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A New TQM Model for the Postmodern Organisation

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Abstract

During the latter part of the 20th century, total quality management (TQM) emerged as a global phenomenon for improving organisational performance. Yet, despite its extraordinary dominance, most TQM initiatives were unsuccessful, leading to its decline by the early part of the 21st century. This paper explores the development of a new TQM based model that can address the conceptual and implementation issues of conventional TQM. By integrating contemporary organisational concepts with TQM, a new quality framework, called EALIM—ethical, adaptive, learning and improvement model—was devised. EALIM's framework presents an essential broadening conception of TQM that could yield increased success, since it is more suited to a postmodern context. In addition to being a meaningful contribution to TQM, this paper offers a broader understanding of organisational processes and decision-making, since any one organisational concept only offers a restricted view of a complex phenomenon. The development of EALIM also provides researchers the prospect of examining its applicability within a variety of settings.

Keywords: Total quality management; Quality improvement; Business excellence; Corporate social responsibility; Complexity theory; Knowledge management

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Introduction

Product quality has been a long-established goal for both manufacturing and service firms—a goal at the heart of quality management. Without attaining this goal, it is unlikely any organisation can survive in a competitive global market. Whether it is a failed medical operation or a product recall, the consequences of poor quality underscore the importance of quality management.

Total quality management (TQM) gained global popularity in the latter part of the twentieth century. Between 1950 and 1970, various quality gurus put forward principles and methods, which formed the foundation of TQM, sparking a golden age of quality [1]. TQM can be defined as 'Total – everyone associated with the company is involved, Quality – customers' expressed and implied requirements are met, and Management – executives are fully committed' [2]. Key principles of TQM include top management support, customer focus, continuous improvement, employee education and participation, recognition and reward, along with statistical reporting [3].

During the 1980s and 1990s, the success of TQM led to a global quality revolution, which led to western companies like Proctor and Gamble, Xerox and Ford adopting TQM to boost their competitiveness [4]. However, by the early 1990s, empirical

studies were asserting that most TQM initiatives had failed. For example, [5] found that only 20% of executives surveyed in 100 UK companies thought their quality efforts achieved substantive results.

By the late 1990s, critics of TQM claimed it had lost global dominance [6], emphasising the need for more contemporary approaches. Whilst a number of authors attribute TQM failures to implementation and conceptual issues [7,8], other authors suggest the underlying reason for TQM's decline is its incompatibility with a postmodern organisational context [9,10]. This context includes greater pluralism, uncertainty, self-organisation, knowledge working and flexibility [11]. Suggesting that TQM requires reform to become fit for the 21st century.

The aim of this paper is to develop a new TQM based model that can overcome some of the conceptual and implementation issues of conventional TQM, enabling a better fit within a postmodern context. To achieve this fit, an eclectic model building approach is adopted [12], which integrates relevant contemporary organisational concepts with TQM. This eclectic approach is useful in two ways. First, it provides different organisational concepts without annulling each other, achieved by identifying distinct perspectives from each concept while highlighting their interrelatedness with TQM. Second, the interplay between these organisational concepts enables a broader understanding

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of organisational processes and decision-making, since any one concept only offers a restricted view [13].

The model building process is done in three stages. The first involves a systematic literature review to identify commonly reported implementation barriers and conceptual limitations of TQM. Following this, a broader systematic review is conducted to select adequate contemporary organisational concepts for integration with TQM, which can address the barriers and limitations identified in the first stage. Using qualitative analysis methods, three organisational concepts are selected: corporate social responsibility (CSR), complexity theory (CT), and knowledge management (KM). In the final stage, the new quality model is built by integrating the relevant aspects of the three organisational concepts selected. The resulting quality model is labelled the Ethical, Adaptive, Learning and Improvement Model (EALIM). The ethical part of the model relates to CSR, the adaptive part to CT, the learning part to KM, and the improvement part relates to TQM.

We argue that EALIM not only holds the prospect of achieving sustainable results within current organisational contexts, but also offers a wide range of methods and decision-making possibilities. While other quality models include divergent organisational concepts, to the best of our knowledge, no other model conflates CSR, CT, KM and TQM into one coherent framework.

