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THE EFFECTS OF TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT ON EMPLOYEES' PERFORMANCE: A STUDY ON TEXTILE BUSINESS¹

Ergün KARA²

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ABSTRACT

Total quality management is a management conception where any capacity for improving and efficiency in businesses are mobilised systematically to ensure customer satisfaction. Whether the businesses may succeed in the conception of total quality management (TQM) may vary depending on various reasons; so satisfying the employees' demands and expectations is quite essential in order to achieve this. For this reason, increasing employees' financial income in parallel with the revenue of the business, increasing their motivation, presenting career opportunities to prove themselves, taking precautions for improvement of performance and using rewarding systems are necessary factors for a successful TQM. We have investigated the effect of total quality management applied in industries, where employees' personal skills have great importance such as textile industry in particular, on the basic factors which affect employees' performance. The research was done on 275 employees employed in textile businesses in Bursa province using the face to face interview technique. In the conclusion of correlation and regression analysis, it was determined that total quality management has a positive effect on the employees' financial earnings and motivation.

Keywords: Total Quality Management, Textile Businesses, Bursa

JEL Codes: M11, M12, M20

TOPLAM KALİTE YÖNETİMİNİN İŞGÖREN PERFORMANSINA ETKİLERİ: TEKSTİL İŞLETMELERİ ÜZERİNE BİR ARAŞTIRMA

ÖZ

Toplam kalite yönetimi, müşteri memnuniyetinin sağlanması için işletmelerde kalite ve verimliliğin artırılmasında sahip olunan her türlü imkânın sistematik olarak seferber edildiği bir yönetim anlayışıdır. Toplam kalite yönetimi (TKY) anlayışında işletmelerin başarıya ulaşması çeşitli sebeplere bağlı olarak değişmekte olup, işgörenlerin istek ve beklentilerinin karşılanması bu başarı için oldukça önemlidir. Bu nedenle işgörenlerin işletme kazanımları paralelinde ekonomik gelirlerinde artış sağlanması, motivasyonlarının artırılması, kendilerini ispatlamaları için kariyer olanakları sunulması, performans artırıcı tedbirlerin alınması ve ödüllendirme sistemlerinin kullanılması TKY başarısı için gerekli olan unsurlardır. Bu çalışma ile özellikle tekstil sektörü gibi çalışanların kişisel becerilerinin büyük önem taşıdığı sektörlerde uygulanan toplam kalite yönetiminin, işgörenlerin performanslarını etkileyen temel unsurlar üzerindeki etkisi araştırılmıştır. Araştırma, Bursa ilindeki tekstil işletmelerinde çalışan 275 personel üzerinde yüz yüze görüşme tekniği ile yapılmış olup, yapılan korelasyon ve regresyon analizi sonucunda toplam kalite yönetiminin iş görenlerin ekonomik kazanımları ve motivasyonları üzerinde pozitif yönde bir etkiye sahip olduğu tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Toplam Kalite Yönetimi, Tekstil İşletmeleri, Bursa

JEL Codes: M11, M12, M20

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² Assist. Prof. Dr., Osmaniye Korkut Ata Üniversitesi, ergunkara@osmaniye.edu.tr

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7815-1111>

1. INTRODUCTION

Societies shall be able to manufacture products and sell these products to third parties so that they may develop economically and reach the welfare level they desire. The goal is to make a profit and to sustain it. “Quality” has the most important effect on the continuity of production. This fact is based on targeting for quality at every stage of production, designing and implementing all elements included in production so that they shall serve for this purpose. Quality appears as an indicator of the competitive power of the businesses in a highly competitive environment and is seen as a key concept for sustainable success. The concept of quality has a multidimensional structure. It also covers the external processes of the businesses in addition to their internal processes. Thus, quality shall be seen as a whole. This wholeness has led to the concept of total quality to become popular since the beginning of the 80s (Özgör, 2008).

Performance assessment has a very important role in total quality management, chosen by the businesses focusing on the customers and that aim for the development of performance together with the understanding of quality and efficiency as a method of management. Performance assessment is the most effective tool for continuous improvement and change, which are the main tasks of the Total Quality Management (TQM). Businesses may only conduct their future in a manner that is more effective and more suitable for their goals and contribute to the development of their employees by means of data generated as a result of the assessment. Accordingly, we see performance assessment as one of the main factors in achieving the goal of total quality management philosophy.

