BARRIERS TO SUCCESSFUL TQM IMPLEMENTATION

Abdullah M. AL-Khalaf, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Public Administration
Institute of Public Administration, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
P. O. Box 205, Riyadh 11411, KSA

INTRODUCTION

The literature of TQM implementation in the U.S. is full of very successful cases (Cohen and Brand 1993; and Lefevre 1992). TQM has resulted in major benefits ranging from improved productivity, profitability, market share, and employee and customer satisfaction to reduced waste, cost, and defects in a large number of organizations (see for example, Carman 1993; Cohen and Brand 1993; Curry 1991; Federico 1989; GAO 1991; Hunt 1993; Juran 1991b; Kane 1992; Keehley 1992; Lefevre 1992; Rubinstein 1991; Scott 1989; Stratton 1991; Ublig 1994; Whitten 1989; and Wood 1992). Cohen and Brand (1993) discussed ten TQM success cases in government organizations and the benefits that have been gained. Lefevre (1992), editor of *Government Quality and Productivity: Success Stories*, combined over 30 articles on successful TQM implementation in different levels of government. Benefits achieved from successful TQM implementation are overwhelming and encouraging.

On the other hand, recent surveys suggest that over 80 percent of organizations implementing TQM are failing to achieve measurable results. Some of these surveys are presented below:

- Based on responses from 458 of its members, The American Electronics Association found that the percentage of members implementing TQM dropped from 86 in 1988 to 73 in 1991; 63 percent of members implementing TQM failed to reduce internal defects by 10 percent or more; and 80 percent failed to reduce supplier defects by 10 percent or more (Eskildson 1994). Another survey by the American Electronics Association was conducted in 1988. This survey reports that 85 percent of the companies surveyed had TQM under way, but less than one-third of them had achieved significant gains in quality (Schaffer 1989).
- ELECTRONIC BUSINESS magazine, based on responses from 138 senior executives, reported that only 16 percent of the respondents believe that their quality efforts resulted in a high market share, and only 13 percent believe that their quality efforts brought higher profits.
- Arthur D. Little surveyed 500 American manufacturing and service companies and reported that only one-third of the respondents believe that their TQM programs have contributed to their competitiveness (THE ECONOMIST 1992; and Eskildson 1994).
- Two years after it won the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, Wallace Co. filed Chapter 11 (Greising 1994).
- T. Kearney, based on a survey of over 100 British firms, found that only one-fifth of those surveyed believe that their TQM efforts had achieved tangible results (THE ECONOMIST 1992; and Eskildson 1994).
- A McKinsey survey suggested that more than 50 percent of TQM efforts surveyed had stalled or failed (Boyce 1992).

In addition to these surveys, expanding literature on TQM implementation asserts that a very large number of TQM efforts are failing to deliver the promised and expected results. Stories and reports of TQM efforts that have failed to live up to expectations are becoming very common (Ackoff 1993; Boyce 1992; Brown, Hitchcock, and Willard 1994; Eskildson 1994; Goodman, Bargatze, and Grimm 1994; Harari 1993a, 1993b; Mathews 1993; Merron 1994; Parry 1993; Steele 1993; Walker 1992; and Walters 1992). Harari (1993a) states that "only about one-fifth--at best one-third--of TQM programs in the United States and Europe have achieved 'significant' or even 'tangible' improvements in quality, productivity, competitiveness or financial returns" (33). Peters (1989) claims that 99% of all quality management programs are flops. Even those that had won national awards are abandoning TQM. Jordan (1992/1993) points out that "... one of the first agencies to win the Federal Prototype

Award has discontinued its TQM effort. Another more recent winner is in danger of being recognized out of existence (46).

