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Practices of Total Quality Management (TQM) In Tourism Service Industries of Chitwan, Nepal

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Abstract

Total quality management (TQM) is a concept to control the quality of service and product with the active participation of all responsible members. Customer satisfaction and long-term success of organization is the main aim of TQM. The study aims to identify the practice of TQM in Nepalese tourism service industries of Chitwan district of Nepal. The study focused on the quality service of tourist focused hotels. It was based on the descriptive and correlational research design. Data was collected from the 120 staffs of 60 hotels and 120 tourists. The result showed the very weak knowledge of TQM among the service providers; they were providing services on the basis of their past experiences. Natural beauty had significant role to determine the level of tourists' satisfaction than the in-door's service quality of hotel. There was need of formal education of TQM for the hotel's managers and employees to ensure the service quality and long-term benefit of hotel.

Keywords: Practice, Total Quality Management, Tourism

Introduction

TQM has been presented by many definitions over the years. TQM is a way of thinking that becomes a center piece of an organization. It is defined as a management tool, philosophy and a set of principles which guides every member of organization who involved in the continuous improvement process to meet customer satisfaction. The TQM concept requires an effective involvement of all members of organization in decision making because their participation and contribution are considered as critical role in all business activities for providing services to customers with high quality products (Dhillon, 2005). However, there is no standard method as to how TQM should be implemented. The organization committed to customer satisfaction through continuous improvement varies from organization to organization and also from country to country, but it has common principles that can be applied to secure market share, increase profits and reduce costs (Kanji, 1996). Total Quality Management (TQM), which is a management approach for an organization, centered on quality, based on the participation of all its members and aiming at long-term success through customer satisfaction, and benefits to all members of the organization and to society (ISO). It is the coordination of efforts directed at improving customer satisfaction, increasing employee participation, strengthening supplier partnerships, and facilitating an organizational atmosphere of continuous quality improvement (Pride, Hughes, & Kapoor, 2009, p. 181). TQM is today generally acknowledged as a supreme management philosophy, implemented in many organizations, institutions and companies of various activities and nature. It has also been successfully implemented in many healthcare organizations and clinical laboratories. Key components of the TQM are:

- top quality of the services and products which fully meets customer needs and expectations;
- top management commitment in defining quality goals, balanced with organization potentials, as well as the definition and implementation of the tools for achieving and appraising those goals;
- continuous improvement based on the indicators of key processes and activities;
- rapid response to customer needs and customer-driven and process-oriented product Development;

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- evidence-based decision making, based on the data derived from the continuous monitoring of processes and activities;
- active participation of all staff through continuous education and training, and encouraging each member of the organization to take the responsibility for quality;
- promotion of the open and cooperative environment by the top management;

Basic idea of the TQM philosophy is to detect and eliminate weak points of the system and processes, and size down the error rate by the risk assessment and risk reduction (Ana-Maria Šimundić, 2008). One of the most popular definitions of quality is meeting or exceeding customer expectations (Evans James, James, & JR, 2000). Similarly, Ross (1999) defines Total Quality Management as the integration of all functions and processes within an organization in order to achieve continuous improvement of the quality of goods and services. The goal is customer satisfaction. The chartered Management Institute gives the following definition as taken from (Laurie, 2007): TQM is a way of managing which gives everyone in the organization responsibility for delivering quality to the final customer; quality being described as 'fitness for purpose' or as 'delighting the customer'. TQM views each task in the organization as fundamentally a process which is in a customer/supply relationship with the next process. The aim at each stage is to define and meet the customer's requirement with the aim of maximizing the satisfaction of the final customer at the lowest possible cost. The development of TQM can be traced to several people including Deming, Juran, and Crosby. TQM is a process and strategy that in certain situations can improve an organization's effectiveness and efficiency. TQM places responsibility for quality problems with management rather than the worker.

