and development leads to empowered human resources who are capable of providing quality services to their customers (Juran 1998).

The resource-based view of the firm (RBV) by Wernerfelt (1984) illustrates that competitiveness can be realized by innovatively delivering greater value to customers. It is critical for organizations to identify their resources and use them strategically to ensure a sustained competitive advantage. Resources are inputs like capital, building, equipment, technical expertise whereas capabilities can be described as the 'know how' for a team of resources to come together and perform some task or activity. Each organization has varying amounts of resources and capabilities, and the exploitation of these determines the performance of a firm (Lin, Peng & Kao, 2008).

This theory therefore postulates that an organization's choice on use and leverage of its existing resources and capabilities is what determines the development of products, processes and market innovations that eventually gives them an advantage over the existing competition and boosts their performance. Technological solutions are some of the critical resources that organizations have invested in and which facilitate the processes in the organization, enables a systems approach and availability of correct data for decision making leading to provision of quality services. The RBV theory is premised on the full deployment of all the resources that an organization has so as to build its competitive advantage and maximize its performance.

**EMPIRICAL LITERATURE REVIEW**

Andrle (2014) observed that the successful execution of TQM needs top leadership commitment. Having good and sustained relationships with their clients is an asset to any organization and for this to happen the management must be committed to being customer oriented with a focus on identification and satisfaction of customer needs. Zakuan *et al* (2012) found that the availability of top management support and commitment is an almost certain guarantee to the success of critical decisions made in the workplace.

Parameshwar, Srikantia and Case (2000) examined two categories of leadership: transformational and transactional leadership and found that despite the different leadership types, what was important was

that the leadership brings together all the staff and influences them into taking up quality improvement as a key ingredient in their work and thus leading to a successful organization.

Jamali, Ebrahimi and Abbaszadeh (2010) found that employee training remained one of the key drivers of effective TQM execution. All staff regardless of their level in the organization are required to be knowledgeable on all aspects of quality management as well as clearly understanding their role in TQM implementation. Employee training and development can be conducted in different ways and can be done both formally and informally. This can be done in the form of workshops, on job training, mentoring, coaching, secondments etc. It is thus the responsibility of the management to continually define the training and learning processes for their organization to meet employee needs.

Stahl *et al* (2007) also identified training as a key building block in the success of any business and found that employee training and capacity building must be seen as a lifelong process and not a single event which is what enables them to become more productive and contribute positively to the success of the organization.

Lal (1999) studied the uptake of technology among manufacturing firms in India and found out that they were influenced by factors such as size of operations, openness of the economy, the competitiveness of the environment as well as firm specific factors. The use of modern technologies to assist in the day to day processes within organizations is what provides the opportunity for services to be improved and allows room for expansion and innovation.

Cibulskis and Hiawalyer (2002) found that the use of ICT helped organizations streamline their information processes; refine their manufacturing and production processes; improve procurement and inventory management; improve financial monitoring and accountability; increase market visibility and publicity among others. The use of

technology led to improved organization performance when well utilized resulting in more effective and timely generation and sharing of information required for effective management. All this ultimately contributes to improved service delivery and leads to customer expectations being met.

**Research Questions**
- What is the effect of leadership skills on service delivery at Global Programs for Research and Training in Kenya?
- How does employee training and development affect service delivery at Global Programs for Research and Training in Kenya?
- What is the outcome of technology use on service delivery at Global Programs for Research and Training in Kenya?

**METHODOLOGY**
This study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional research design. The descriptive research design enables the explanation of the what, where and how of the phenomenon under study without influencing any of the parameters and defines its current status (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013). This study intended to assess the effect of total quality management practices on service delivery in the Global Programs for Research and Training organization in Kenya.

The population of this study comprised of all the office and field based staff of Global Programs both in Nairobi and Kisumu. The total number of staff within the organization was fifty seven (57) and so the study used a census approach with a study population of fifty seven (57) respondents.

The research used primary data collected using well-designed questionnaires with inclusion of both open and closed questions. The researcher carried out a pilot study to facilitate pre-testing of the research instrument. Face validity was ensured through consultations with experts in field of management. Content and construct validity were ensured through extensive review of relevant theoretical and empirical literature. Internal

consistence was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha index of at least 0.7 as recommended by Hair *et al* (1998). In this case, leadership skills, employee training, technology use and service delivery yielded Cronbach Alpha coefficients of 0.804, 0.821, 0.820 and 0.778 respectively.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The researcher targeted a total of fifty seven (57) staff of Global Programs for Research and Training in Kenya for this study. However, only thirty seven staff participated in the survey representing a response rate of 65%. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a response rate of above 60% is good therefore the response rate for this study was acceptable.