The increasing number of successful as well as futile implementations raises the question: what are the barriers to successful TQM implementation? If TQM is to be successful and deliver the promised results and benefits, it is very important to identify the factors that prevent successful implementation. Yet, very little empirical research has been conducted to identify the barriers to successful TQM implementation. Accordingly, the primary objective of this study is to investigate and analyze the role of certain organizational and behavioral factors in impeding successful TQM implementation in American municipalities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

TQM initiatives in the 1980s and early 1990s have been validly characterized as "miscarriages and abortions" (Mathews 1993). Many quality improvement efforts are being recognized as plateauing (Cole 1990); running out of steam (Walker 1992); floundering (Katz, Albert 1993); and failing dismally (THE ECONOMIST 1992). The literature of TQM implementation reveals that the majority of quality improvement efforts are failing to live up to initial expectations (see for example, Ackoff 1993; Axline 1991; Boyce 1992; Brocka and Brocka 1992; Brown, Hitchcock, and Willard 1994; Brown 1989, 1993a; Cole 1993; Crosby 1979; Eskildson 1994; Feigenbaum 1991; Goodman, Bargatze, and Grimm 1994; Harari 1993a, 1993b; Holpp 1989; Jordan 1992/1993; Juran 1991a; Mathews 1993; Merron 1994; Parry 1993; Peters 1989; Schaffer 1989, 1993; Sherwood and Hoylman 1993; Sohal, Ramsay, and Samson 1992; Spitzer 1993; Steele 1993; THE ECONOMIST 1992; Walker 1992; Walters 1992; and Wilson and Durant 1994). Surveys show that over 70 percent of TQM efforts are failing (Boyce 1992; Eskildson 1994; Harari 1993a; Schaffer 1989; and THE ECONOMIST 1992).

In a recent book, Brown, Hitchcock, and Willard (1994) divided TQM implementation into three major phases: (1) start up, (2) alignment, and (3) integration. Based on their experiences, the authors argue that organizations attempting to implement TQM fail during the first phase because of lack of top-management commitment, poor timing and pacing, wasted education and training, and lack of short-term, bottom-line results. In the second phase, TQM efforts fail due to divergent strategies, inappropriate measures, outdated performance appraisal methods, and inappropriate reward systems. During integration, TQM collapses due to failure to transfer true power to employees, maintaining outdated management practices, poor organization and job design, outdated human resource systems, and failure to manage learning and innovation.

Zangwill (1994) and students at the University of Chicago interviewed a number of organizations that they defined as having excellent TQM programs. They found ten common mistakes that leaders make that might prevent their organizations from developing excellent quality programs: (1) leaders failure to lead; (2) believing that being close to the customer and planning for customer satisfaction is sufficient; (3) believing that planning develops from financial goals; (4) believing that quality means inspection; (5) believing that quality improvement is too expensive; (6) managing by intuition rather than by facts; (7) using misguided incentives and developing a distorted culture; (8) changing targets each year; (9) failure to follow the best practices; and (10) believing that Baldrige Award examiners are stupid (Zangwill 1994).

Other studies addressing the causes of failure are Mohr-Jackson (1994) and Lawler, Mohrman, and Ledford (1992). Mohr-Jackson (1994), by comparing quality starters with quality advancers, found significant differences in the areas of leadership, strategic quality planning, human resource development, management process quality, quality operational results, and customer focus and satisfaction. Lawler, Mohrman, and Ledford (1992), in their investigation of employee involvement (EI) in the Fortune 1000 companies found that the major barriers include short-term performance pressure, lack of a champion for EI, lack of a long-term strategy, unclear EI objectives, lack of tangible improvements, centralization of decision-making authority, a culture opposed to EI, worsened business conditions, failure to coordinate EI programs with other programs, and turnover in top management.

