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## **The Impact of Employees' Qualitative Superiority on Competitive Performance in the Saudi Telecommunication Companies**

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### ***Abstract:***

*The qualitative superiority conception and matching specifications and standards have become a prevailing term through the policy of many organizations due to the sever competition. The senior management of these organizations has transferred its concentration on quality from operational level to match it with decisions' making on strategic level. The researcher of this study believes that the industrial and service organizations in the Arab world are still facing various obstacles in their progress and competition with global firms. This is attributed to the obvious insufficiency in the qualitative superiority; therefore, the researcher seeks in this current study to explain the influence of qualitative superiority factors on the competitive performance of organizations.*

***Keywords:*** *Qualitative superiority, qualitative superiority factors, Competitiveness*

### **1. Introduction**

The services of high quality are considered as the basic goal and strategic target for any organization. These services' quality represents one of the main and significant administrative responsibilities upon which the survival of any organization.

The senior management is clearly responsible for matching the public goals and policies of the organization when framing its qualitative policy. This will lead to the full awareness of every personnel that the qualitative superiority of their performance is the responsibility of all inside the organization and their main goal must be headed toward the "consumer satisfaction". [5]

The adoption and incorporation of qualitative superiority by senior management within their strategic goals are considered among the reasons of many global corporations' success. The idea of making change or enhancement through re-engineering operations are not deemed to be an alternative for qualitative superiority strategy; rather, the unity of both is a successful notion for having a progress development and achieving higher degree of consumers' satisfaction.

Accordingly, the qualitative superiority subject and its pertaining decisions have been transferred from the operational management to the senior management due to its great influence on the competitive status of organizations. [10]

The researcher conducted a survey on the previous studies related to the influence of qualitative superiority factors on the organizations' performance, and found that these studies do not cover all factors. Moreover, there is no single study that measures the influence of all qualitative superiority factors on the competitive performance of organizations providing services.

### **2. Qualitative Superiority**

The senior management carries out the determination of qualitative superiority variables, which might be adopted by firms in their strategies. In addition, the philosophy of senior management is considered as the main suitable access to the realization of these variables components.

Crosby strictly indicated the responsibility of line managers on the poor quality in many American corporations. He also had attributed this to the lack of interest on qualitative superiority in comparison to what they want in other duties. This is considered as a lack of administrative guidance due to the following reasons: [12]

- The corporate managers feel that the subject of quality could be handled by others.
- The difficulty of determining administrative duties in the domain of quality.
- The decisions related to quality are taken centrally without the participation of employees or staff.

The previous studies that addressed qualitative superiority such as [1.3.7] showed that it has many factors (Quality Content, Empowering People, Quality Communications, and Eliminating Barriers).

### 2.1. *Quality Content*

Gebreen defined quality content as “the prevailing atmosphere in the corporation which represents its culture and philosophy. That is, the position and public trend of behavior”. [3]

Through this definition, corporations should give an attention to the quality as a basic power in its strategies representing in the employees’ adoption to the positions, values, and innovations for the sake of achieving whatever is possible of higher quality. Moreover, the essence features of (quality content) as a superior factor requires a serious work to modify the corporation position in the following directions: [8]

- Quality must become an approach to work.
- Quality must be turned to a strategic thinking, which leads to create a competitive attribute.
- Quality must be appreciated by all as an important way to the enhancement and development.

### 2.2. *Empowering People*

Empowering, in its practical definitions, gives the authority to the employees to execute the required duties each as his position within the organizational structure. This will increase the effectiveness of employee, and will consequently make him effective in the support of quality strategy and improving the competitive performance. Furthermore, this confirms the necessity of personnel’s contribution in supporting the quality activities through the skills and experience he /she acquired by training. Also, providing the employees with the knowledge and moral support will enable him to contribute in the development of these activities. [11]

The administration must include the empowering operation in its comprehensive plans because it takes time and addresses all parts of the organization as a comprehensive operation. [4] The empowering operation required from those in charge of it to determine the reasons lie behind the need for change, constitute working teams, share the knowledge with the employees, and establish a training program results in awards and appreciation for the achievements. [6]

### 2.3. *Quality Communications*

The communications usually take two directions: the first represents the framework of cooperation, and includes the receipt of information, providing advice, suggestions, and the right to openness and to object the decisions. The second is the dialogue, which includes the right to accept or reject decisions in addition to the participation in decision-making among employees, which in turn promotes the cohesion of the group, and create an obvious trend to the contribution of everybody in setting the goals, plans, and work to implement them in the spirit of one team. Therefore, the administration must support the sharing of knowledge between individuals and expanding the opportunity to interact between them and the administration, and to give individuals the opportunity for debate and contribute to problem -solving and decision-making; it all helps to spread an atmosphere filled with the work of qualitative awareness. [2]

### 2.4. *Eliminating Barriers*

Quality programs and qualitative superiority have faced a lot of limitations and drawbacks. One of the most important obstacles is that the results are not shown in the short term, and it is considered as one of the programs of processing errors after its occurrence. This led to the non-departmental interest by the required level. In order to have a successful qualitative superiority program, the management must adopt a barriers’ removal program by all the members of the organization, and change the belief that the essence of the removal of barriers is the inspection on the workers, the acceptance of change, and encourage and support it on the basis that it is an improvement in the quality of the work of individuals. [15]

Al-Dabbagh mentioned in his study that the qualitative management has three main axes: [1]

- Improving the quality is the senior management's commitment to the application of quality concepts, strategic planning for quality, participation and empowerment, training, and continuous improvement.
- Reducing cost by appointing consultants and staff to coordinate the quality programs, and to reduce the cost of defects and errors.
- Increasing productivity through the accuracy in selecting the right man in the right place, and following up the execution of the work.

