# Assessment of critical success factors of TQM culture in hospitality sector in Kosovo

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## Abstract

*This paper attemts to ilustrate how the managers and the staff of a 5 star hotel in Kosovo define quality. Furthermore, it explores the number of critical success factors related to TQM culture and how they are applied in the hotel operations. Different theories related to the quality in the field of service provision, more particular in hospitality or hotel sector and the introduction of the TQM culture in the same sector. A conceptual framework based on existing theories and literature is developed which is than confirms through the research findings and analysis. The findings suggest that most features associated with TQM, like critical success factors assessed throughout the research (leadership, customer focus, and training, communication, teams and staff empowerment) can produce an advantage for the 5 star hotel operations that will affect the quality of service. Furthermore, it confirms that some of the TQM aspects are applied and can be applied in 5 star hotel operations in Kosovo. The issue is whether these aspects are understood as TQM principles and whether their added value is embraced in the day-to-day running of the hotel. The outcomes imply that, indeed, the TQM culture is present in the The Hotel, a 5 star hotel in Kosovo. Some of the critical success factors are directly linked to TQM and some less and it also provides suggestions for improvement where needed, especially related to specific tools that are integral parts of the TQM culture.*

***Key words:*** *TQM, Critical Success Factors, Hospitality, Quality, Hotel*

***JEL classification:*** *L83, M10*

## Introduction

There is a wide range of literature focusing on Total Quality Management (TQM). Naturally the literature at first is dominated by the manufacturing industries as they pioneered the TQM approach. Nevertheless, the service sector is not left behind. In the last decade there is a great deal of literature and authors that have assessed the service sector and its link to the TQM as a new direction towards quality service provision. However, there is very limited coverage related to introduction of TQM culture in 5-star hotels.

TQM is a culture maintained by the business or a company that aims at achieving the customer's satisfaction through continuous improvement. Meeting or exceeding the customer's needs is the main focus and driver of this culture. This paper is an output of a research undertaken focusing on to evaluate this theory and its aplication.

The main aim of this research is to assess the application of the Total Quality Management approach in hotel business in Kosovo. This is done by conducting a case study on one of the 5 star Hotels in Prishtina (in the document referred as The Hotel). This particular case study based research is chosen as it is generally understood that 5 star hotels have advanced quality levels and usually more experienced management and staff. Therefore, it is believed that 5 star hotels would have more in-depth approach to a TQM culture in comparison with hotels of other ratings or any other hospitality related business. This understanding comes from the fact that 5 star hotels are more challenging to be managed, the customer demands are larger and meeting or exceeding their needs requires dedication and hard work, but also a high quality service. Therefore, it is expected that in these hotels, the managers but also the staff, would have a deeper knowledge and would have been introduced to quality management and to basic TQM principles.

Furthermore, the research has two main objectives:

- Confirming that the hotel managers and staff define quality (their perception) mainly through customer focused operations;
- Identifying key critical success factors that are closely linked to TQM culture in 5 star hotel operations.

## Total Quality Management

Quality management has generated great interest in sectors as manufacturing, services, education and health sector and is embraced world wide. Total Quality Management (TQM) as a process will include meeting the needs and expectations of customers, covering all parts of the organization, including every person in the organization, examining all costs which are related to quality, getting things 'right first time', i.e. designing-in quality rather than inspecting it in, developing the systems and procedures which support quality and improvement, developing a continuous process of improvement (Operations management, Slack et al).TQM as a concept has its origin in Japanese manufacturing system.

TQM is not about using high–tech system or outsourcing a team of experts to do the quality control or performance measurement. This should be embedded within the company daily operations, where problems are flagged immediately and solutions are sought in timely manner. Continuous improvement should be the overall aim of operation, as overarching goal of entire system.

### Total Quality Management implementation

In the beginning of the introduction of TQM most of the literature was focusing on the TQM that deals with the manufacturing industry with tangible products. Later on literature focuses in the service industry with intangible products, but mainly on sectors other than hospitality.