**Statistical Measures**

The measures that were considered relevant to the objective of this study were mean, standard deviation and multiple regressions. These statistical measures were used for summarizing, describing and comparing the results with respect to the research variables of interest. Results from the Likert scale looking at the rating of the study variables was as shown below.

**Table 1: Rating of Leadership Skills and Service Delivery**

| Statements | Mean | Std. Dev |
|---|---|---|
| The vision, mission and objectives of Global Programs are well known by all the employees | 3.24 | 1.11 |
| The leadership of Global Programs supports the good performance of the employees | 4.00 | .901 |
| All the Global Programs staff have the pre-requisite knowledge and skills | 4.18 | .846 |
| Most of the employees have vast experience in their areas of work | 4.30 | .728 |
| The organization sources for qualified and performing staff | 4.39 | .704 |
| The organizational leadership has the necessary soft skills | 4.32 | .876 |
| The Global Programs staff are mentored on leadership skills | 4.00 | .952 |

**Table 2: Rating of Employee Training and Service Delivery**

| Statements | Mean | Std. Dev |
|---|---|---|
| Good performance by employees is recognized in Global Programs | 3.30 | 1.01 |
| Global Programs provides its employees with everything they need to perform well in their responsibilities | 3.60 | .933 |
| All the employees have the required job guidelines, manuals, references to help them carry out their work | 3.66 | .989 |
| The organization organizes regular trainings for capacity building of the staff | 2.45 | 1.22 |
| There is regular on-job training for employees | 2.63 | 1.22 |
| Global Programs supports staff academic advancement | 2.75 | 1.34 |
| The organization has a mentorship programme | 2.45 | 1.25 |
| Global Programs leadership seeks to identify the challenges faced by staff in their work | 3.15 | 1.30 |

**Table 3: Rating of Technology and Service Delivery**

| Statements | Mean | Std. Dev |
|---|---|---|
| The organization has automated most of its services and processes | 3.27 | 1.23 |
| Global Programs has invested sufficiently in new technology to improve service delivery | 3.39 | .998 |
| The employees are all trained on use of modern technology software and hardware | 3.48 | .97 |
| The staff are sensitized to accept and learn to use modern technological equipment | 3.57 | 1.00 |
| Most of the official correspondences are done online | 4.12 | 1.11 |

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**Table 4: Rating on Service Delivery at Global Programs**

| Statements | Mean | Std. Dev |
|---|---|---|
| Global Programs always provides services to its clients as promised | 4.12 | .739 |
| Global Programs meets the service needs of its clients | 4.15 | .667 |
| Global Programs is efficient with its work and stays within approved budgets | 3.84 | .795 |
| The work output of every employee in Global Programs is maximised | 3.90 | .804 |
| Service quality to the beneficiaries has improved | 3.90 | .678 |
| There is enhanced accountability and integrity in use of resources | 4.27 | .761 |

**Source: Research Data (2019)**

From Table 1, the values of mean range from 3.24-4.39, but most of them are over 3.5. This showed that on average, good leadership skills were presented within the organization. Table 2 indicated that employee training was generally practiced in Global Programs as shown by the values of means ranging from 2.45 to 3.66. Respondents disagreed with the statements that Global Programs supported staff academic advancement, that regular on-job training for employees was in place and that the organization had a mentorship program in place as supported by values of means ranging from 2.45 to 2.75. Table 3 showed that the respondents were neutral on most statements on technology and how it enhances service delivery with means ranging from 3.27-3.57. When asked whether there were additional technologies that Global Programs should invest in to improve their work output, the majority of the respondents (80%) said Yes while 20% said No.