TQM: A Critical Review

This involved a qualitative review of the literature to identify TQM's key implementation barriers and conceptual limitations. The initial literature search located about 400 articles that discussed TQM. However, after a narrative review, only 41 were selected for analysis, as other articles were mere studies of TQM constructs that did not overtly critically examine TQM or its implementation issues. Thematic analysis was then applied to the selected articles, using open, axial and selective coding [14]. This

coding involved comparing the textual accounts of each article to identify codes, forge connections between codes, and organise them into meaningful thematic categories [15]. This analysis led to the identification of the commonly cited TQM implementation barriers and TQM conceptual limitations (Tables 1 and 2).

The analysis of the literature revealed that although TQM improved organisational performance in some cases, most reported mixed results caused by implementation issues. For instance, a TQM study by [28] reported improvements in teamwork but not in service quality because of implementation obstacles such as lack of top management commitment and a disregard for cultural factors. Even in cases where TQM succeeded, [7] purports this was after a five-year implementation period. To increase the likelihood of TQM success, the new model will therefore need to address all implementation barriers identified.

Studies from the literature search that problematized TQM, took a postmodern approach of making explicit its unstated philosophical assumptions. For instance, [9] state that TQM methods are socially and psychologically engineered to extract maximum output from the workforce. From this, TQM techniques are predicated on assumptions of scientific management, i.e., Taylorism-an approach that tends to disregard employees' emotional and psychological needs. Other limitations like TQM's managerial obsession with statistical process control reveal a technocratic ideology, which treats workers like machine parts at the expense of employee discretion and dignity [10, 27]. These sorts of conceptual limitations conclude that conventional TQM is incompatible with a postmodern age because it emerged from an era where the emphasis was on workforce efficiency and managerialism. This shift in emphasis suggests TQM requires adaptation to fit a postmodern organisational milieu. As previously discussed, our approach towards achieving this is to integrate more contemporary organisational concepts with TQM that can address its conceptual and implementation issues.

Table 1. Key TQM Implementation Barriers in Manufacturing and Service Firms.

B1	Lack of top management commitment and ethics TQM message is incongruous with the behavior of management. Conflict between the espoused message of TQM and its practice. Lack of visible participation by top management [7, 16-18].
B2	Limited stakeholder approach from top managers Emphasis on customers and suppliers at the expense of other stakeholders. Managers fail to recognize their organizational responsibilities to society. Insufficient employee participation [7, 19, 20-21].
B3	Lack of adaptability to change and unintended outcomes Lack of spontaneity to unpredictable events. Slow response to changing customer requirements creates market drift. A controlling culture inhibits staff from adapting to dynamic customer needs [4, 8, 17, and 22].
B4	Too much emphasis on hard TQM factors Too much focus on the technical and analytical aspects of TQM. Statistical process control (SPC) is inadequate for evaluating metaphysical attributes like attitudes and motivation, warmth, care, etc. [23-25]
B5	Disregard for contextual factors Top managers hold taken for granted assumptions about controlling culture. TQM dogma and framework is applied as a universal approach without adapting it to fit the organizational context [4, 17, 18, and 22].
B6	Middle management resistance Middle managers lack involvement and place too much reliance on a quality manager or department. TQM is perceived as a political threat to their authority [7, 17, 21, and 26].
B7	Inadequate learning Lack of a learning culture. Failure to apply knowledge in practice. No reflexive learning. Managers fail to learn how their leadership methods and actions contribute to implementation problems [7, 17, 18, and 21].

Table 2. TQM’s Conceptual Limitations.