Mauch (2010) believes that the rise of complex organizations in modern times triggers the need for improving the implementation of TQM and the ability to measure it. TQM discipline is becoming more concerned with performance reporting to a diverse management audience. He believes that quality is an

on-going practice and must be implemented throughout the entire organization to achieve continuous improvement and optimum results.

Hur (2009) examines how organizations react to TQM practices. He concludes that TQM practices bring about a new managerial approach that provides momentum for employees to think about customers and quality services, an aspect they do not consider seriously. This momentum creates a new organizational culture which transforms managerial style and allows employees to adjust their attitude and promote their knowledge of quality services, customer satisfaction, and teamwork.

In practice, many organizations recognize that TQM is a philosophy to improve quality performance. However, many of them do not use the TQM label to describe their quality improvement programs, and others may be committed to TQM, but refer to their program simply as "our programs," or "the way we do things."

## Total Quality Management in services sector

Service industry started to grow rapidly, becoming a largest segment of economy in developed countries employing more people than manufacturing industries. Therefore some service companies in the 1990s started to realize that they could gain from quality management. Also, a strong competitive pressure has forced service organizations to adopt QM tools and techniques to offer higher quality products and services as a way to delight and keep their customers intact.

The growth of service industries has resulted in an increased focus on the implementation of TQM principles in service organizations and in delivering high-quality service to customers (Schneider and White, 2004; Rönnbäck et al, 2008).

## TQM in hospitality sector – hotels

Each sector of the service economy has their differences and challenges. Business-to-consumer sector stands for individual purchase for themselves or on behalf of another individual, or providing consistent services to a wide variety of customers. Hotel industry is ranged in this type of business and faces challenges that most of the businesses-to-customers do (Johnston and Clark, 2005).

The term hospitality is linked to any institutions that provide food and shelter to people outside their homes (Powers and Barrows, 2012). The development of tourism and hospitality business is historically linked to the development of transportation and economic growth (Knowles, 1998). This term has recently became popular, naming different organisations and hotels (Mullins, 2001). It is an industry that serves travellers with food, drink and shelter (Knowles et all, 2004, as well as an industry that is labour intensive and serves as one of the major employees in many countries and continents (Kus Iawn, 2003). Clarke and Chen refer to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) and its statistics, stating that in UK For example, the hospitality, including tourism industry is responsible for 11% of gross domestic product and 200 million jobs (Clarke and Chen, 2007).

The hospitality sector is characterised with imprecise standards and varying demands. Seasonal factors are determining factor in this industry thus they contribute towards the complexity of this sector (Sasser et al, 1978). Therefore the quality management is challenging and it is very difficult to measure the consistency of service quality. The hotel sector is a vital part but also most challenging of the hospitality industry (Baker et al., 2000). This is because hotels offer more than one product to its guests and customers, such as accommodation and foodservice. This means that managing quality in hotels is more challenging to hotel managers and staff than it is in any other hospitality business (Stutts and Wortman, 2006).

## Total Quality Management Critical Sucsess Factors

Different theories have been developed in past two decades confirming that the TQM has contributed to the competitiveness and the long term profitability of business. The TQM as an approach demands a flexibility and competitiveness of the business, customer as a main focus aiming at customer's satisfaction as a main result (Oakland, 1993; Mohanty and Bahera, 1996).

The customer satisfaction is to be met through continuous improvement hence the final aim at exceeding the customer expectations (Kanji and Wallace, 2000).

According to Godfrey, the TQM has four main targets:

- Satisfied customers
- Satisfied staff
- Increased revenues
- Reduced costs

These targets need to be applied through the organisation or a business, in every department and they need to be integrated within the business culture (Oakland, 2003; Rawlings, 2008).

Critical factors, although essential for TQM, are a challenge in terms of definition and measurement (Zairi & Youssef, 1995). They are followed by tools and techniques that lead towards their implementation (Tari, 2005).

The first time that the grouping of critical factors was done through a study of TQM in USA where a list of 78 success factors was made (Saraph et al 1989; Zairi & Youssef 1995). This grouping was made through instruments that included the role of top management leadership, product/service design, quality reporting and employees relationship. Afterwards the measurement of success factors was subject to numerous studies, like Black and Porter (1996) or Ju et al (2006) which used statistical techniques to measure the success factors or re-grouped the factors into ten. Arasli (2002) listed seven success factors as part of the TQM application.