## 3. **Competitiveness**

The rapid technological developments, the information revolution, the Internet, the major change in communications technology, and the great increase of the importance of knowledge have contributed in changing the basis of competition among organizations, particularly in the field of communication. [9]

Mann’a defined competitiveness as "how the organization can distinguish itself from its competitors, and achieve her differentiation and superiority". [7] The ability of organizations and its vitality, its survival and adaptation, and the transition from the subordinate to the challenger lie in the adoption and creation of competitive advantages that ablest to generate higher returns than average. And that the biggest challenge for entrepreneurs is how to build the offensive and defensive capacity from the movement or repulse of competitors, and that this is achieved through capabilities that lead to competitive advantage. [16]

### 3.1. *Competitiveness Strategies*

Achieving competitiveness in the framework of the business sector requires the company to formulate strategies that can earn it in the practical application, and give it excellence and superiority over its competitors in reducing the cost and improving the quality of their

products and services. [13] Porter stated that public competitive strategies which will help public organizations to improve their competitiveness are differentiation strategy, cost strategy, and focus strategy. [14]

- Differentiation strategy: means the distinguish of service offered by one way or another from offering and providing the competitors or other services. There are several entrances to distinguish the service of a company from the competitive companies which are different service formations, special features of service, provide excellent services, and the provision of the technical aspect and engineering design that ensure the performance, the quality and high reliability, technological pioneering, and wider range of services provided to customers.
- Least-Cost Strategy: this strategy seeks to achieve a lower cost compared with competitors to increase the profit margin so that the organization will be able to change the prices for its products in a position that enables it to book a market share and attract customers who are looking for the best price
- Focus Strategy: this strategy seeks to build a competitive advantage, and reach a better position in the market by satisfying the special needs of a particular group of consumers or by focusing on a limited geographic market or certain uses of product of a service. The Focus Strategy is the company's specialty in a particular service or to service a particular market.

#### 4. Methodology

The researcher adopted four hypotheses that clearly explain whether qualitative superiority factors (Quality Content, Empowering People, Quality Communication, and Eliminating Barriers) might affect the competitive performance:

- Qualitative Content affects "attitude and innovation" in improving the competitive performance.
- Empowering People affects "information, support, and time" in improving the competitive performance
- Quality Communication affects "participation in the plans, objectives, and cooperation" in improving the competitive performance.
- Eliminating Barriers affects "a future vision, the acceptance" in improving the competitive performance.

The researcher has designed a questionnaire and distributes it to the population of the study which is telecommunications companies in Saudi Arabia. The researcher selected 150 employees in three companies as a sample of the study, and then the internal consistency coefficient of the questionnaire has been extracted using the Cronbach's alpha equation. The stability coefficient reached 91% in order to assure the validity of the questionnaire.

The researcher divided the questionnaire into four main sections containing a set of questions related to the measurement of the impact of the qualitative superiority factors on the competitive performance. This is done so by dividing the organization's performance to several trends represented in human resources management, financial management and marketing, production, research, and development.

#### 5. Results

The researcher received a response to 135 out of 150 questionnaires. 13 questionnaires were also excluded for non-completion of their answers. The researcher tried to provide a diversity of jobs of respondents to have more comprehensive results. Based on the T - test results for the main hypotheses, the superiority factors represent a qualitative superiority very strongly, and has a statistically significant result, where the T test is 0.5504 - 0.7306.

The statistical results on the impact of the qualitative superiority factors on competitive performance trends were positive in that 78% of respondents supported the impact of qualitative superiority factors on their performance in various departments, 13% were neutral, and 9% do not agree with this influence. The researcher concluded from the previous studies that the corporation management must use a qualitative superiority factors in the diagnosis of its internal and external environment, and to determine the criteria for the use of these factors to improve services' delivery. It is shown that the telecommunications companies were interested in the topic of quality and the application of its factors on its employees, and use it as a means to improve their services. The companies were keen on the participation of employees in decision-making and recruiting talent, experienced, and qualified personnel. They were characterized by the stability of their human resources and providing them with an atmosphere that encourages innovation and creativity. It also provides training courses and empowering people programs to help them improve their performance.

#### 6. Conclusion

The application of qualitative superiority factors help companies earn major achievements in the field of operations management and decision-making in the long term, so as these factors are connected to the strategic objectives of the organization. This required an attempt to utilize efforts to take care of these variables, and use them as solutions when dealing with the issue of improving the services provided to customers until they become a strength point to support it before competitive companies. The researcher recommends the systematic thinking to these variables, gives them more attention, expands their scope, and searches for other factors related to the qualitative superiority that affect the competitive performance of the organizations.

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