L1	Investment and consumer capitalism: Limited to serving shareholder interests and customer needs. Fails to adequately address the experiences of other stakeholders [9, 27-28].
L2	Formal rationality: Simple means-ends calculation. Disregards the personal qualities of individuals and the impact decisions have on their wellbeing [9, 20].
L3	Utilitarian rationality: The efficient use of resources to achieve maximum output. Disregards employees’ emotional and psychological needs, consequently harming quality efforts [24, 27].
L4	Executive vision: A vision constructed and imposed by executives. Reinforces control and undermines collaboration [16, 19, and 29].
L5	Technocratic ideology: Emphasizes technical processes and systems. Removes employee discretion from work processes [7, 9, and 27].
L6	Single loop learning: Restricts learning to means-end relationships. Occludes new ways of thinking and learning [8, 30].
L7	Newtonian paradigm: A linear and reductionist worldview. Cannot work in disequilibrium where cause/effect is non-linear [8, 31].
L8	Codified and explicit knowledge sharing: Limited to sharing express information. Occludes tacit knowledge [32-33].
L9	External customer focus: Emphasizes satisfying consumers. Lacks regard toward other key stakeholders [16, 23].

Table 3. Limitations of Conventional TQM Addressed by EALIM.

Conventional TQM	EALIM
Investment and consumer capitalism	Moral capitalism
Formal rationality	Substantive rationality
Utilitarian rationality	Kantian rationality
Executive vision	Shared vision
Technocratic ideology	Humane ideology
Single loop learning	Triple loop learning
Newtonian paradigm	Complexity paradigm
Codified and explicit knowledge sharing	Explicit and tacit knowledge sharing
External customer focus	Stakeholder focus

Integrating Organisational Concepts with TQM

The process of selecting alternative concepts for integration with TQM involved a broad review of organisational literature. Qualitative methods of analysis were deployed as purported by, which included constructing inter-textual coherence (i.e., focusing on key contributions and forging connections between concepts), problematizing the literature (i.e., identifying key issues that have not been addressed) and presenting arguments for alternative perspectives. From around 20 organisational concepts examined, three were selected based on two criteria: 1) their fit with a postmodern context, and 2) their potential to overcome TQM’s conceptual limitations and implementation barriers. This criterion was chosen to enable the expansion of TQM with concepts better suited to current contexts, whilst redressing the barriers and limitations identified in the first part of this paper. A description of each organisational concept and the reasons for selecting them are given next. To systematically account for how these concepts redress TQM, we include in parentheses the number assigned to each finding from Tables 1 and 2 for ease of reference.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Defined as an organizational approach that demonstrates ethical regard for people and the planet [20], CSR attracted wide interest among scholars and practitioners during the last 20 years. Integrating CSR with TQM would enable a shared vision among a wider range of stakeholders [29] an approach that addresses TQM’s prevalence on investment and consumer capitalism (L1), its restriction to an executive vision (L4), and its confined external

customer focus (L9). Since CSR involves a stakeholder approach, its integration could also overcome TQM’s implementation issue of a limited stakeholder approach from top managers (B2). Hence, combining the ethics of CSR with TQM allows a balance between the profit-seeking activities of executives and the interests of other stakeholders, resulting in improvements to the quality of life of a broader community [28].

Additionally, adopting a CSR approach of socially responsible business practices on employee health and wellbeing, promotes a Kantian duty ethic that treats people as both the means and the end thus overcoming the utilitarian rationality of TQM (L3). The adoption of such a Kantian CSR approach could enable managers and workers to understand that their jobs are not only a mean for generating shareholder wealth, but to also generate a better quality of life for a wider community of stakeholders This outcome can redress two particular TQM implementation issues: lack of top management commitment and ethics (B1), and middle management resistance (B6). Consequently TQM could provide a strong foundation in which to embed CSR values and support a more substantive rationality, a point that redresses TQM’s formal rationality [L2], which tends to overlook the impact decisions have on people’s wellbeing.

Complexity Theory (CT)

CT has been used to explain the dynamic interaction of inter-dependent variables and how these can generate chaos and unpredictability In the field of organisational behaviour, its use has been focused on conceptualising how local human interactions produce organisational and societal patterns, yielding new insights into how organizations adapt to uncertainty.