Many studies have identified critical success TQM factors and their similarities and compatibilities (Saraph et al, 1989). Essentially, it has been found that the critical success factors are vital requirements that enable successful implementation of the TQM. The hospitality sector being a service providing sector, is heavily dependent on its human resource management and capabilities. This is mirrored in its TQM culture as well. Therefore the critical success factors in hotels are very much around its human resources. The following are the key critical success factors that are relevant for hospitality sector and are further analysed in the view of this research, its research questions, its findings and finally the recommendations:

Leadership: This is a critical managerial skills that is related to the ability to motivate the staff towards a common goal (Oakland, 2003). This goal is not necessarily seen clearly from the beginning by everyone, therefore leaders need to provide to staff a purpose and direction to achieve the organisational goals. Every employee should become fully involved in achieving organisational objectives. This requires from leaders to continuously motivate their staff, share their vision with others and inspire the staff for self-improvement. (Hoyle, 2007). The link between leadership and quality is very clear. Leaders must be equipped with skills and knowledge in order to be able to inspire and move forward the team towards the common business goals. The managers need to be communicative; customer oriented and have high quality values (Godfrey, 2000). Leadership as a critical success factor of TQM has been identified in many research studies (Kanji and Asher, 1999), Fynes and Voss, 2001), Joseph et al, 1999), Saraph et al, 1989), (Garvin, 1986), (Dale et al, 2001), (Rahman, 2001). This study identifies leadership as one of the success factors and will aim at conforming that the leadership is indeed critical in the successful hotel business.

Customer focus: Each organisation has its own mission and vision, as well as expected objectives. But these can be achieved only if they satisfy the needs and expectations of business customers. Therefore, today, if a business wants to be successful, it needs to be customer-focused (Kotler et al, 1999). Customer focus is stressed by many authors to be one of the main TQM success factors (Shiba et al (1993) define a customer as a person or a group of individual that receives the work, service or a product that one carries out. Evans and Lindsay (1996) state that the business has four main goals: (i) to satisfy its customer, to achieve higher customer satisfaction than its competitors, to retain customers in the long run and to gain market shares.

The use of customer focus approach in organisation or a business has been identified as critical success factors in many empirical research studies (Lakhe and Mohanty, 1995), (Sureshchandar et al, 2002),

(Rahman, 2001), (Sila and Ebrahimpour, 2003), (Wali et al, 2003), (Parzinger and Nath, 2000). This study recognises the customer focus is a critical success factor of TQM culture in hotels. The research will aim to prove that both managerial and lower level staff need to identify and meet, even exceed, the needs of customers.

Communication: Communication is gaining its importance more and more in today's modern business (Dolphin, 2005). There is a direct link between poor communication and lack of commitment among staff (Rawlings, 2008). Good communication needs to be integrated deep within the organisation and throughout all the levels, managerial and the lowest one, in order for the TQM approach to be successfully implemented. This way staff behaviour will be influenced so it will lead towards achievement of common organisational or business objectives (Oakland, 2003). Management should target the right audience with the right information and message at the right time. Sharing information should be well thought and done strategically. Failure in effective communication may result lost of interest and eventually a decline in quality of service or production (Oakland, 2003).

Staff empowerment: In recent years staff empowerment has been directly linked with better service provision and increase of quality. This has resulted in improved customer satisfaction which directly contributed to the staff satisfaction which has direct impact of the company or business improved performance (Kusluvan, 2003). Conger and Kanungo (1988), Schlesinger and Heskett (1991) and many other have defined empowerment as providing the staff with freedom and opportunity over certain job-related activities. Moreover, Hoyle (2007) links empowering of staff with their encouragement and reward which inspires them for imagination and intiative. He believes that every staff member posses with the knowledge beyond his-her job description and it is in the management hands to inspire and boost this knowledge that will ultimately lead towards improved performance of the company as a whole.