In Nepal, there are various places defined as a tourism destination, among them, Chitwan district is also one. Chitwan is famous because of its religious, cultural, archeological and natural beauty. Chitwan has very easy transportation, communication and accommodation facilities and lies very close to the capital city of Kathmandu. The presence of the Chitwan National Park (CNP), the first and world famous National park of Nepal adds up another flavor for the tourist visiting Chitwan. The endangered species such as largest population of Asian rhinoceros, tiger, gaur, bison etc. and wild rang of terrestrial and aquatic plants and animals are found in the park. The park is also listed in the world heritage sites due to its unique natural features. The tourist oriented hotel are giving services for domestic and international tourists so it is necessary to measure the service quality of service providers to ensure the increment of tourist in future day.

So, this study is going to study the practice of total quality management in tourism sectors of Chitwan district:

Materials and Method

The study was based on descriptive and co-relational design which explained about the status of TQM implementation and also explored the relationship between the response of hotel and tourist regarding the quality service of hotel. The study had selected the 60 hotels of Chitwan. Purposively hotel manager and one employee were selected from each hotel and 120 tourists were also asked about the service quality of hotels. Structured survey questionnaire was used to collect the data. Instrument was pre-tested to ensure the quality of data. Selected hotels were pre-informed for the data collection and individual consent form was filled out from the each respondents. Descriptive analysis, Pearson Chi-Square test and Paired sample t-test was used to analyze the data. The data was presented in the tabular form.

Result and Discussion

Total Quality Management is known as maintenance of quality of total product and service. It describes a management approach to long-term success through the satisfaction of regular customers as well as attracts the interest of potential customers also. In a TQM effort, all staffs of organization participate in improving the processes, products, services, and the culture in which they work. It is a strategy to increase the productivity and performance of business. Practice of TQM is more important to ensure the quality and performance.

The study tested the level of knowledge and its practice. The results are presented below:

Knowledge of TQM

The Industrial development and strength of any country depends primarily on the proper application of quality management systems in all productive stages of industrial products. Many companies promote quality as the central customer value and consider it to be a critical success factor for achieving competitiveness (Schiffauerova & Thomson, 2006). Knowledge is the back-bone of success. There is need of proper knowledge of TQM and its potential benefit after implementation so this study initially assessed the knowledge of TQM among the respondents.

Table 1: Knowledge of TQM

	Hotel' Response				Tourist Responses				Pearson Chi-Square test (P value)
	Yes		No		Yes		No		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Have you heard of Total Quality Management (TQM)?	30	25	90	75	38	31.7	82	68.3	.252
Has your company started implementing TQM?	22	18.3	98	81.7					
Have you seen the quality certificate put in hotel where you are staying now in Chitwan?					23	19.2	97	80.8	
Do you recommend your friends/family to visit this tourist destination?					117	97.5	3	2.5	

Source: Field Survey, 2015

The table above represents the information regarding the knowledge of total quality management (TQM) in hotel in which the respondents from the hotels and from the tourists were included. Among the four questions, only one was related with both of the groups and rest of the three, two were asked to the tourists only and one was for the respondents from the hotels. The data in the table above reported that only 25% of the respondents from the hotel heard about total quality management (TQM) in hotel and 75% of them were unknown. Similarly, 31.7% of the tourists' respondents heard of total quality management (TQM) and 68.3% did not hear about it. While analyzing the data, it clearly indicates that highest percentage of the respondents from the both groups was found unknown about the total quality management (TQM) which might be the result of company's ignorance on the TQM implementation because 81.7% of the hotel companies did not have initiation to implement total quality management in their hotels where very less percentage, that was 18.3, had started implementing total quality management (TQM). There was no significant association between the hotels and tourist regarding the knowledge of TQM because $P = .252$; greater than the significant level.05. Another question asked to the tourists which was related with quality certificate in hotel showed 80.8% of the respondents did not see it where only 19.2% of them replied "yes". The