Total quality management is a “human”-oriented management philosophy, and businesses implementing the total quality management philosophy utilize the “performance assessment” system to achieve their goals. Therefore, we have taken the textile enterprises operating in the province of Bursa as the subject of our research in this study. We have addressed the concepts of industry and SME, and concepts of total quality management and performance assessment first, and then examined the effects of total quality management on the performance of employees.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

As a result of the review of domestic and foreign literatures, we have realized that the total quality management and employee performance were critical to textile businesses. We may state that this is a fact accepted in the empirical and theoretical studies available in the literature. In this literature review oriented at these concepts that were observed to be a subject of many studies already and that have a strategic importance in providing competitive advantage to textile businesses, it is worth of noting that the number of studies in which the effects of these concepts against each other are analysed statistically

is not much. In this part of the study, we have tried to cite the scientific studies available in the literature on the total quality management and employee performance to the extent we have reached such studies.

Baş (2000) has reached the conclusion that total quality management, if understood and implemented correctly, is an approach that may be implemented for increasing task performance of military organizations at company level and the satisfaction of end-users in his survey with 194 persons who served as privates / petty officers in the Land Forces Command in order to assess the effects of TQM on the task performance and satisfaction of end users.

Odabaş (2004) conducted a research on 111 people employed in three different businesses in order to determine the relationship between job satisfaction and individual performance. As a result of this study, the regression analysis between the performance level and the independent variables showed that factors such as gender, marital status and age did not have an explanatory effect on individual performance, i.e. the performance level did not produce different results according to these factors.

Özgör (2008) conducted a research with 46 employees employed in the design department of a business operating in defence industry in Ankara in order to determine the effect of Total Quality Management philosophy on the employee performance. As a result of this study, it was concluded that the principles of total quality management philosophy did not differ according to age, education and employment period, but differed according to the title, and also it was concluded that upper level staff had a more positive approach to the principles of total quality management philosophy.

Ekici (2009) investigated the effects of total quality management on the performance of employees on a total of 281 people, consisting of both managers and employees, in a factory in Kırşehir. As a result of the research conducted, it was concluded that the utilization of employees in an effective and efficient way and improving their performances shall be possible if the businesses understood and implemented the philosophy of of the total quality management as it was the employees that shall ensure that the businesses reach their goals.

Gedikbey (2009) investigated the effects of performance assessment on job satisfaction in total quality management. 100 persons employed in the automotive industry have participated in this survey. As a result, it has been concluded that the perception on wages and performance assessment, the perception on delegation of authority and participation of employees, the perception on jobs and benefits, and finally the working environments of employees have an impact on the job satisfaction levels of the employees.

Gül (2013) has conducted a research on persons employed as banking officers in private banks in Yalova province in order to determine the perception levels of task performance and contextual

performance in the banking industry. As a result of the survey, it was concluded that it stood out at first that the performance and contextual performance perceptions of the bankers were high, but that the demographic characteristics of the bank officers participated in the survey did not have any effect on both the task performance and contextual performance as clearly revealed by the analyses performed.

Gübüz (2014) examined the effects of total quality management perception on individual performance in a study conducted with 410 healthcare employees in a private hospital in Ankara province. According to the results of this survey, it was observed that the perception of leadership, trust and personnel relations amongst the elements of total quality management were highly related to individual performance and improved it. Moreover; it was concluded that perceptions for fairness, appreciation, conduct of the management in the workplace and confidence in the job have high effects when the performance assessment is considered.

When the studies available in the literature are examined, we observe that the effects of total quality management on the employee performance were investigated and that they have concluded that total quality management has a positive effect on the performance of the employees as a result of their analyses.

3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. Concepts of Industry and SME

There is no consensus on the definition of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs). However, the absence of a generally accepted definition of SMEs is not a weakness, but a sign of health (Müftüoğlu, 1993, 99). As a matter of fact, it is not possible to make a definitive description for these businesses. SME definitions may vary between countries and even between different regions and sectors of the same country depending on the line of business and production techniques of the businesses that have reached the level of industrialization (Karataş, 1991, 22). First of all, the level of economic development of the country prevents such a classification. Businesses vary greatly in terms of their scope, capacity and variety and they may have different sizes and scales in different parts of the world and even in different industries and regions of the same country (Yücel, 2000, 4). The importance of identification of SMEs arises from the fact that both scientific researches and state aids may be performed effectively for these businesses (Baykal, 1998). It is appropriate to consider a combination of qualitative and quantitative criteria in the identification and classification of SMEs (Çelik, 1997; Müftüoğlu, 1993; Çetin, 1996). Identification of SMEs by various organizations in Turkey is usually made according to the number of workers employed.