Finally, the GAO (1992) survey of more than 2,800 civilian and DoD installations (80% response rate) shows that the major barriers to TQM implementation are employee training and recognition and strategic planning. Other barriers viewed as moderate to very major include: employee training and recognition (58%); strategic planning (47%); empowerment and teamwork (40%); measurement and analysis (36%); leadership (31%); and customer focus (31%). The most significant

barriers in these categories are perceived to be "employees do not believe they are empowered to make changes" (63%); "funding/budgeting constraints" (62%); "employees have insufficient information on how to implement TQM and use TQM tools" (55%); "employee have insufficient information and training on the theory, concepts, and design of TQM" (48%); "resistance to moving toward a participatory style of management" (48%); "problems due to federal personnel regulations" (46%); "employees' resistance to changing roles or changing organizational structures" (44%); "senior management unable to spend sufficient time on TQM" (41%); and "lack of a long-term planning approach" (40%) (GAO 1992).

A review of the previous studies and a comprehensive review of the literature of TQM implementation reveals that there are at least seven factors that appear to cause serious and sincere efforts to fall short of expectations: **(1)** organizational culture; **(2)** training and education; **(3)** leadership; **(4)** participation and empowerment; **(5)** strategic planning; **(6)** resistance to change; and **(7)** communication (Table 1). As presented in Table 1, organizational culture was cited 14 times in the literature of TQM implementation as a cause of TQM failure, ineffective training resulting in lack of understanding was cited 13 times, lack of top-management commitment was cited 15 times, lack of employee participation and involvement in the process was cited 14 times, lack of linkage between quality goals and strategic plans goals was cited 8 times, employee resistance to change was cited 6 times, and lack of effective communication was cited 3 times.

Other factors that cause TQM to fail to deliver expected results include (1) too much emphasis on the technical aspect of TQM, i.e., focusing on quality tools and techniques in the absence of the human and management side of quality (Brown 1993b; Chang 1993; Chaudron 1993; Cole 1993; Katz, Albert 1993; and Schaffer 1989); (2) limitation of human and financial resources (Cassell 1993; Spitzer 1993; and Walker 1992); (3) poor choice of the method of implementation (Kordupleski, Rust, and Zahorik 1993; Metz 1984; and Steele 1993); and (4) bad management (Cole 1993; Crosby 1984; Deming 1986; Gilbert, James 1992; Juran and Gryna 1993; and Parry 1993).

Table 1
Factors identified in the literature that cause failure TQM implementation

Authors	Factors that cause failure TQM implementation*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Alloway, James (1994)	X						
Atkinson, Philip (1990)	X					X	
Barclay, Charles (1993)		X	X	X			
Boyce, Graham (1992)	X	X					
Bremer, Michael (1988/89)	X						
Brooks and Linklater (1986)							X
Brown, Mark G. (1993b)	X	X	X	X	X		
Brown, Mark G. (1989)			X				
Cassell, Ron (1993)	X		X	X			
Chaudron, David (1993)		X					
Cole, Robert (1993)		X	X	X			
Cole, Bacdayan, and White (1993)				X			
Crosby, Philip (1984)		X	X	X			
Crosby, Philip (1992)	X						
Ebel, Kenneth (1991)					X	X	
Feigenbaum, Armand (1993)			X				
Fuchs, Edward (1993)	X				X		
Gilbert, James (1992)		X		X			
Hamilton and Mayhugh (1992)						X	
Hare, Lynne (1993)		X					

Table 1 (continued)

Authors	Factors that cause failure TQM implementation*						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Harrington and Rieker (1988)			X	X		X	
Heath, James (1994)	X						
Hull and Neptune (1991)			X				
Juran and Gryna (1993)		X	X			X	
Katz, Albert (1993)	X		X				
Leddick, Susan (1990/91)			X				
McCormack, Shaun (1992)		X			X		
Murphy and McArthur (1991)					X		
Quimby, Parker, & Weimerskirch (1991)							X
Ritter, Diane (1993)		X					
Robson, Mike (1989)				X			
Roth, William (1991)			X		X		
Rubinstein, Sidney (1993)				X			
Schaffer, Douglas (1993)			X				
Smith, A. Keith (1993)				X			
Spitzer, Richard (1993)	X						
Steele, Jack (1993)	X						
The Economist (April 18, 1992)		X		X			
Townsend and Townsend (1988)		X	X	X	X	X	
Varian, Tom (1991)							X

