A Strategic Paradigm: Linking Marketing and TQM in Higher Educational Institutions
Lin, L.

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Approach and Objectives

This thesis is all about utilizing modern management principles to manage higher educational institutions in order to improve education quality and work performance efficiency and effectiveness. Even though discussions about non-profit organization performance among academia started in the US as early as the 1950s, the prosperity of the 60s eased the public and government pressures for serious reform among public and non-profit organizations. It wasn’t until the late 70s, during which time the US economy faced double-digit interest rates and a major economic slum, that criticisms about non-profit organization performance (which included higher educational institutions) became more pressing. In the second half of the 80s, improving higher educational institutions’ performance began to kick into a high gear. Consequently, many higher educational institutions have now implemented a TQM program. At the same time, shrinking student pools and increasing competition forced higher educational institutions to adopt marketing concepts. In the European higher educational community, the trend is also toward becoming more competitive by focusing on identifying student markets, meeting student needs, and improving organization performance.

Despite many publications and researches on the subject of utilizing modern management principles (most frequently, marketing and TQM principles) to manage higher educational institutions, marketing and TQM are normally perceived as two separate management tools. The former is used to transfer the organization into a market-oriented institution and the latter, for improving education quality and performance.

In reality, it makes sense that the principles of marketing and TQM are utilized jointly and systematically to improve organization performance.
As Kotler states, "Organizations gain market leadership by understanding consumer needs and finding solutions that delight customers through superior value, quality and service." TQM, on the other hand, offers philosophy and methodology in improving management and employee performance and product quality — both are more related to organization internal issues. At the same time, effective marketing requires an internal organization perspective and methodology to transfer customer needs into tangible and intangible products, and TQM requires organization external perspective and methodology to determine and define market(s) and market demand prior to setting standards for product quality and work performance.

It was for this reason that a model utilizing both marketing and TQM concepts are proposed in this thesis (reference Figure 1.10. A Strategic Paradigm: Linking Marketing and TQM in Higher Educational Institutions). The purpose of this model is to help higher educational institutions become more competitive and to maximize organization efficiency and effectiveness internally as well as at the marketplace. This is achieved by way of aligning institution effort and resources to the task of identifying and satisfying market demand and improving education quality. The model organizes and outlines all of the major organization issues, internal and external, at one glance. The subsequent field research as well as theory development follow the framework of the proposed model.

Acknowledgements

Ever since my undergraduate days, my professors would, from time to time, encourage me to pursue a doctorate degree. But I was too smart to listen; I thought I knew better. I wanted to get an MBA and that was enough for me. After all, I wasn’t going to teach -- I thought only boring people became teachers. It was purely by accident that I became a teacher and surprise, surprise, I rather enjoy it. So, I joined the most exciting
profession on this planet -- well, I guess I've changed my mind about teachers being dull.

When I first began teaching for the University of Maryland, those students who did not know me very well thought that I was one of them, and this was fun for me. I got to hear a lot things about myself that I hadn't known. Eventually, I promptly and hopelessly developed the 'teacher's stern look'. One glance at me, and any smart student would immediately spot me as a teacher. It seemed to me that from that moment my fun days were gone forever. When I came to teach for the Hotelschool the Hague, I decided that since I now looked like a teacher, I might as well acquire a Ph.D. to add to my credentials. I looked into several American universities in the States, and all required me to do most of my doctoral study at the university. This, of course, was a problem for me because I wasn't in a position to quit my job in order to study.

By pure coincidence, Dr. Ewout Th. Cassee, Chairman of the Board, Hotelschool The Hague, offered to help me study for a Ph.D. in The Netherlands. I gladly accepted. He then introduced me to my "promotion father," Professor Doctor Jozef H.J.P. Tettero.

In fact, I have two special people to thank for my being able to complete my thesis successfully. One, of course, is Professor Tettero, who, despite his gruelling schedules, took time to read and re-read my writings; he, then, patiently gave me detailed notes and discussed each point at length with me. His valuable feedback and suggestions helped me in working through many difficult problems. I especially appreciate his thorough and yet nonjudgemental way of communicating his constructive suggestions, and his subtle ways of encouraging me to go on.

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Finally, my thanks to my two wonderful Dutch cats who are great joy to me. I often joked about that my cats has approved my thesis long before I finished it, and I have their paw marks found in various sections of my thesis to prove it too! My special thanks to my orange cat, Chenny, who was named after Drs. Chenevert because they both have the same hair colour -- all right, so there is a slight difference in hair texture but who is going to notice it?! In any event, I appreciate the fact that - with his great sense of humour - Drs. Chenevert gracefully accepted that a cat has being named after him.