Various authors [8, 30] argue that because TQM was largely designed through a Newtonian paradigm of reductionism, objectivism and linear causality (L7), it fails in its contingency toward chaos, uncertainty and non-linear events of major change. It follows that combining CT with TQM could overcome its Newtonian limitations and support new decision-making capabilities, an advantage particularly useful when organizations are subject to dynamic conditions [8]. Since the lack of adaptability to change has been a common TQM implementation issue (B3), adopting a CT perspective could enable organizational members to better adapt and self-organize in unpredictable environments.

Whilst a number of complexity theories are presented in the

literature, Professor Ralph Stacey's complex responsive process theory was selected because it regards a corporate social ethic as a durable quality, an ethics that fits well with CSR. Furthermore, Stacey's theory focuses on communicative interaction among people—a humane ideology that addresses TQM's technocratic ideology (L5).

Knowledge Management (KM)

Since the 1990s, KM has become popular for improving organizational performance through sharing, creating and applying explicit and tacit knowledge [16]. For the purpose of clarity, explicit knowledge is knowledge made 'explicable' and tacit knowledge 'is that which has not or cannot be made explicit' [17]. Since TQM relies heavily on a codified approach of collecting and disseminating explicit knowledge through formal processes [L8], it fails to properly consider tacit forms of knowledge shared through experiences, practice, and informal networks [18]. Hence, adopting a KM approach of tacit knowledge sharing enables individuals to acquire 'know-how, expertise, and experience and savoir faire' [19].

Tacit knowledge is typically difficult to acquire through a codified approach because this approach treats knowledge as an external object that people possess and transfer through purely cognitive processes [41], an underpinning assumption of TQM (see L8). In contrast, a knowledge-as-practice perspective treats knowledge as something interpreted and inseparable from human activity [20]. Therefore, adopting practice-based learning within TQM could allow employees to develop increased tacit understandings of work processes, which could address the implementation issue of inadequate learning (B7).

According to Collins [21] three different kinds of tacit knowledge exist that are seldom differentiated in the literature: 'relational, somatic and collective.' Relational tacit knowledge (RTK) is acquired through human relationships and guidance over an extended period of time—factors that can ameliorate TQM's implementation problem of placing too much emphasis on hard factors (B4). Conversely, somatic tacit knowledge (STK) involves the use of individuals' physical bodies and is more difficult to explicate, since it is derived through demonstration—analogue to practice-based learning [22]. The third kind, collective tacit knowledge (CTK), is a domain of knowledge with a strong resistance to being made explicit, since it involves learning cultural nuances (i.e., savoir faire) only acquired by embedding one's self in society. As such, adopting an approach that encourages CTK could enable people to gain increased knowledge of cultural factors, ameliorating the TQM barrier of disregarding contextual factors (B5). Another important reason for selecting KM is that it supports double and triple loop learning [23], addressing TQM's one-dimensional use of single negative loop learning (L6).

Presenting EALIM: A New Quality Model

In this section, we present a new quality model that synthesises the four organisational concepts discussed in the previous part: CSR, CT, KM and TQM. The synthesis of these concepts not only offer alternative perspectives of organisational processes, but also provide a more complete understanding of an organisation, since any one concept can only offer one particular view. To

capture the juxtaposition of each concept, the new model has been called the Ethical, Adaptive, Learning and Improvement Model (EALIM). The ethical part denotes the use of CSR, the adaptive part signifies a CT perspective of organisational life, the learning part embodies KM methods of knowledge sharing, and the improvement part adopts a TQM approach of satisfying customer needs.

EALIM's Key Principles

In conceptual model building, principles provide structure and serve as rules for the model's operation, creating a paradigmatic boundary in which other constructs can be added [24]. Based on this approach, ten key principles were inductively conceived from the literature, reflecting the synthesis of EALIM's four organisational concepts.