We observe that the definition of SMEs is considered according to different criteria in different parts of the world. Variations from production techniques of the countries to forms of organizations of these countries, from their level of industrialization to their economic structures cause them to use different criteria in their definition of SMEs. Three basic elements are taken into account while defining SMEs. These are described as follows (Kaya, 2007):

1. The market share in the market that the business operates, its number of employees, annual sales revenue or balance sheet size,
2. Whether the task of management is carried out by the owner of the business and/or his/her partners or by the professionals,
3. The fact that the business defined as a SME is not part of a larger enterprise.

3.2. Total Quality Management

The concept of quality for businesses is also changing in today's markets, where competition is ever increasing, and becoming increasingly global rather than national. The content of the quality concept is based on a more integral excellence and perfection rather than the soundness of the product and having it under good physical conditions. The concept of quality is based on "persons". The value given to the persons, the confidence against them, the fulfilment of their needs, ensuring their self-realization at the highest level and their happiness constitute the basic goal of the philosophy of quality (Kanbur, Kanbur, 2008).

Total quality management goes beyond making efforts within the organization to achieve quality and aims to make quality inherent within the organizational culture. While efforts for quality assurance are implemented in certain departments of the organization, total quality management is implemented throughout the organization (Çatalca, 2003).

The main aim of TQM is to ensure that the works related to quality management are performed so that quality is achieved in a manner covering all departments within the business. In order to realize this, all the departments within the business and employees ranging from the top management to the lowest level shall come together and cooperate for the implementation of the quality activities (Kunii, 1972, 859-860). We may list the objectives of TQM as follows (Şimşek, 2001, 361-362; Şimşek, 2002, 108):

- ✓ Ensuring that all personnel from the top management to the lower level employees work in cooperation.
- ✓ Establishing the habit of continuous improvement and development (kaizen) within the business.

- ✓ Meeting all demands of the customers and gaining their trust.
- ✓ Ensuring that the business reaches its goals specified.
- ✓ Continuous inspection of production processes within the scope of sustained product development strategy.
- ✓ Specifying the improvements required and establishing performance criteria.
- ✓ Identifying a team approach for the solution of any problem that may occur.
- ✓ Establishing effective ways for communication and correspondence.
- ✓ To be able to use simple approaches to measure quality performance.

To sum up, the main objective of TQM is as follows: To create a community that aims to continuously improve the work performed, to make those who use the goods produced and services provided (i.e. customers) happy, where performances are assessed as per the results of the universal criteria, and that aim for continuous learning, improvement and achievement (Kantarıcı 1999, cited by: Akdağ, 2005, 161).

3.3. Employee Performance

As a concept, performance is defined as the goods or services produced within a certain period of time and as per the aimed goal. Effectiveness and efficiency are two aspects of performance that stand out, and performance covers the whole of the efforts of a person to fulfil these two aspects (Helvacı, 2002, 156). For cases where service quality, and effectiveness and efficiency of production are aimed, increasing the performance level of employees to the desired level in a regular and planned way is described as performance (Kubalı, 1999, 32).

There are many definitions on employee performance available in the literature. As per some definitions in this context, performance is defined as the effort by the employee to fulfil the tasks they have undertaken in a timely and effective manner in order to meet their requirements and achieve their personal satisfaction (Barutçugil, 2004, 40); a set of results that arise in line with a specific and planned goal and that may be measured qualitatively and quantitatively (Akal, 2005, 17); and the extent to which the organizational goals are reached (Sümer, 2000, 59). Yet in another definition, performance is defined as fulfilling of the responsibilities assumed by the employee in the organization (Barutçugil, 2002, 40).

