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THE INVESTIGATION OF TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT PRACTICES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SD PHARMACY

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ABSTRACT

In today's rivalry packed industrial atmosphere, the growth of any business organization would entirely depend upon customer appreciation and loyalty it can command. These can be ensured only by offering products and services of high quality on a durable basis. Therefore, continuous enhancement of quality on a sustaining basis has become essential for the prosperity of any business organization at present and in the future as well. In the early 1950's, quality management practices developed rapidly in Japanese plants, and became a major theme in Japanese management philosophy, such that, by 1960, quality control and management had become a national preoccupation. Total Quality Management (TQM) is now part of a much wider concept that addresses overall organizational performance and recognizes the importance of processes. As we move into the 21st century, it has developed in many countries into holistic frameworks, aimed at helping organizations achieve excellent performance, particularly in customer and business results. TQM has gained importance not only for manufacturing and service organizations but also for pharmaceutical companies. Ayurveda is an ancient Indian Medical Science, the origin of which can be traced back to more than 5000 years. World Health Organization (WHO) has recognized 'Ayurveda' as an alternative system of medicine. Ayurveda is a science dealing not only with the treatment of some diseases but also helps to lead a healthy way of life. This system of medicine follows a holistic approach which includes the whole body constitution of the patient. Today, ayurveda is gaining global popularity. The World Health Organization recognizes ayurveda as an alternative system of medicine. The 100% natural, after effect free and eco-friendly medicines used in Ayurveda makes it one of the world's safest systems of medicine. SD Pharmacy is one among the popular ayurvedic companies in India which was established in the year 1939, by a leading practitioner of Ayurveda, Shri.P.S.Kesavan Vaidyan to aid his practice. As was the custom of those days, leading Ayurvedic physicians used to manufacture medicine for use in their clinical practice in the same premises under their vigilant eye. But the growing demand for his medicines made Shri.P.S.Kesavan Vaidyan; think in terms of a large scale-manufacturing unit. This was the beginning of the SD Pharmacy group, today a highly diversified group of companies which manufactures ayurvedic medicines, herbal cosmetics and massage equipments. This study mainly deals with the investigation of the total quality management practices adopted by SD Pharmacy, Alleppey and the study is confined to ayurvedic medicines only. The last few weeks helped me to gain knowledge about their different types of ayurvedic medicines and its indication. SD Pharmacy has a very long product line up of over 350 products. Liquids, pastes, powders and pills constitute traditional preparations. Oriental Medicine Private Limited, its sister concern produces modern tablets which share shelf space along with the traditional pills. The various quality control measures taken by the company has also viewed along with this. Still SD Pharmacy considers its traditions sacred. In spite of the advent of most modern quality control methods and materials, they still believe in the traditional sensory Quality Control. They employ sense of smell, taste and naked eye examination of consistency in addition to modern scientific lab QC methods. SD Pharmacy's processing facility is with staff having rich experience, some of them with 20/30 years in the same facility.

KEYWORDS

TQM, S D Pharmacy's.

INTRODUCTION

All the customers who consume the product or service ensure quality. The term quality means 'fitness for purpose'. Total Quality is a description of the culture, attitude and organization of a company that strives to provide customers with products and services that satisfy their needs. The culture requires quality in all aspects of the company's operations, with processes being done right the first time and defects and waste eradicated from operations.

Total Quality Management is a philosophy that seeks to bring about organization-wide quality improvement by involving every individual in the organization. The conventional approach confined quality to the quality personnel and manufacturing departments. Quality was also limited to certain parameters of product specifications which enabled any quality related problem to be attributed to the manufacturing department.

Total Quality Management seeks to eliminate the inconsistencies by making quality control the responsibility of each and every person in the organization. The whole organization is guided towards serving the customers more effectively. Total Quality Management is a management approach that originated in the 1950's and has steadily become more popular since the early 1980's. It is a management philosophy that seeks to integrate all organizational functions (marketing, finance, design, engineering, and production, customer service, etc.) to focus on meeting customer needs and organizational objectives.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

TQM views an organization as a collection of processes. It maintains that organizations must strive to continuously improve these processes by incorporating the knowledge and experiences of workers. The simple objective of TQM is "Do the right things, right the first time, every time". TQM is infinitely variable and adaptable. Although originally applied to manufacturing operations, and for a number of years only used in that area.