Table 1 (continued)

Authors	Factors that cause failure TQM implementation*						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Vinzant and Vinzant (1993)					X		
Walker, Terry (1992)	X			X			
Westcott, Russ (1993)	X						
TOTAL	14	13	15	14	8	6	3

*Factors that cause failure TQM implementation are:

1. Organizational culture (quality culture).
2. Training and education.
3. Leadership (top-management commitment).
4. Participation (empowerment and teamwork).
5. Strategic planning (long-term focus).
6. Resistance to change.
7. Communication.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The International City/County Management Association (ICMA), through its Director of Research, Haywood Talcove, provided a listing of all US cities with populations between 50,000 and 125,000 and council-manager forms of government. Of the 242 cities in the US that met these two criteria and that were in the ICMA data base, 142 were contacted in summer and fall 1993 by telephone and 80 by mail to solicit their participation in the study. Twenty cities were not contacted in advance due to erroneous phone numbers and/or incorrect mailing address.

Packets were sent to the 78 cities that agreed to participate in the study and to 20 other cities without advance notice. The packets included a questionnaire to be completed by the city manager, a set of 20 questionnaires to be completed by other employees. In total, 98 cities received the packet. After five waves of mailings and telephone calls, complete and usable data were received from 56 cities (23 percent of all council-manager cities in the US with populations between 50,000 and 125,000).

The questionnaire that was sent to city managers is a modified form of the instrument that was developed and used by the United States General Accounting Office (GAO) to collect data on TQM implementation in civilian and DoD installations. The questionnaire measures the level of TQM implementation based on the implementation of TQM activities. It also asked city managers about the level of TQM implementation success based on their perceptions, and their perceptions of employee participation, training opportunities provided, and employees' attitudes toward change.

To identify the barriers to TQM implementation, city managers were provided with a list of 21 barriers and were asked to indicate how small or large a problem a specific barrier had been during any phase of TQM implementation. These barriers are measured on a five-point scale (1 = "no problem at all"; 5 = "very major problem"). The 21 barriers were grouped in six categories. The categories and the number of barriers in each are: leadership (5); training and recognition (3); strategic planning (3); empowerment and teamwork (4); measurement and analysis (3); and customer focus (2). City managers were also asked in an open ended question to identify the major barriers to successful TQM implementation.

The second questionnaire was used to collect data from employees. It was developed to obtain information from city employees in the areas of training opportunities provided, employee participation, TQM, and employee resistance to change. This paper reports on information received from city managers regarding barriers to TQM implementation only. Information received from the other city administrators and results regarding other variables are reported in other papers.

RESULTS

Twenty barriers to TQM implementation were measured. The barriers were grouped in six categories: (1) leadership (5 barriers); (2) employee training and recognition (3 barriers); (3) strategic planning (3 barriers); (4) empowerment and teamwork (4 barriers); (5) measurement and analysis (3 barriers); and customer focus (2 barriers). The city managers identified employee training and

recognition (mean = 3.5) and strategic planning (mean = 3.2) as moderately problematic barriers. Other barriers were somewhat problematic, with averages ranging from 2.4 (customer focus barriers) to 2.7 (leadership barriers). Even though the group means for these categories of barriers were somewhat low, some individual barriers in each group were identified as serious. In fact, 13 of the 20 barriers were identified as moderate to very major by over 50 percent of the respondents. Examination of each group of barriers is presented below.

1. Employee Training and Recognition Barriers

Employee training and recognition is the major obstacle to successfully implementing TQM (mean = 3.5). Over 80 percent of the respondents identified all three of the training and recognition barriers as moderate to very major problems (Table 2). Eighty-three percent of the city managers indicated that providing employees with information and training on the concepts and design of TQM was a moderate to very major problem; 81 percent identified providing employees with sufficient information about how to implement TQM and use its tools as a moderate to very major problem; and 81 percent perceived employee beliefs that they are not sufficiently empowered to make changes as a moderate to very major problem (Table 2). Overall, the means of the three employee training and recognition barriers show that 25 percent of the city managers perceived employee training and recognition as a very major problem; 28 percent saw it as a major problem; 28 percent perceived it as a moderate problem; 10 percent perceived it as a small problem; and only 8 percent believed that employee training and recognition was not a problem at all.