- **Moral anchor:** This reflects a Kantian approach to CSR that regards the wellbeing of people and values them above short-term gain (moral capitalism). This moral anchor is important for several reasons. First, it binds each organizational concept to a strong corporate social ethic; second, it acts as a guide for decision-making; and third, it obligates individuals to follow the golden rule of 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you' [25].
- **Exemplary leadership:** Exemplary leadership emphasizes service and trust, an approach that is epitomized in servant leadership. Defined as a way of leading by serving others in the absence of extenuating personal benefits, servant leadership empowers followers to become more autonomous human beings [26]. Since this kind of leadership fosters human sustainability, it links with CSR's notion of socially responsible business practices that value employee health and wellbeing.
- **Boundary less collaboration:** The term 'boundary less' used here, describes the removal of boundaries or silo formations across disciplines, hierarchies and cultures through effective stakeholder collaboration [27]. Collaboration promotes trust, organizational support, knowledge sharing and interdependence among stakeholders, all of which are prerequisite elements of both CT and KM (Stacey, 2010).
- **Empowerment and democracy:** This is a key principle for cultivating TQM and KM. Empowerment means devolving power to employees so they can freely apply knowledge and take decisions over the quality of their own work [28]. Democracy is important because it is difficult to see how workers can be empowered without managers allowing them to participate in the process of governing and organising [29].
- **Emergence and self-organization:** This principle is a key aspect of CT and refers to the process of creating space for new patterns of organizing to emerge and to innovate in the face of change (Stacey, 2010). Emergence and self-organization is cultivated when managers adopt a hands-off approach with a few simple rules, so that employees can explore new ways of thinking and doing without falling into anarchy [30].

- Learning communities and team working: This principle relates to KM and focuses on the sharing of explicit and tacit knowledge and the creation of new knowledge. This process facilitates learning communities across disciplines and enhances team working, a key requirement for successful problem solving in TQM.
- Practice-based learning: Situated in a knowledge-as-practice perspective, this principle refers to learning derived in and through practice, which provides both context and experience for learners. From a KM perspective, this kind of experiential learning enables individuals to develop somatic tacit knowledge, resulting in increased know-how and expertise.
- Continuous improvement: Continuous improvement is a fundamental tenet of TQM and is generally regarded as small incremental improvements to work processes by everyone in the organization through suggestions and team working. Improvement is continuous because it is a never-ending journey of detecting and preventing errors.
- Quality chain: The quality chain is another key principle of TQM, which deems every employee an internal customer and supplier. The idea is for employees to obtain what is needed from their immediate internal suppliers, so they can satisfy the needs of their immediate internal customers.
- Customer satisfaction: Satisfying customers is the cornerstone of TQM. Whilst germane to any organization, attaining customer satisfaction involves the commitment of all organizational members towards identifying, meeting and reviewing customer needs, Customer satisfaction is the end goal of EALIM, and essential for maintaining existing customers and developing new ones [3].
- Corporate philanthropy: Corporate philanthropy, in the form of direct contributions to charities and social causes, has been a significant source of support for community agencies. This can motivate employees, especially when involved in selecting philanthropic programs.
- Community volunteering: Employees volunteering their time, talents and expertise towards community organisations and social causes. Corporate support includes offering employees paid time off, finding them opportunities of interest, and affording recognition for their service.
- Socially responsible business practices: Supporting human and ecological sustainability for the wellbeing of employees and the environment. Practices include promoting employee health and safety, selecting environmentally friendly suppliers, sourcing safe materials, recycling and reducing waste.

CT methods

- Complexity mental model: A perspective that welcomes creative thinking and deals with the paradox of certainty and uncertainty, stability and instability. In a world where complexity is unavoidable, adopting this mental model empowers individuals in dealing with unintended consequences.
- Planned strategy: A long-term business strategy that enables stable and incremental change to advance the organisation primary objectives. However, this strategy is only effective when environmental changes are linear, identifiable and predictable.
- Emergent strategy: in the case when an organisation is part of a larger, more complex and unpredictable environment, novel strategies are also required that allow the organisation to adapt to uncertainty, spontaneously self-organise, and engage in revolutionary change.
- Ordinary management: The deployment of rational, formal and analytical management methods. This form of management is dominated by calculations involving means-end relationships.
- Extraordinary management: In contexts where the need for dynamic change is required, the use of creative, informal and intuitive management methods are needed. This approach involves the use of reflexivity, allowing individuals to critically question their goals and practices, which in turn promote self-organisation.