TQM is now becoming recognized as a generic management tool, just as applicable in service and public sector organizations. As we move into the 21st century, TQM has developed in many countries into holistic frameworks, aimed at helping organizations achieve excellent performance, particularly in customer and business results. In Europe, a widely adopted framework is the so-called "Business Excellence" or "Excellence" Model, promoted by the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM), and in the UK by the British Quality Foundation (BQF)."

Quality control has become a major criterion for ayurvedic medicines as well. Ayurveda is the 5000 years old Indian system of medicine. The term evolved from two words 'Ayur' meaning life and 'Veda' meaning science. This system of medicine follows a holistic approach, diagnosing not just the disease but the whole body constitution of the patient. Today ayurveda is gaining global popularity. The World Health Organization recognizes ayurveda as an alternative system of medicine. The 100% natural, after effect free and eco-friendly medicines used in Ayurveda makes it one of the world's safest systems of medicine. It also has a wide range of medicines compared to modern medicine.

Rejuvenation and therapeutic procedures are unique to Ayurveda. This comprehensive, multi disciplinary system of medicine offers specialties like pediatrics, genetics, gynecology, physiotherapy and rejuvenation. Ayurvedic therapy being natural and practically after effect free, will replace chemical drugs more and more in coming years. This will create a dramatic growth in popularity of Ayurveda in the coming 10 - 15 years.

The growing demand for ayurvedic medicines was the focal point for the SD Pharmacy to set up in terms of large scale manufacturing unit. Today, it is a highly diversified group of companies which has an international fame for its ayurvedic resort 'Keralayam' within very short span of 5 years.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE**QUALITY**

Quality of a product or services is its ability to satisfy the needs and expectations of the customer. According to *Joseph Juran*, quality is "fitness for use". *Philip B. Crosby* defines quality as "conformance to requirements". Every customer looks for a product its quality. Therefore, all the organization should continuously improve the quality of the products and services.

TOTAL QUALITY

Total Quality is a description of the culture, attitude and organization of a company that strives to provide customers with products and services that satisfy their needs. The culture requires quality in all aspects of the company's operations, with processes being done right the first time and defects and waste eradicated from operations.

TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT

The expression of Total Quality Management started to appear in the 1950s and has steadily become more popular since the early 1980's. Total Quality Management (TQM) is a method by which management and employees can become involved in the continuous improvement of the production of goods and services. It is a combination of quality and management tools aimed at increasing business and reducing losses due to wasteful practices. According to *Ross*, TQM is "the integration of all the 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 key principles of TQM are as follows:

- Management Commitment
 - a) Plan (drive, direct)
 - b) Do (deploy, support, participate)
 - c) Check (review)
 - d) Act (recognize, communicate, revise)
- Employee Empowerment
 - a) Training
 - b) Suggestion scheme
 - c) Measurement and recognition
 - d) Excellence teams
- Fact Based Decision Making
 - a) SPC (statistical process control)
 - b) TOPS (Team Oriented Problem Solving)
- Continuous Improvement
 - a) Systematic management
 - b) Excellence teams
 - c) Cross functional process management
 - d) Attain, maintain, improve standards
- Customer Focus
 - a) Supplier partnership
 - b) Service relationship with internal customers
 - c) Never compromise quality
 - d) Customer driven standards

OBJECTIVES

1. To find out the total quality management practices adopted by S.D Pharmacy.
2. To evaluate whether the TQM practices adopted by S.D Pharmacy ensures competitive edge in the market to attract the prospective customers.

METHODOLOGY**POPULATION**

The entire aggregation of items from which samples can be drawn is known as a population. For the study, dealers and the employees pertaining to Alleppey district constitute the population.

SAMPLE UNIT

A sample unit can be an individual element or a group of elements selected from the population. Those dealers and the employees who are close with the product constitute the sample unit.

SAMPLE SIZE

The sample size is 55 which is to be collected from both the dealers as well as employees.

DATA COLLECTION

For the study, both primary data and secondary data are to be collected. Primary data are those data which are collected afresh and for the first time whereas, secondary data is the data that already exists which has been collected by some other person or organization for their use and is generally made available to other researchers free or at a concessional rate. Primary data is collected using direct interview with Mr.K.Ramesh, Managing Director of SD Pharmacy; Alleppey and using questionnaire whereas, secondary data are collected using brochures, internet and other published resources.