Table 2
Percentages of respondents identifying employee training and recognition barriers as "no problem at all" to "small problem" and "moderate problem" to "a very major problem."

Employee Training and Recognition Barriers	No Problem At All to Small Problem	Moderate Problem to a Very Major Problem
Employees have insufficient information and training on the concept and design of TQM.	17.3%	82.7%
Employees have insufficient information on how to implement TQM and use its tools	19.6%	80.5%
Employees do not believe they are empowered to make changes.	19.2%	80.8%

2. Strategic Planning Barriers

The second problematic area in TQM implementation is strategic planning (mean = 3.2). Of the strategic planning barriers, funding and budgeting constraints were identified by 75 percent of city managers as moderate to very major problems (Table 3). Lack of a long-term planning approach and linkage between strategic quality plan goals and the organization's other strategic plans were identified as moderate to a very major problems by 59 percent and 65 percent, respectively (Table 3). Overall, 15 percent of the city managers indicated that strategic planning was a very major problem, another 27 percent perceived it as a major problem and 24 percent saw strategic planning as a moderate problem. Nineteen percent indicated that strategic planning was only a moderate problem; and 14 percent held the view that strategic planning was not a problem at all in their organization.

Table 3
Percentages of respondents identifying strategic planning barriers as "no problem at all" to "small problem" and "moderate problem" to "very major problem."

Strategic Planning Barriers	No Problem At All to Small Problem	Moderate Problem to Very Major Problem
Lack of a long-term planning approach	40.7%	59.3%

Disconnect between strategic quality plan goals and the organization's other strategic plans	34.7%	65.2%
Funding/Budgeting constraints	25.0%	75.0%

3. Leadership Barriers

The third problem area of TQM elements is leadership (mean = 2.7). Only 13 percent of the city managers perceived leadership as a very major problem, 19 percent indicated that it was a major problem, and another 19 percent believed that it was only a moderate problem. Twenty-four percent indicated that leadership was only a small problem; and 25 percent indicated that leadership was not a problem in their organizations. However, some individual barriers in leadership were very serious (Table 4). Table 48 shows that the most problematic leadership barrier was the inability of senior managers to spend sufficient time on TQM (mean = 3.6). A very high percentage of city managers (78%) identified the inability of senior managers to spend sufficient time on TQM as a moderate to very major problem. Other major barriers in leadership include lack of communicating commitment to change to TQM by senior managers and lack of support for TQM among organization managers. Sixty percent of the city managers perceived the former as a moderate to very major problem, and 58 percent perceived the latter as a moderate to very major problem (Table 4). Lack of senior managers' support for TQM and turnover of senior management were perceived as moderate to a very major problems by only 35 percent and 24 percent, respectively.

Table 4
Percentages of respondents identifying leadership barriers as "no problem at all" to "small problem" and "moderate problem" to "very major problem."

Leadership Barriers	No Problem At All to Small Problem	Moderate Problem to Very Major Problem
Senior management does not support TQM	64.7%	35.3%
Turnover of senior management	76.5%	23.6%
Insufficient support for TQM among organization managers	42.3%	57.7%
Commitment to change (to TQM) not effectively communicated by senior management	39.6%	60.5%
Senior management unable to spend sufficient time on TQM	22.2%	77.8%

4. Measurement and Analysis Barriers

City managers identified resistance to measuring processes as the most problematic barrier in measurement and analysis (Table 5). Table 5 shows that 57 percent of the city managers perceived resistance to measuring processes as a moderate to very major problem; 53 percent perceived management as unfamiliar or uncomfortable with statistics and measurement techniques as a moderate to very major problem; and 46 percent saw resistance to measuring employee attitudes as a moderate to very major problem. Overall, measurement and analysis was perceived as a moderate to very major problem by only 7 percent, as a major problem by 20 percent, as a moderate problem by 25 percent, as a small problem by 31 percent, and 17 percent indicated that measurement was not a problem at all in their organizations.