The above mentioned theories are with specific importance for the hotel businesses. The jobs in hotels tend to be described as hard, long hours' jobs, heavy and boring with the routine, lack of security and quite often with unprofessional and disrespectful management (Kusluvan, 2003). Therefore, empowering the staff of the hotel needs to be empowered, as this will affect directly their satisfaction and performance, which will inevitably lead towards improved service and finally customer satisfaction. This will lead towards increased competitiveness of the hotel (Lashley, 2001).

Teams: The need for organising the staff in teams has a long history and it is cross sectorial. Cross functional teams of business operations have been a great added value for businesses (Oakland, 2003). Teamwork is critical element in TQM and it directly affects the TQM successful implementation (Crosby, 1984). It promotes a bottom up approach and it enables synergy in the overall quality enhancement efforts (Thiagarajan & Zairi, 1997). According to Koichi Tsukamoto, Wascoal Corporation President, Japan: "One step by hundred persons is better than hundred steps by one person" (Thiagarajan & Zairi, 1997). Running the operations through teams will lead towards solving problems, proved quality, but also will inspire introduction of new products and services (Hoevemeyer, 1993). If a comparison is made between the individual and team work, the effectiveness and efficiency of teams is far higher than of the work of an individual. The team members are proud of their job, of their company and they are convinced of the benefit of the work processes (Thiagarajan & Zairi, 1997).

Training: Training is becoming more and more one of the most important element of human resource management (Oakland, 2003). Training aims at equipping the staff with new behaviour or skill in order to increase the knowledge and abilities that will make the staff but also the organisation or business more successful (Janes, 2003).

Ishikawa declares: "Quality begins and ends with training" (Ishikawa, 1985). But training on its own is not sufficient. Providing the right type of training is crucial. Therefore, the biggest organisations or businesses ensure that their training programmes include the basics of quality management. Those that are aware of its benefits, they include the TQM in the regular training programs for building the necessary set of skills for continuous quality improvement (Thiagarajan & Zairi, 1997).

For more traditional business, TQM means changing the culture, which requires defining or even changing the roles, knowledge, skills, attitudes and abilities of the staff. Therefore, training needs to be is a top priority within the business policies.

Companies started to get interested in quality model framework that could be used basically in three ways: as the bases for awards, as the bases for a form of self assessment and as descriptive 'what needs to be in place' model (Oakland, 2004). TQM effectiveness can be measured through self framework, such as European Quality Award (EQA), Deming Prize (Japan) and Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA). The MBNQA framework is used to assess the organisation for excelling in quality management and quality achievement and it is seen as the most attractive self assessment tool by many organisations and companies (Oakland, 2004). This model has seven categories:

**Table 1:** MBNQA and Critical Success Factors

| MBNQA/EQA Criteria | MBNQA/EQA Critical success factors |
|---|---|
| Leadership | Senior management commitment<br>Senior management involvement<br>Shared values<br>Passion for excellence<br>Inspire, guide, coach and support<br>Corporate citizenship<br>Public responsibility |
| Policy and strategy | Quality function deployment<br>Strategic direction<br>Performance tracking<br>Planned development and implementation<br>Strategic business and quality plans |
| Customer focus | Customer quality measurement<br>Customer relationships<br>Customer satisfaction<br>Market research |
| Information and analysis | Managing supplier resource<br>Supplier performance evaluation<br>Process partnership improvement<br>Comparative benchmarking<br>Organisational performance measures |
| Human resource focus | Human resource development<br>Participatory environment<br>Employee well-being and satisfaction |
| Process management | Process design<br>Process implementation<br>Process management<br>Process review and improvement<br>Supplier and partnering processes<br>Product and service processes |
| Business results | Stakeholders satisfaction<br>Special impact<br>Customer focused results<br>Human resources results<br>Organisational effectiveness results |

**Source:** McDonald, Zairi & Idris (2002)

## Research Methodology

The literature review and TQM theory analysis stress the similarities and differences between different sectors where TQM is applied. The literature and the theory also focus on the TQM success factors and the link with critical success factors. In order to confirm some of the theories but also to reach alternative conclusions, a qualitative research was conducted through the case study of one 5 star hotel in Kosovo in

order to see whether TQM is applied as an approach and what are the factors or critical success factors that are linked to the implementation or non implementation of the TQM.