EALIM's Methods

Now that its key principles have been made explicit, we can move towards describing the practical elements of EALIM. To implement the model, suitable methods have been selected that translate its principles into action. These methods are not expected to be implemented in the same way in all contexts, but can be customized to the organization environment and characteristics as long as they present a good fit with EALIM's four organisational concepts and ten principles. The methods are organised in line with the organisational concept they represent.

CSR methods

- Shared vision: A CSR vision that stakeholders are committed to, as opposed to one imposed by management. This vision can help bring people together to create common identity and a sense of purpose.
- Stakeholder approach: Crossing boundaries between internal and external stakeholders through collaboration. This means top management must be committed to working in partnership with suppliers, customers, employees, and the community from which the organisation draws its resources.

KM methods

- Triple loop learning: A mode of learning that allows individuals and groups to engage in 1) improvement, by learning new ways of doing, 2) reflection, by learning new ways of thinking, and 3) transformation, by learning new ways of learning.
- Communities of practice: Practitioner-based (homogenous) groups for mutual support, knowledge sharing, and learning of best practices. These practice-orientated groups promote

collective tacit knowledge sharing among group members and allow ideas to be negotiated and legitimised.

- Project teams: Setting up of cross functional (disciplinary) teams for specific projects involving knowledge creation and new product development Integrating ideas among people of diverse disciplines creates novelty and builds innovation.
- Storytelling and narratives: Using story telling as a means of creating identity, deep meaning and tacit knowledge sharing. Stories bring people together, convey information in interesting ways, express values, and provide context, all of which are features that foster shared understanding.
- Knowledge brokers / boundary spanning: Individuals with social capital who act as sources and facilitators of knowledge due to their interaction with diverse communities. These individuals convey knowledge from external groups into a language organisational members understand.

TQM methods

- Voice of the customer: The continuous monitoring of customer needs through targeted multi-level interviews, discussions, focus groups, and surveys. Since customer needs are dynamic, identifying their changing needs is an ongoing priority to avoid customer dissatisfaction and market drift.
- Force field analysis: Identifying factors that block movement toward a goal (restraining forces), and factors supporting

movement toward a goal (driving forces). The idea is to analysed the forces for and against a specific change, then strengthen the driving forces and weaken the restraining forces.

- Nominal group technique: A technique for acquiring group ideas for the detection and correction of errors. This involves gathering a list of problems from everyone in a group, then ranking them in order of importance for problem solving. Solutions for each selected problem are gathered and ranked for action in the same manner [3].
- Affinity diagram: The collaborative arrangement of a large number of ideas into categories for review and analysis. Through a process of brainstorming, random ideas are noted for review. Related ideas are then grouped under a relevant heading for analysis and corrective action [3].
- Pareto principle: A data analysis technique that helps identifies the biggest variables to address. Also known as the 80/20 rule, this method allows individuals to identify the vital few problems to solve, instead of the useful many.

EALIM's Conceptual Framework

EALIM's framework, showing the conflation of its four concepts, principles and methods, is presented in The framework's permeable boundary symbolises the removal of barriers to teamwork through collaboration as well as the reciprocal flow of influence between an organisation and its external environment (Figure: 1). Since EALIM includes a complexity perspective,