As it can be seen from the definitions above, the concept of performance in the organizational framework is generally a condition expected and demanded from the employees. And for the realization of the performance expected from the employees, businesses have much to do. We may say that ensuring the employees feel that they are a part of the organization, ensuring their motivation and

job satisfaction completely, implementing fair wage policies and placing emphasis on personal development are the elements required to achieve performance (Gupta, 1982, 135-136). Despite the fact that today's technological developments have reduced the need for manpower in the industry, the need for skilled manpower shall be ever increasing when you consider the fact that the technological systems shall be operated by people in the end. Therefore, employees stand out as a significant element in increasing organizational performance (Bekiş et al., 2013, 20).

3.4. Factors Affecting Employee Performance

Organizations reach their desired goals through existing employees. Therefore, those who have the strongest effect on the efficiency of the organization are the employees again. Employees' skills and motivations are as important as their levels of education. Moreover, the understanding of performance in organizations is seen as a developing and ever-changing process. In this context, we may collect the elements that affect the performance of the employees in 3 groups. These are: Economic, Physical and Psycho-Social Factors (Yumuşak, 2002):

These factors are briefly described as follows:

- **Economic Factors:** We may list economic factors as “increase of wages, wages with premium incentive and economic rewards.” Of course, the oldest and most widely used means of economic incentives is the increase of wages (Sabuncuoğlu and Tüz, 1998). For some tasks in the organizations, income is increased in proportion to the increase in efforts and the nature of this method as a means of incentive is thus clearly specified. In addition to the fixed wages earned by the employees, additional fees offered to encourage the employee to work more and in a more efficient way is called a premium. Some companies implement this system in order to encourage their employees to work more efficiently. In order to encourage employees and to increase their loyalty to the businesses, economic rewards may be offered to those who achieve certain successes. For example, a monetary reward may be offered to the employees who propose a significant innovation or an invention in their department (Sabuncuoğlu and Tüz, 1998).
- **Physical Factors:** These are the factors that affect the working environment of the employee. The efficiency of the workforce will be affected positively if an appropriate and comfortable working environment in terms of health and safety is provided to the employees; and otherwise it may be affected negatively. The fact that the workplace is adequate in terms of lighting, ventilation, temperature, coldness and humidity, and the ergonomic suitability of the production system used are the most important factors that need to be addressed as physical factors (Uğur, 1991).

- **Psycho-Social Factors:** The people of the 21st century demand to be regarded as human beings, have their ideas, their beliefs and personality respected, and above all they want to love their job, but also to work in the job they embrace, to move forward and to realize themselves. The way to ensure competitive advantage now goes through ensuring the motivation and commitment of these creative people who wants to fulfil themselves to the business. Effective psycho-socio-factors affecting the efficiency of the employees are as follows: Communication, Orientation, Employee Training, Career Opportunities and Motivation (Yumuşak, 2002). Regardless of the type and field of activity of the organization, managers have to address the issue of motivation. Motivation is closely related with performance. You cannot expect a high performance from a personnel who is not motivated. If the manager of the organization may understand and interpret both the internal and external physiological, psychological and social environment and requirements, he/she shall determine the ways to utilize the employees as necessary to maximize performance. Thus, both the requirements of the employees shall be met and the business shall achieve its goals (Birdal and Aydemir, 1992). In addition to these, career opportunities are also important factors in increasing the employee performance of businesses operating in the industry. Because, today career opportunities are considered as an important advantage in ensuring businesses to gain an advantage against their competitors in their industry.

4. METHODOLOGY

In this part of the study, the aim, scope, reliability analysis, model, hypotheses, sampling, data collection tools and research findings of the study are explained.

4.1. The Aim and Sampling of the Study

The aim of this research is to try to determine the effect of total quality management practices on employee performance. For this purpose, a face-to-face survey was conducted on 275 randomly selected employees working in 10 businesses operating in textile industry in Bursa province. In this survey, the relationship between the total quality management practices and the economic factors, motivation and career opportunities, which basically affect the performance of employees, has been examined and the effectiveness level of this relationship has been tried to be measured.

4.2. Collection of Data

The data obtained from the study were collected by survey method. The survey form consists of three parts. In the first part, personal information were collected about the participants, and the second part included 19 statements limited in three dimensions in line with the research hypotheses of the scale, which was developed by Paul E. Spector to measure employee performance and which was

translated into Turkish by Yelboğa (2009). In the third part, Total Quality Management (TQM) scale developed by Gerald et al. (1997) and consisting of 37 statements was used. A 5-point Likert-type scale consisting of statements such as “Strongly disagree”, “Disagree”, “Neither agree nor disagree”, “Agree” and “Strongly Agree” was used in the survey.