Table 5
Percentages of respondents identifying measurement and analysis barriers as "no problem at all" to "small problem" and "moderate problem" to "very major problem."

Measurement and Analysis Barriers	No Problem At All to Small Problem	Moderate Problem to Very Major Problem
Resistance to measuring processes	43.4%	56.6%
Resistance to measuring employee attitudes	53.9%	46.1%
Management unfamiliar or uncomfortable with statistics and measurement techniques	47.2%	52.7%

5. Empowerment and Teamwork Barriers

Table 6 presents the four empowerment and teamwork barriers. It shows that resistance to moving toward a participatory style of management was identified as a moderate to very major problem by 57 percent of the city managers, followed by employee resistance to changing roles or changing organizational structure (55%). Only 29 percent identified problems due to personnel regulations as moderate to very major, and 39 percent identified unions as a moderate to very major problem. Only six percent of the city managers perceived empowerment and teamwork as a very major problem, 15 percent perceived it as major problem, 23 percent perceived empowerment and teamwork as only a moderate problem, 30 percent perceived it as a small problem, and 25 percent indicated that it was not a problem at all.

Table 6
Percentages of respondents identifying empowerment and teamwork barriers as "no problem at all" to "small problem" and "moderate problem" to "very major problem."

Empowerment and Teamwork Barriers	No Problem At All to Small Problem	Moderate Problem to Very Major Problem
Resistance to moving toward a participatory style of management	42.8%	57.2%
Problems due to personnel regulations	70.9%	29.1%
Employees' resistance to changing roles or changing organizational structures	45.4%	54.6%
Employee organizations/unions resistant to TQM	61.2%	38.8%

6. Customer Focus Barriers

None of the customer focus barriers were perceived as moderate to very major problems by 50 percent of the city managers (Table 7). As Table 7 shows, 43 percent of city managers indicated that resistance to soliciting external customer feedback was a moderate to very major problem, and 46 percent indicated that measures of satisfaction from external customers was a moderate to very major problem. Only four percent indicated that customer focus was a very major problem. Seventeen percent perceived it as a major problem, and 23 percent as a moderate problem. Thirty one percent indicated that customer focus was a small problem, and 25 percent saw it as not a problem at all.

Table 7
Percentages of respondents identifying customer focus barriers as "no problem at all" to "small problem" and "moderate problem" to "very major problem."

Customer Focus Barriers	No Problem At All to Small Problem	Moderate Problem to Very Major Problem
Resistance to soliciting external customer feedback	57.4%	42.6%
Measures of satisfaction from external customers	53.5%	46.5%

7. Other Barriers to TQM Implementation

City managers who did not implement TQM in their organizations were asked to list the three major elements that prevented them from implementing TQM. All cities that did not implement TQM, except for two, provided reasons. The total number of barriers identified by city managers who had not implemented TQM was 85. The barriers were coded, classified, and grouped in 20 categories (Table 8).

Table 8
Barriers to TQM implementation identified by city managers and number of their occurrences

Factors that Prevented TQM Implementation	Frequency (n = 79)
Lack of time to implement TQM	13
Lack of understanding of TQM by members of the organization	8
Lack of knowledge of TQM by management	6
Organizational culture factors	8
Lack of top-management commitment	6
Lack of interest by top-management and employees	4
City Council does not support TQM	5
Budgeting constraints	5
Lack of adequate funding to implement TQM	6
Lack of human resources (personnel)	4
TQM is perceived as another management fad	5
Skepticism about what TQM can do	1
Lack of measurement and statistical techniques	3
Organizational survival was the priority not TQM	2
Frequent turnover of people in city manager position	2
Inability to provide sufficient training to employees in TQM	2
Diversity in the work force. Some employees do not speak, read, or write English	2