For developing the research, primary and secondary data were collected and analysed. Primary data were collected through interviews with relevant hotel representatives. The interviews were conducted with hotel's managerial staff as well as employees of different departments through constructive set of questions that were grouped by the main areas of the quality management.

The interview discussion questions were constructed around the area of quality management, its tools and how they were applied by hotels. For the purpose of this research and in order to obtain as much as possible information, the interviews were of flexible structure (Kumar, 2005). In some cases in-depth interviews through repeated face to face interaction were used. This way in depth and more accurate information was collected for the research (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984).

Secondary data were collected mainly from the documents provided by the hotel staff using the information that is already marked as publically accessible information that corresponds with ethical principles of confidentiality and information sharing.

In order to ensure the validity of the research method and data collection and analysis, the logical approach was applied where each question during the interview was related to the objectives of the research (Kumar, 2005). The establishment of the logical link between the questions and research objectives was a complex endeavour. It was important to focus on the key success factors of the TQM and discuss them with the hotel staff.

This research was focused on 5 star hotels in Kosovo. The hotel is located in Prishtina, Kosovo, in prime location, in the centre of the city. These elements are not in common for other hotels throughout Kosovo. The demographics of Prishtina play a role in this hotel functioning as well: Prishtina is the centre for international community presence in Kosovo. For confidentiality purpopses, the name of The Hotel will not be revealed. The Hotel is a host of almost all high level international conferences in Kosovo and, if this is not the case than the guests of such conference will in most cases reside in the The Hotel during their stay in Kosovo. This provides a number of advantages to The Hotel which are not at hand for the other hotels in Kosovo.

## Data analysis

Classifying hotel organisations is not easy as the industry is diverse and does not present obvious, well-defined categories. Hotels can be classified based on several categories such as: quality of facilities and services, target market, comparative statistics and type of services provided to the guest (Stutts and Wortman, 2006). Some of the key requirements for achieving a 5 star grading are as follows:

- All areas of operation should meet the 5-star requirements for cleanliness,
- maintenance and hospitality, and for the quality of physical facilities.
- Hotel opens seven days a week all year.
- Enhanced services offered, e.g. valet parking, escort to bedrooms, proactive table service in bars and lounges and at breakfast, concierge service, 24 hour reception, 24 hour room service and full afternoon tea.
- At least one restaurant, open to resident guests and non-residents, for all meals seven days a week.
- All bedrooms with en-suite bathroom with WC, bath and shower.
- A choice of environments in public areas of sufficient size to provide generous personal space.
- Additional facilities, e.g. secondary dining, leisure, business centre or spa.

In 5-star hotels, other products/services are offered such business-related and leisure-related services. This means that it is more challenging to manage quality in 5-star hotels than in lower-rated hotels as more services are offered to variable types of guests.

The Hotel Prishtina is internationally awarded with 5 star Diamond Award International from the American Academy of Hospitality Sciences for its luxurious ambiance and the personalized services offered.

## Defining quality (perception)

From interviews with both managerial and staff, it is evident that there is a joint perception on quality and its definition. When asked "Which of these following statements would best define quality from your perspective: Achieving the purpose; Meeting specifications; Meeting or exceeding customer needs?" most of the respondents answered that quality is defined as meeting the customer needs. The fact that this definition flows across the board between different staff levels is a strong indication that meeting the customer needs is one of the strongest drivers of the high quality service in this hotel. Therefore, this can be seen as one of the main drivers in the overall service industry, and more specifically hospitality sector. This is viewed as a key to the business success which is the bases of TQM theory as well.

## Critical Success Factors as enablers of the TQM

### Leadership

Leadership is defined in literature as a skill of communicating with a group of people (Lee, 2001, Kacmar et al, 2003 and Campbell et al, 2003). All hotel staff agreed with this definition. The Hotel managers defined leadership as an ability to motivate a group of people and in terms of the hotel, to motivate the staff to achieve hotel objectives. This confirms the additional definition of leadership stated in literature (Oakland, 2003). Most of hotel managers believe that the teams are very important to achieve TQM objectives and apply TQM culture in the hotel operations. Furthermore, they also defined a good leader as someone who has the skill to motivate a group of people to achieve organizational objectives. On the other hand, all staff believed that a good leader is someone who can communicate with them and maintain a friendly atmosphere.