4.3. Research Model and the Hypotheses

The research model prepared for the relationship between the total quality management practices and the main factors affecting the performance of the employees is shown in Figure 1 and the hypotheses of the study was formed as follows:

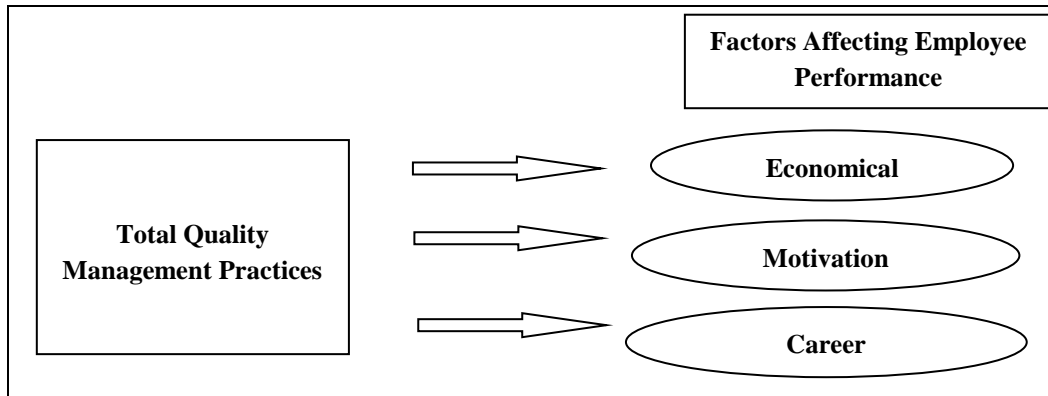


Figure 1. Conceptual Model of the Study

Based on the literature review and the variables mentioned above, three basic hypotheses have been formed in line with the aims of the study and within the framework of the conceptual model shown in Figure 1. The hypotheses of the research are given below.

Hypothesis 1: Total quality management practices have positive effect on the economic factors of the employee.

Hypothesis 2: Total quality management practices have positive effect on the motivation of the employee.

Hypothesis 3: Total quality management practices have positive effect on the career opportunities of the employee.

4.4. Reliability Analysis

The *Cronbach Alpha* coefficient was calculated in order to determine the consistency of all the questions against each other and their homogeneity in measuring the subject addressed. The alpha value (α) obtained as a result of the test is considered as an indicator of the homogeneity of the test (Tavşancıl, 2006: 29):

- *If $0.00 \leq \alpha < 0.40$, the scale is not reliable.*

- If $0.40 \leq \alpha < 0.60$, the scale has low reliability.
- If $0.60 < \alpha < 0.80$, the scale is reliable.
- If $0.80 < \alpha < 1.00$, the scale is highly reliable.

In the assessment of the reliability analyses of the scales, the reliability coefficient of the TQM scale consisting of 37 questions was found to be 0.91, the reliability coefficient of the economic factors scale consisting of 6 questions regarding the employee performance was found to be 0.84, the reliability coefficient of the motivation scale consisting of 8 questions was found to be 0.93 and the reliability coefficient of the career opportunities scale consisting of 5 questions was found to be 0.869. These values indicate that the scale is highly reliable.

5. Assessment of Research Findings

In this part of the study, demographic data of the individuals who participated in the study were evaluated first, and then correlation and multiple regression analyses were performed to reveal the relationship between TQM and employee performance. SPSS 23.0 software was used to calculate the data of the study. Table 1 below presents the findings related to the gender, age, employment period, marital status, level of education, and monthly income as the demographical characteristics of the participants.

Table 1: Findings on Demographical Characteristics

Sex	N	(%)*	Employment Period	N	(%)*
Female	155	56	1-5 Years	103	38
Male	120	44	6-10 Years	136	49
Total	275	100	11-15 Years	27	10
Age	N	(%)	16 Years and More	9	3
18-25	68	24	Total	275	100
26-35	94	34	Level of Education	N	(%)
36 and above	113	42	Secondary School	12	4
Total	275	100	High School and Equivalents	86	31
Marital Status	N	(%)	Associate Degree	153	56
Married	192	70	Bachelor's Degree	24	9
Bachelor	83	30	Postgraduate	--	--
Total	275	100	Total	275	100
Monthly Income	N	(%)			
1500 and below	--	--			
1501 - 3000	267	97			
3001-4500	8	3			
4501 and above	--	--			
Total	275	100			

(*) Percentages are rounded to integers.