maximum numbers of hotel in Chitwan were found with no quality certificate in their hotels and it is obvious that they don't have ample knowledge about the certificate of quality management in hotels. Though the hotels do not have quality certificate and they haven't started implementing it, 97.5% of the tourists' respondents were ready to recommend their friends and families to visit the same destination and only 2.5% of them replied negative answer. The highest percentage in relation to recommendation of the visit in same destination may be the result of that many numbers of the tourists themselves did not have knowledge of total quality management (TQM). Every organization has their own system and work culture which determines the level of change and development. TQM implementation will change the organization culture. It will change the perception of employee and customers also. A cultural change needs commitment from the leaders and all other participants and may create a cooperative teamwork at all levels in an organization. It is necessary for top management to ensure the participation of the employees in quality improvement process, and to develop a quality culture by changing perception and attitudes towards quality (Lau & Anderson, 1997).

Physical Facilities of Hotel

Table 2: Physical Facilities of Hotel

P1 Physical Facilities of Hotel							
Response on services & physical facilities of Hotel		Responses of Hotel (H)		Responses of Tourists (T)		Difference (H-T)	Independent Sample T-test
		N(Yes)	Percent	N(Yes)	Percent	%	
Physical Facilities of Hotel	Easy road to reach in hotels	110	91.7%	94	78.3%	13.40%	.004
	Attached toilet & bathroom with all facilities; hot & cold water, shampoo, soap, table, mirror, enough space for bath	120	100.0%	114	95.0%	5.00%	.014
	Not more than two bed rooms with at least 6.5 fit length and 3 fit width	120	100.0%	120	100.0%	0.00%	Not applicable
	There is facilities to sit in ground without chair and table for lunch or dinner	110	91.7%	107	89.2%	2.50%	.513

Source: Field Survey, 2015

The table above gives real picture of the physical facilities of the hotels in Chitwan. The data in the table reveals that 91.7% of the respondents from hotel replied that there was easy road access to reach the hotel and 78.3% tourists respondents' opinion met the same showing the close difference of 13.40%. Following the similar opinion of the hotel respondents with 100 percentage, 95 percent of the tourists replied positively that there was facilities of attached toilet & bathroom with all facilities; hot & cold water, shampoo, soap, table, mirror, enough space for bath and that indicated only with the 5 percent of differences as well as 120 (100%) respondents from the hotel put their view that there were not more than two bed rooms with at least 6.5 fit length and 3 fit width and the same opinion was followed by tourist respondents following the same numbers and the percent and seemed no any differences. Showing the difference of only 2.5%, respondents from

hotel and the tourist had positively given answer of the question in relation to the facilities to sit in the ground without chair and table for lunch or dinner standing in 91.7 and 89.2 percentages respectively. By analyzing the above fact in the table, it is found that physical facilities of the hotel is good because road access, toilet, bathroom, ground etc. are the symbol of physical facilities and those are found in the hotel. The statistical analysis of Independent Sample T-test shows that there was significant difference between the response of Hotel and tourist regarding the easy road to reach hotels ($p=.004$), and Attached toilet & bathroom with all facilities ($P=.014$) in.05 significant level at 95% confidence interval. Similarly, test was not applicable regarding the no. of bedrooms in single room because all hotel and tourist respondents the same. There was no significant difference between the hotel and tourist regarding the facilities to sit in ground without chair and

table for lunch or dinner in hotel because $P = .513$; greater than the .05 significant level.