### Customer focus as CSF

Customer focus has been identified as a critical success factor widely in literature (Mohanty and Lakhe, 1995, Samson and Terziovski, 1999, Agus et al, 2000). This case study, through conducted interviews with the hotel management and staff confirms that indeed customer focus helps achieving TQM objectives.

Customer focus relates to the notion of the business providing superior value to its customers (Kotler et al, 1999). For each business today, in order to be successful, needs to be customer focused. This means that all the staff, the management, organisational structures and functions to be directed towards customers their needs and satisfaction.

This is very visible in The Hotel. Managers and staff agreed that the customer is most important for the hotel business and as such the most important factor for the success for the business. Therefore, the customer needs to be met and this is permanent obligation and a driver for staff's daily engagement. Both parties, hotel managers and staff, strongly believe that they are customer focused and that this means to understand customer needs and try to satisfy them.

### Communication as CSF

Literature refers to two forms of communication: top-to-bottom and bottom-to-top communication (Johnston et al, 2005). Both forms of communications were reported to be used in The Hotel by the managers and staff. All managers and staff reported on the following communication tools: e-mail, telephone and verbal communication. The emphasis however was given to verbal communication. Communication and its tools, if appropriate and if serving for information sharing, can increase the staff commitment to the hotel and assist them in their daily duties. This is confirmed through staff and management interviews.

The use of appropriate levels of communications can be definitely named as one of the critical success factors of the TQM (Saraph et al, 1989, Joseph et al, 1999, Chow and Lui, 2003). Furthermore, Kanji and Asher have compared the communication as part of the cement that holds together the bricks of the total

quality process (Kanji and Asher, 1993) and it is the basic principle of the overall people-based management.

The Hotel management and staff communicate appropriately. The most often used is verbal communication. E-mails are used mainly with external stakeholders. Verbal communication, although enhancing interpersonal relation within the hotel staff and management, can sometimes cause confusion in providing guidance and reporting. This is where written communication can bring an added value and contribute directly towards applying TQM in the hotel and achieving its objectives.

## Staff empowerment as CSF

The literature highlights three approaches for staff empowerment (Lashley, 2001). The first approach refers to the staff empowerment through participation, the second approach refers to the involvement as a tool for staff empowerment and the third refers to commitment to the organisational goals which empowers the staff. Furthermore, literature highlights that there are some problems related to staff empowerment and the decision-making process (Wilkinson, 2001). When decision making process is not clear than the ideas suggested by staff are not considered fully or at all by the management. The entire process causes confusion and sometimes dissatisfaction. This affects motivation and decrease of quality in service.

The case study shows that the staff of The Hotel are not empowered by any of three above mentioned approaches. In some moments, the findings show that staff is empowered through the participation in decision making but this is not a continuously and regularly applied practice. The case study also highlights that most managers of The Hotel do not consider any suggestions from staff as they do not believe that they are worth of consideration. On the other hand, most of the staff of The Hotel believe that staff empowerment would contribute greatly towards achievement of TQM objectives. Most of hotel staff agree that empowerment of staff contributes to their motivation which directly links with service quality increase.

## Team assembly as a CSF

Teams and team work are the key of today's modern business in any business area. Cross functional teams are becoming the new tool in developing business and their products as well as improve or re-design the operational and organisational processes (Henke et al, 1993), (Palmer and Burns, 1992). In case of The Hotel, the multi functional teams are assembled for two purposes: for quality assurance and problem solving. In terms of meetings, the literature refers to the link between the frequency of meetings and quality increase (Cooper and Kleinschmidt, 2007).

In case of The Hotel the meetings are not as regular as they should be but rather are organized on ad-hoc bases. There is already an understanding that this is an area that needs improvement as meetings and information sharing are the core of the good functioning of multi-functional teams.