**Regression Analysis**

**Table 5: Model Summary**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .905[a] | .819 | .800 | 1.37238 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Technology, Leadership Skills, Employee Training

**Table 6: Analysis of Variance**

| | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Regression | 246.896 | 3 | 82.299 | 49.727 | .000[b] |
| Residual | 54.619 | 33 | 1.655 | | |
| Total | 301.515 | 36 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: Service Delivery

b. Predictors: (Constant), Technology, Leadership Skills, Employee Training

**Table 7: Regression Coefficients**

| | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | t | Sig. |
| (Constant) | 7.276 | 1.561 | | 4.661 | .000 |
| Leadership Skills | .824 | .129 | .877 | 6.372 | .000 |
| Employee Training | .335 | .079 | .071 | 4.241 | .003 |
| Technology | .428 | .122 | .037 | 3.508 | .023 |

a. Dependent Variable: Service Delivery

**Source: Research Data (2019)**

The regression model estimated in Table 7 is as presented below

Service Delivery = 7.276 + 0.824Leadership skills+ 0.335Employee Training+ 0.428Technology use

The value of R is reported as 0.905; this is interpreted to mean that total quality management practices have a strong and far reaching influence on service delivery in Global Programs for Research

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and Training. The R of 0.905 signifies a strong positive correlation between the variables of the study. The value of R square on the other hand is 0.819, which implies that 81.9% of changes in the service delivery in the Global Programs for Research and Training organization are as a result of the independent variables of the study (Leadership Skills, Employee Training and Technology).

Moreover, the results of the ANOVA table reveals that the regression model adequately fitted the observed data as the estimated model was confirmed to be statistically significant at F (3, 33) = 49.727 and calculated probability value of 0.000 which is less than the 0.05 threshold adopted. Therefore, the regression analysis revealed that holding the TQM practices (leadership skills, employee training and technology use) to a constant zero, the service delivery of Global Programs would be at a level of 7.276.

The researcher sought to determine the effect of the TQM practices of service delivery. The results reported in Table 7 revealed that leadership skills, employee training and technology use are each significant at β=0.824; t = 6.372; p =0 .000; β=0.335; t = 4.241; p =0 .003 and β=0.428; t = 3.508; p = 0.023. This suggests that at 95% level of confidence, these TQM practices have a positive effect on the service delivery of Global Programs. These findings imply that if all the variables of this study were to be held constant, the service delivery of Global Programs would be at 7.276. If leadership skills were to increase by one unit while the other variables held constant, this would increase the service delivery of Global Programs by 0.824. If employee training was to increase by one unit while the other variables held constant, the service delivery of Global Programs would increase by 0.335. On the other hand, a unit increase in technology use while holding other variables constant would increase the service delivery of Global Programs by 0.428. Therefore, researcher concludes that TQM practices affect the service delivery of Global Programs for Research and Training.

These results were corroborated by the empirical findings of Andrle (2014) which concluded that TQM had a positive effect on service delivery in the public service. These results are also consistent with the conclusion made by Parasuraman *et al* (1985) that for good operational performance and success, the implementation of quality management systems is a critical factor.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The objective of this study was to assess the effect of total quality management practices on service delivery in the Global Programs for Research and Training organization. In this study, the researcher looked at leadership skills, employee training and development and technology use. The study results showed that the studied Total Quality Management practices had a positive and significant effect on the service delivery of the Global Programs for Research and Training organization. Results of statistical analysis showed that leadership skills had the greatest statistically significant positive effect on service delivery followed by technology use and then employee training thus confirming the study expectations.

The conclusion of this study is that leadership skills have positive and significant effect on the service delivery of Global Programs for Research and Training. The leadership of the organization demonstrates the required attributes needed to ensure that the organization performs well and achieves its objectives. The leadership of the organizations needs to ensure that the vision, mission and objectives of the organization are made known to all employees and that they continue to support the recognition of good performance by the employees.

The study also found that employee training has a positive and significant effect on service delivery. The employees of Global Programs for Research and Training are well educated and trained and have all the required job guidelines and manuals for their work. However, there is need for regular and continuous need based trainings that will enable them to be more productive. The organization also

needs to consider putting in place a structured mentorship programme for staff to benefit from and which will greatly improve their work output.

The study found out that technology has a positive and significant effect on service delivery but the organization needs to invest in additional technologies which will help it improve its service delivery such as an Enterprise Resource Planning solution, a fleet management system and an automated financial and human resource management system. The leadership of the organization will need to review and prioritize the technological investments based on need and availability of funding.

Notably, the findings and conclusions of this study were limited to the Total Quality Management practices and the service delivery of the Global Programs for Research and Training organization in Kenya. The study specifically looked at leadership skills, employee training and technology use and their influence on service delivery which was shown to be at 81.9%. Future researchers should conduct studies to identify other factors which influence service delivery. Future studies should look at related Total Quality Management practices such as customer orientation, stakeholder involvement, organizational culture, resource management among others. More studies should also look at non-government NGOs working within different sectors such as development, agriculture and humanitarian.

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