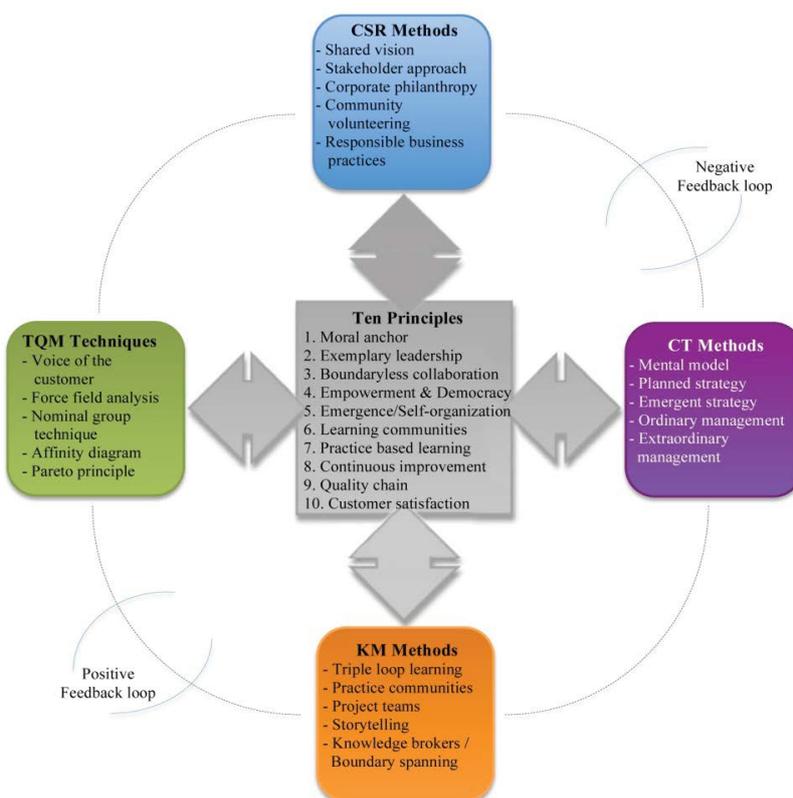


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework of EALIM.

its use allows an organisation to adapt to variables of external influence. The dynamics between an organisation and its external environment emerge from negative and positive feedback loops. A negative loop is self-correcting-meaning; it balances a change by producing a countering effect. On the other hand, a positive feedback loop is self-reinforcing, producing an amplifying effect that causes a growth or decline. The bi-directional arrows between the ten principles and four organisational concepts connote how they shape and are shaped by each other, allowing the model to adapt reflexively as it allows practitioners to explore alternative ways of thinking. This leads to novel and flexible ways to apply the model, hence its evolution over time.

Discussion and Conclusion

Benefits of EALIM's conceptual framework for theory

Although others have examined the integration of TQM with other organisational concepts, to the best of our knowledge, none have integrated CSR, CT, KM and TQM into one coherent quality framework. On this basis, EALIM can be added as a meaningful and novel contribution to the TQM literature. EALIM's moral anchor also presents a novel contribution, since a Kantian ethic is overlooked in TQM due to its assumptions of investment and consumer capitalism, and its formal and utilitarian rationality. As previously discussed, integrating these four organisational concepts into one coherent framework present advantages that address TQM's conceptual limitations. Table 3 presents a summary of these limitations and the elements of EALIM that address these.

Benefits of EALIM's conceptual framework for practice

Since EALIM redresses TQM's conceptual limitations and implementation barriers, its use offers the prospect of achieving greater success than conventional TQM. EALIM's synthesis of contemporary organisational concepts addresses postmodern realities that evade orthodox TQM models, and at the same time enlightens practitioners with a wealth of methods to achieve organizational goals. For instance, its CSR methods promote powerful motivations among stakeholders toward the success of the organisation; CT methods encourage organisational members to positively engage uncertainty with alternative ways of thinking; KM methods promote innovation; and its TQM methods stimulate creative solutions. It follows that EALIM represents a new vision of TQM that enables executives with new insights of how to address the operational challenges they face within a postmodern reality. Whilst other quality models include aspects of CSR (e.g., EFQM, Baldrige), EALIM's integration of a Kantian ethic presents a step further, in that it forms a moral anchor that binds organisational members to altruistic decision-making and behaviour. This moral anchor forms the basis for promoting a moral kind of capitalism, epitomising the next stage in the evolution of quality.

Since EALIM can be applied in both manufacturing and service firms, its development provides an opportunity for research into its use within a variety of organisational settings. However, decision makers should be aware of what it is they are committing to and what barriers they may encounter along the way. To avoid inconsistency, EALIM's principles and methods should not only be espoused, but also particularised in everyday work with others-thus providing a personal exemplar of action. As wrote in Coriolanus, 'Action is eloquence, and the eyes of the ignorant more learned than the ears.'

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