Quality of in-room services of Hotel

Table 3: Quality of in-room services of Hotel

P1. Quality of in- room services							
Response on in-room services of Hotel		Responses of Hotel(H)		Responses of Tourists(T)		Difference (H-T)	Independent Sample T-test
		N(Yes)	Percent	N (Yes)	Percent	%	
1.	Clean carpeting in the ground of room	106	88.3%	105	87.5%	0.80%	.844
2.	Doormat in front of room	118	98.3%	92	76.7%	21.60%	.000
3.	clean bed with white cover	120	100.0%	111	92.5%	7.50%	.002
4.	sophisticated hanger to hang the cloth	118	98.3%	99	82.5%	15.80%	.000
5.	Provision of regular electricity in room	118	98.3%	84	70.0%	28.30%	.000
6.	beautiful picture are decorated in the room which can shows the local culture/identities	100	83.3%	64	53.3%	30.00%	.000
7.	there is availability of dust bin in room	120	100.0%	117	97.5%	2.50%	.083
8.	Two sleepers in the room for guest	118	98.3%	90	75.0%	23.30%	.502
9.	Mirror in the room	102	85.0%	117	97.5%	-12.50%	.001
10.	One tea table in the room	114	95.0%	111	92.5%	2.50%	.426
11.	Two chairs in the room	114	95.0%	78	65.0%	30.00%	.000
12.	the room is safe from insects, mosquitoes and other animals	116	96.7%	111	92.5%	4.20%	.155

Source: Field Survey, 2015

The table above equips the information regarding in-room service quality of the hotel. According to the data, positive answer of having clean carpeting in the ground of room was 88.3% from the hotel respondents and 87.5% from the tourists respondents which showed the difference of 0.80% and 98.3% from the hotel respondents and 76.7% tourist respondents said there was doormat in front of room and the difference between both of the group was 21.60% as well as clean bed with white cover had positive opinion from the hotel respondents was 100% which was followed by 92.5% from the tourist respondents and showed the 7.50% of the differences as well as sophisticated hanger had 98.3% and 82.5% with 15.80% of the difference respectively. Regular electricity service and picture decoration in room exposed 98.3% and 83.3% from the hotel respondents and 70% and 53.3% from the tourists as well as 28.30% and 30% of difference from the both groups respectively. According to the data, respondents of the hotel in relation to dustbin availability and pairs of sleepers was higher, carrying 100% and 98.3%, than the tourists respondents who carried 97.5% and 75% and the difference was 2.50% and 23.30% respectively. The data related to mirror in the room gave totally different result by exposing the difference with -12.50% in which the respondents from tourist is higher than the respondents from the hotel carrying 85% and 97.5% respectively. The quires related to a table and two chairs in the room showed similar percentage with 95 from the hotel respondents where 92.5 and 65percentages from the tourist respondents with the difference of 2.50% and 30% respectively. The percentage of hotel respondents to the matter of safety from various insects like mosquitoes was 96.7 and the respondents from the tourist was 92.5 percent as well as the difference was only 4.2%.

The study explored the difference between the Hotel and

Tourists regarding the quality of in-room services of hotel from the statistical analysis of Independent Sample T-test. There were 12 questions asked to hotel and tourist to measure the quality of in-room service of hotel. Higher numbers of hotel reported good quality of in-room services of hotel than the tourists except one question 'mirror in the room'. Statistical result showed that there was significant difference between the hotel and tourists regarding the Doormat in front of room ($P = .000$), clean bed with white cover ($P = .002$), sophisticated hanger to hang the cloth ($P = .000$), Provision of regular electricity in room ($P = .000$), beautiful picture are decorated in the room which can shows the local culture/identities ($P = .000$), Mirror in the room ($P = .001$), and Two chairs in the room ($P = .000$). But there was no significant difference between the hotel and tourist regarding the Clean carpeting in the ground of room ($P = .844$), there is availability of dust bin in room ($P = .083$), Two sleepers in the room for guest ($P = .502$), One tea table in the room ($P = .426$) and the room is safe from insects, mosquitoes and other animals ($P = .155$).

The quality of in-room service put the great meaning to satisfy the customers so the tourists were also asked the similar question of in-room service of hotel to know their level of satisfaction. Tourists' satisfaction ensures the quality of service of hotel. It is known that hotels were not fully aware about the TQM but they were providing the quality service considering the need of customers. Kumar asserts that TQM is customer oriented and that the good is to satisfy the customer. When an organization produces goods and services of quality at economic cost and is consistently meeting the customer's needs, then the organization is said to have satisfied the customer. He goes on to say that customer's needs must be understood and used to design both the products and services offered (Kumar, 2006). Dale says that customer satisfaction is a

business issue and that all processes should work towards satisfying the customer (Dale, 2003).