SAMPLING METHOD

Sampling is the act, process or technique of selecting a representative part of a population for the purpose of determining the characteristics of the whole population. Sampling can be probability sampling and non-probability sampling. A sampling in which every member of the population has a calculable and non-zero probability of being included in the sample is known as probability sampling whereas, non-probability sampling involves the selection of units based on factors other than random chance. In this study, convenience sampling, a non-probability sampling method has been adopted.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS**TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ADOPTED BY S.D PHARMACY**

Total Quality Management (TQM) is a method by which management and employees can become involved in the continuous improvement of the production of goods and services. Some of the total quality management practices used by the company is as follows:

- a. The raw materials are washed, cleaned and dried as soon as it is delivered. It is then checked for parasites, fungus, foreign bodies, adulteration and moisture.
- b. There is separate area for storing of herbs, minerals, animal origin, volatile oils and perfumes and these are stored in proper containers.
- c. Segregation of different raw materials is done by the procurement and storage department.
- d. Raw materials are then labeled with the supplier name, quantity and date of receipt.
- e. The company ensures personal hygiene, proper waste management and sanitation system.

- f. As soon as the top management instructs, the goods are dispatched from the procurement and storage department. Then there is a random sampling of raw materials by the quality control and assurance department. After their checking and approval, the production begins.
- g. There is quality checking at each and every stage during the production.
- h. Finished goods are then packed and labeled using shrink wrapper, aluminium foil and preservatives to protect from damages.
- i. These finished goods are stored in bottles which are sterilized and boiled.
- j. In case of the defects in the finished goods, both the production department as well as quality control and assurance department is responsible.
- k. Finally it is checked for packing material, labeling and finished goods and the goods are stored in the dispatch department and as per the requirements, and the goods are supplied to the outlets.

As a part of the study, data are collected from both the dealers as well as the employees of the company. This is to know the extent to which the total quality management techniques are followed by them.

DATA ANALYSIS OF EMPLOYEES

VARIOUS WAYS FOR STORING THE RAW MATERIALS

The table shows the different ways for storing the raw materials.

TABLE NO. 1

Ways	Respondents	Percentage
Containers	25	50
Sacks	9	18
Jars	6	12
All the above	10	20
Total	50	100

Source: Survey Data

Interpretation

The above figure shows that 50% of the employees said that the raw materials are stored in containers, 18% said in sacks, 12% in jars and 20% said all the above.

MINIMUM SHELF PERIOD OF RAW MATERIALS

The table shows the minimum shelf period of raw materials.

TABLE NO. 2

Shelf Period	Respondents	Percentage
Below 1 week	12	24
1-2 weeks	28	56
2 weeks-1 month	7	14
1 month-3 months	3	6
Total	50	100

Source: Survey Data

Interpretation

From the above figure, it is clear that the minimum shelf period of raw materials is 1-2 weeks.

FREQUENCY OF QUALITY CHECKING OF RAW MATERIALS

The table shows the frequency of quality checking of raw materials.

TABLE NO. 3

Frequency	Respondents	Percentage
Daily	17	34
Weekly	3	6
Monthly	5	10
Random Sampling	25	50
Total	50	100

Source: Survey Data

Interpretation

From the above figure, it is clear that 50% of the respondents said that there is random sampling of raw materials, 34% said that quality of raw materials are checked daily, 10% said monthly and 6% said weekly.

ENSURING THE QUALITY OF PRODUCTS

The table shows the ways of ensuring the quality of the products.

TABLE NO. 4

Ways	Respondents	Percentage
Quality control lab	26	52
Research and analysis wing	0	0
Periodic sample checking	14	28
All the above	10	20
Total	50	100

Source: Survey Data

Interpretation

52% of the respondents said that the quality of the products is ensured by the quality control lab, 28% said by periodic sample checking.

REMEDIAL MEASURES IN CASE OF SHORTAGE OF RAW MATERIALS

The table shows the remedial measures in case of shortage of raw materials.

TABLE NO. 5

Measures	Respondents	Percentage
Stocking in excess	31	62
Outside purchasing	3	6
Inoperative	3	6
All the above	13	26
Total	50	100

Source: Survey Data

Interpretation

From the above figure, it is clear that stocking in excess is the remedial measure taken in case of shortage of raw materials.

MEASURES ADOPTED IN EMERGENCY BREAKDOWNS

The table shows the measures adopted in emergency breakdowns.

TABLE NO. 6

Measures	Respondents	Percentage
Power supply standby	8	16
Emergency rescue	2	4
Production standby	38	76
All the above	2	4
Total	50	100

Source: Survey Data

Interpretation

76% of the employees said that the production process is controlled in case of emergency breakdowns

ADEQUACY OF STORAGE FACILITY FOR SMOOTH PRODUCTION

The table shows the adequacy of storage facility for smooth production.