When the demographic characteristics of the participants were examined (Table 1), we observe that the majority of the employees in the textile industry are women with a ratio of 56%. Nearly half of the employees (42%) are 36 years of age and above, and 70% of the employees are married. The majority of the employees (56%) are graduates of vocational schools. Participants stated that their employment period in the workplace is usually between 6-10 years and almost all of them stated that they receive a salary between TL 1501 and 3000. If we make a general evaluation of demographic characteristics, we may say that the textile industry is still a women-based industry as it was in the past; that employees change workplaces frequently to get better wages if we consider that the employment period in the same workplace is short despite the fact that most of the employees are 36 years of age and above; and that it the vocational schools providing training for providing a qualified work force to the industrial businesses have achieved their goal in textile industry.

Table 2. Results of the Correlation Analysis

VARIABLES	r	Sig.
TQM and Economical Factors	0.523*	.000
TQM and Motivation	0.494*	.000
TQM and Career Opportunities	0.218*	.000

(*p<0.05 meaningful)

As a result of the correlation analysis, a meaningful and moderate relationship was found between TQM and Economic Aspects ($r = 0.523$; $p < 0.05$); and a meaningful and almost moderate relationship was found between TQM and Motivation ($r=0.494$; $p < 0.05$). A very low relationship was found between TQM and Career Opportunities ($r = 0.218$; $p < 0.05$), and “Hypothesis 3” was rejected due to the low relationship found as a result of the correlation analysis.

Table 3. Multiple Regression Analysis Between TQM and Employee Performance

	R ²	Corrected R ²	F	β	p
TQM	.460	.317	11.393	0.641	.000
Economical Factors	.212	.102	6.813	0.437	0.011
Motivation	.182	.091	2.704	0.409	0.023

As a result of the multiple regression analysis performed, for the effect of TQM on economic factors $\beta = 0.437$, $R^2=0.067$ and $F=6.813$ ($p < 0.05$). As per this result, “*H₁*: Total quality management practices have positive effect on the economic factors of the employee.” hypothesis is accepted. And for the effect of TQM on motivation, $\beta = 0.409$, $R^2=0.182$ and $F=2.704$ ($p < 0.05$). As per this result,

“*H₂: Total quality management practices have positive effect on the motivation of the employee.*” hypothesis is accepted.

6. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Today, it is only possible for companies to survive in a highly competitive environment by providing a better quality product and service to their customers. Within this system, where customer satisfaction in production and marketing is brought forth and defined as the total quality management, the role of the employees who are the basic building blocks of the businesses is very important. Total quality management proceeds depending on the systematic success of the employees in all processes. Thus, while TQM process brings positive results both for the business and employee in an organization where job satisfaction, wage satisfaction, motivation and career opportunities are provided, any administrative errors on this subject may cause job dissatisfaction and leave of employment.

One of the most important tasks of TQM is to ensure organizational commitment in the employees. For the total quality management process in SMEs, where the production is dependent on human skills such as textile sector in particular, employees shall follow technological innovations closely and be willing to implement them. Ensuring the participation of the employees in the decisions by the management and ensuring that they feel that they are valuable for the organization is also important for the success of TQM. For this purpose, we have tried to determine the effects of total quality management process applied in textile businesses operating in the province of Bursa on financial income, employee motivation and career opportunities, which form the basis of the employee performance. According to the analyses performed on results of the research, it has been determined that as a result of the increase in the quality of products and services, TQM practices increase the financial income and motivation of the employees, who are the main executive element of the system, in a positive way even if it is just a little, and that these practices have no effect on career opportunities.

In line with these findings; we may say that internal entrepreneurship shall be supported by the management of the organization, training of the staff shall be focused on to ensure the commitment to organizational culture, new human resources systems specific to the business shall be developed for determination of who shall be promoted, a reward system that shall encourage positive competition among employees shall be executed and access to technological developments that shall maximize employee effectiveness and efficiency shall be provided in order to achieve success in TQM to be applied in textile businesses.

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