Quality of general services of Hotel

During the study time, hotel's managers and tourists were

asked about the quality of general service of hotel. General Service covered the transportation facilities, drinking water, hygiene of local food, price list of available service and first aid service in hotel.

Table 4: Quality of general services of Hotel

P1. Quality of general services of Hotel							
Response on General services of Hotel		Responses of Hotel(H)		Responses of Tourists(T)		Difference (H-T)	Independent Sample T-test
		N (Yes)	Percent	N (Yes)	Percent	%	
1.	Transportation facilities available in the hotel for guest	112	93.3%	111	92.5%	0.80%	.802
2.	Drinking water is filtered or boiled	114	95.0%	102	85.0%	10.00%	.010
3.	Hygiene local foods are available in hotel	114	95.0%	117	97.5%	-2.50%	.310
4.	There is Menu (price list of services) in hotel	112	93.3%	114	95.0%	-1.70%	.584
5.	There is facilities of First Aid service in hotel	72	60.0%	82	68.3%	-8.30%	.180

Source: Field Survey, 2015

The table above shows the facts carrying out the information in relation to quality of general services in hotel. The data exposed that only 0.80% of difference carrying 93.3% from the hotel respondents and 92.5% from the tourist respondents when they were positive in availability of transportation where as 95% of the respondents from the hotel replied they had filtered or safe drinking water in the hotel which was followed by 85% through the opinion of tourist respondents and the difference seen was 10.00%. The service of local hygienic food in the hotel was another question which showed 95% from the hotel respondents but the response from the tourist carried 97.5% which denoted of -2.50 % of the differences. The price list and first aid service in the hotel from the hotel respondents showed 93.3 and 60 percent as well as 95 and 68.3 percent from the tourist respondents carrying -1.70 and -8.30 percent of differences respectively. The statistical analysis of Independent Sample T-test showed that there was significant difference between the hotel and tourist regarding the quality of drinking water either filtered or boiled ($P = .010$). There was no significant difference in Transportation facilities available in the hotel for guest ($P = .802$), Hygiene local foods are available in hotel ($P = .310$), There is Menu (price list of services) in hotel ($P = .584$), and There is facilities of First Aid service in hotel ($P = .180$) because the P value was greater than .05 significant level. Quality service is really challenging. Single person or institution cannot ensure the quality of service or product. Hotel also depends on the product quality of market which is used in the hotel; food items, infrastructures so it is necessary to assess the quality of suppliers also. Hoyle noted that, an organization and its suppliers are interdependent and a mutually beneficial relationship enhances the ability of both to create value. The management must educate and train their staff on what customer and supplier management entails for the successful implementation of this practice (Hoyle, 2007).

Conclusion

The study assessed the level of knowledge of TQM among

the hotel managers, employee and tourists. Very few respondents had knowledge of TQM; 75% hotels reported the no knowledge of TQM. But it was interesting that they claimed the quality service of their hotel. There was the gap of formal education of TQM for the managers and employees. Just knowledge of hotel management or business management was not enough to understand the TQM in practical work. Experienced based business was running in the tourist destination also. Hotels were maintaining the in-door and out-door service but not fully aware about the compliance of standard of TQM. 1 to 30% variation found in response of hotel and tourist regarding the quality service of hotel. Comparatively, hotels reported high % than the tourist about the quality service of hotel. The study found the lack of proper defined standard of TQM for the particular context of Nepalese service sectors. There was no any strong monitoring system of quality service from the government level so it is necessary to define the Nepalese standard of TQM for tourist focused hotel. It is also necessary to orient hotel about the implementation of TQM and its effective monitoring.

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