## Training as a CSF

The use of training in organisations has been acknowledged as a critical success factor by different authors (Saraph et al, 1989, Agus et al, 2000, Baidoun, 2003, Tavalera, 2004). This fact was acknowledged by the management ans staff working at The Hotel. Most of the staff assessed the level of training to be satisfactory. The training has helped them improving their skills and increase the quality of their performance. As such, training has directly contributed to the implementation of TQM in The Hotel.

The hotel uses both on the job training and traditional classroom training. All managers believe that training problems are lack of time, space, cost, lack of funds, lack of professionalism in staff and lack of dedicated training officer. All managers agreed that training helps achieve TQM objectives. On the other hand, the staff mostly agreed that trainings are useful but not necessarily contribute towards achieving the TQM objectives.

Finally, the collected data show that there is a common understanding among managerial and lower level staff when defijing the quality is concern. The common perception is the quality is directly linked with customer focus. Regarding the six key critical success factors, there are common and different understandings and approaches among managers and staff. The most contradictory understanding is

related to the staff empowerment. The managers do not see the staff empowerment as an added value, whereas staff members believe that this factor is directly linked to work motivation and increased quality in service. Other critical success factors, like leadership, customer focus, teams, training and communications are commonly seen as critical success factors that directly relate to the TQM introduction and implementation.

## Conclusion

When defining quality in hotels is concerned, the study concluded that both hotel managers and staff defined quality as meeting or exceeding customer satisfaction. This definition confirms the definitions used in the literature by different authors such as Oakland (2003), Dale (2003) Hoyle (2007) and Rawlings (2008). This definition acknowledges the fact that both managers and the hotel staff are customer focused and aim at satisfying customer needs. This is viewed as a key to the business success which is the bases of TQM theory as well.

A total of six critical success factors were assessed through this study and their link to the TQM culture in 5 star hotels. The study assessed in details these critical success factors and their presence in The Hotel. Assembling cross functional teams is a critical success factor when introducing TQM culture in 5 star hotels. The cross-functional teams were assembled for two purposes: for problem solving and quality assurance purposes.

On the other hand, leadership is defined by managers as an ability to motivate the staff towards achieving the business objectives. Whereas the staff has defined the leadership as the ability to communicate with team members and maintain good relations and friendly atmosphere. The study confirmed that the leadership is also a critical success factor of introduction of TQM culture in the 5 star hotel.

When staff empowerment is concerned, the three theoretical approaches are not applied in 5 star hotel in Kosovo. Furthermore, staff empowerment as a concept is applied more on ad hoc bases and as needed, but not as part of human resource management. On the other hand, the staff of the hotel agreed that staff empowerment directly affects their efficiency, motivation and dedication. Although not applied successfully in the The Hotel in Kosovo, the study confirms that staff empowerment is indeed a critical success factor for TQM application. In this case study, by not empowering the staff sufficiently, the management has not used fully the potential of the hotel staff.

The study found that there is a satisfactory level of communication among the staff in The Hotel in Kosovo. The communication flows both ways: to-to-bottom and bottom-to-top, between the managers and the hotel staff. As such, communication is conformed as one of the critical success factors when introducing the TQM culture in 5 star hotels. In terms of communication tool, the hotel managers and staff currently prefer verbal internal communication whereas e-mails are mainly used for external communication. This represents a limitation factor in terms of performance and efficiency. Written communication in form of e-mails and written reports should be used in regular bases in order to improve efficiency and performance as well as the quality f service.

Whe it comer both, off and on, job training approaches were use. This depended on the period and stage of the business development. In the initial stages, the off the job training approach was used more as the staff lacked experience in 5 star hotels. After few years of successful 5 star hotel business operation, the on the job training approach was used as a primary training tool as the more senior staff had sufficient experience and knowledge that could be transferred to more junior staff. The study confirms that the training is one of the most important critical success factors when introducing TQM culture in 5 star hotels.

In the end in terms of customer focus, the study found that both managers and hotel staff are customer focused. Customer needs are the top priority for all engaged at any level at the hotel and this is visible in all stages of the hotel operation. This conforms that customer focus is one of the main critical success factors when applying TQM approach in 5 star hotels.

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