TABLE NO. 7

Particulars	Respondents	Percentage
Adequate	20	40
Inadequate	4	8
Needs improvement	18	36
More than required	8	16
Total	50	100

Source: Survey Data

Interpretation

The above table depicts that 40% of the employees said that the storage facility is adequate, 36% said it needs improvement, 16% said it is more than required and 8% said it is inadequate for smooth production.

MEASURES FOR WASTE DISPOSAL IN THE COMPANY

The table shows the measures for waste disposal in the company.

TABLE NO. 8

Measures	Respondents	Percentage
Recycling	12	24
Reusable products	0	0
Reutilizing method	38	76
All the above	0	0
Total	50	100

Source: Survey Data

Interpretation

From the above figure, it is clear that 76% of the employees said that wastes are reutilized, 24% said it is recycled.

PROGRAMMES FOR THE SKILL DEVELOPMENT OF EMPLOYEES

The table shows the programmes adopted for the skill development of employees.

TABLE NO. 9

Programmes	Respondents	Percentage
In house training	33	66
Training by experts	7	14
Field/factory visit	4	8
None of the above	6	12
Total	50	100

Source: Survey Data

Interpretation

The above table depicts that 66% of the respondents said that in house training is provided for the skill development of employees, 14% said there is training by experts and 8% said field or factory visit.

RATING ABOUT PERKS AND EMOLUMENTS OF EMPLOYEES

The table shows the rating about perks and emoluments of employees.

TABLE NO. 10

Rating	Respondents	Percentage
Satisfactory	23	46
Unsatisfactory	10	20
Competitive	10	20
Needs improvement	7	14
Total	50	100

Source: Survey Data

Interpretation

46% of the employees are satisfied with the perks and the emoluments, 20% are unsatisfactory as well as said competitive and 14% said it needs improvement.

SHELF PERIOD OF FINISHED GOODS

The table shows the shelf period of finished goods.

TABLE NO. 11

Shelf Period	Respondents	Percentage
1 year	9	18
2 years	17	34
3 years	20	40
4 years	4	8
Total	50	100

Source: Survey Data

Interpretation

From the above table, it is clear that the shelf period for finished goods is 3 years.

WAYS OF PROTECTING THE FINISHED GOODS

The table shows the ways of protecting the finished goods.

TABLE NO. 12

Ways	Respondents	Percentage
Aluminium foil	3	6
Shrink wrapper	6	12
Preservatives	4	8
All the above	37	74
Total	50	100

Source: Survey Data

Interpretation

74% of the employees said that the finished goods are protected using aluminium foil, shrink wrapper and preservatives.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DEFECTS

The table shows the person responsible for the defects.

TABLE NO. 13

Responsibility	Respondents	Percentage
Production Department	8	16
Quality Control Department	15	30
Packing and labeling Department	11	22
Both QC and production Department	16	32
Total	50	100

Source: Survey Data

Interpretation

The above table shows that 32% of the employees said that both the quality control and production department is responsible for the defects.

ESSENTIAL AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT

The table shows the essential areas for improvement.

TABLE NO. 14

Areas	Respondents	Percentage
Production	4	8
Quality Control	5	10
Distribution and Marketing	34	68
All the above	7	14
Total	50	100

Source: Survey Data

Interpretation

68% of the respondents said that there should be improvement in the area of marketing and distribution.

WAYS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY

The table shows the ways to improve the quality.

TABLE NO. 15

Ways	Respondents	Percentage
Encourage Communication	10	20
Quality Circles	18	36
Motivation	12	24
Fringe benefits	10	20
Total	50	100

Source: Survey Data

Interpretation

36% of the employees said that there should be quality circles to improve the quality, 24% said that motivation is essential and 20% said both communication and fringe benefits.

DATA ANALYSIS OF DEALERS**FEATURES OF THE PRODUCT AND THE PRODUCER**

The table shows the features of the product and the producer.

TABLE NO. 16

Features	Respondents	Percentage
Quality Products	3	60
Efficient Delivery Channel	0	0
Commission	1	20
All the above	1	20
Total	5	100

Source: Survey Data

Interpretation

The above table shows that quality is the main feature which the dealer looks in to.

THE BRAND IMAGE OF THE COMPANY

The table shows the brand image of the company.

TABLE NO. 17

Brand Image	Respondents	Percentage
Excellent	2	40
Good	3	60
Average	0	0
Poor	0	0
Total	5	100

Source: Survey Data

Interpretation

60% of the dealers said that the brand image of the company is good and 40% said excellent.

PRESENT SET UP REGARDING INCENTIVES FOR THE DEALERS

The table shows the present set up regarding incentives for the dealers.

TABLE NO. 18

Particulars	Respondents	Percentage
Attractive	1	20
Adequate	2	40
Moderate	1	20
Poor	1	20
Total	5	100

Source: Survey Data

Interpretation

40% of the dealers said that the incentives are adequate and 20% said attractive, moderate and poor respectively.

FREQUENCY OF THE INCENTIVES

The table shows the frequency of the incentives for the dealers.

TABLE NO. 19

Frequency	Respondents	Percentage
Daily	0	0
Weekly	1	20
Monthly	3	60
Yearly	1	20
Total	5	100

Source: Survey Data

Interpretation

The above table shows that 60% of the dealers said that they receive the incentive on monthly basis and 20% said that they receive weekly and on a yearly basis respectively.

MEASURES ADOPTED IN THE CASE OF DAMAGED GOODS

The table shows the measures adopted in the case of damaged goods.

TABLE NO. 20

Measures	Respondents	Percentage
Buy back	3	60
Dispose	1	20
Discounts	1	20
Offers	0	0
Total	5	100

Source: Survey Data

Interpretation

The above table depicts that the company will buy back the goods in case of damage.

FINDINGS

From the study, the following findings were arrived. All the findings are given in a nut shell, based on the questionnaire and their detailed version is given in the data analysis part along with the graph. Among the respondents, 50% of the employees said that the raw materials are usually stored in containers. 56% of the employees said that the raw materials have a minimum shelf period of 1-2 weeks 24% of the respondents said below 1 week. 50% of the respondents said that random sampling is done to check the quality of raw materials. From the 52% respondents, 52% said that the quality of the product is ensured through the quality control lab, 28% responded through periodic sample checking and the rest said both the quality control lab and periodic sample checking is done to ensure the quality of products. 62% of the employees said that raw material are stocked in excess in case of shortage. 76% responded that the production is controlled in the case of emergency break downs. 40% of the respondents said that the storage facility is adequate for the smooth production and 36% responded that it needs improvement. Reutilizing method is mainly adopted for the waste disposal in the company said 76% of the employees. 66% of the respondents said that in house training is provided for the skill development of the employees. Among the employees, 46% are satisfied with the perks and emoluments. 40% of the respondents said that the finished products have a shelf period of 3 years. 74% of the employees said that the finished goods are protected by aluminium foil, shrink wrapper and preservatives. 32% of the respondents said that both the production as well as the quality control department is responsible for the defects. 68% of the respondents said that distribution and marketing is the essential area for improvement. 36% said that quality circles should be encouraged in order to improve the quality. Among the dealers, 60% said that quality is the main feature of the product and the producer. 60% said that the brand image of the company is good and 40% said it is excellent. 40% of the dealers said that the incentives are adequate. 60% said that incentives are received on monthly basis and 20% said weekly and yearly. In the case of damaged goods, 60% of the dealers said that the company will buy back the goods.

SUGGESTIONS

The methodology should change when there is a problem in the working condition. Problem solving allows workers to learn the process and how to use the tools effectively which in turn will improve the quality of the organization as a whole. Implement the PDCA (Plan Do Check Act) Cycle which promotes continuous improvement. Encourage communication among the employees and motivate them to improve the quality. Control charts can be used so that the products which are not within the set limits can be rejected. Modern techniques and production processes should be adopted for manufacturing of highest quality goods. Encourage field visit or factory visit among the employees which will help them to learn new things. Formation of quality circles within the organization.

CONCLUSION

The employee and dealer survey indicated that the key concern for the company is to encourage communication and motivation to improve the quality of employees in the organization. They should also improve their marketing and distribution channel in order to boost the customers to have a better brand image and formation of quality circles is also essential. The company has a competitive edge in the market to attract the customers being a company hailed for ayurvedic medicines.

In order to capture the market successfully, the company should also have a look on the competitors services and offer the best which is attractive than them, so that the customers will communicate to their friends and relatives about the company's products and its services, a best method called mouth- to-mouth marketing which creates publicity. The company should also provide some attractive incentives for the dealers and at the same time they should also focus on the employees'. The Company should always ensure that they offer the best quality products to their customers and this study enables the customer to know about the various quality measures taken by the company.

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