Table 8 (Continued)

Resistance from union leaders	1
Lack of vision	1
Concern about employee empowerment	1

Obviously lack of time to implement TQM was a major obstacle. An assistant to a city manager wrote "As a municipality we are faced with different problems each day. In administration there is an enormous amount of work already at our desks each morning. Each day has its own "fires" which must be put out and the workload is pushed back." Another city manager wrote: "As I understand it, TQM requires too much time to be implemented which I don't have, neither do the employees or the department directors."

Another factor preventing TQM implementation was budgeting constraints and lack of funding. Eleven city managers indicated that they were not able to implement TQM because they do not have the financial resources and are controlled by their budgets. City managers complained that they do not have enough funds to implement TQM, neither do they have enough staff. One city manager indicated that they had cut back over 20 percent of their staff, and the city could not function if some employees had to attend a training program: "we are barely able to do what has to be done with what we have." Another city manager wrote, "Our current and continuing budget crises in ... is causing tremendous stress on our organization and is making implementation of major systematic change very difficult."

The third factor frequently identified by city managers was the perception that the city was doing fine without TQM. Six city managers indicated that they did not see a need for TQM because the cities were functioning well without it. A city manager wrote: "We have never attempted to implement a formal TQM program in our city and I do not think we will in the near future. We have been doing a very good job without it. We reviewed some materials about TQM and decided not to go for it because it is not worth changing the method we have been using."

Lack of understanding and knowledge was also frequently identified by city managers. Many city managers (14) complained about the lack of knowledge and understanding of TQM concepts and tools. Questions such as "what is TQM," "how to implement it," "what are the benefits of implementing it," and "what does it do to the city," were frequently addressed by city managers. Three city managers indicated that city councils usually ask these questions, to which city managers do not have precise answers. One city manager indicates that it takes too much time to understand the concept, let alone implement it and get results.

Fifteen of the respondents attributed the problem to top-management and councils. Either lack of interest, lack of support, or lack of commitment. One city manager indicated that he/she was very supportive of TQM after attending several conferences and workshops about the concept. He/she tried to implement TQM in his city, but the proposal was rejected by the city council. According to this city manager, TQM will significantly improve the operations of local governments, but it is not likely to gain support because it has no political value. Another city manager indicated that the politics of local governments is the main obstacle to TQM. Councilmen are not interested in the concept because it conflicts with their political goals. A third city manager complained that: "It is not what is good for the city we do, it is what the politicians like. Their major concern is how to get reelected not how to improve quality. I know TQM is good but unless you get those ... off my back it has no chance in [our city]. Honestly, most of them do not know what TQM is and are afraid of it."

The perception that TQM is just another management fad and skepticism about what it can do are additional factors preventing the implementation of TQM in some cities. Five city managers believed that TQM is a fad. A city manager of a city that had implemented TQM made this concern very clear. He/she wrote: "Many of our minor initial obstacles have been caused by the negative stereotype 'TQM' has received recently. During this 'fad' phase, organizations might be better off calling their programs something else. Our approach in the City of ... is somewhat unorthodox, focusing on what works rather than complying with a specific system. Others might benefit more from this path."

Lack of measurement and statistical techniques was identified as an obstacle to TQM implementation in local governments by three city managers. Frequent turnover of people in the position of city manager, inability to provide sufficient training to employees, and having more immediate priorities were identified two times each as obstacles to implementing TQM in local governments. Resistance from union leaders, lack of vision, concern about employee empowerment, and diversity of the work force were identified one time each as an obstacle to TQM implementation. A city manager complained that TQM implementation requires extensive training to be successful. "We have employees who do not speak, read, or write in English. Who can train them and make them understand the concepts and tools of quality. This is our biggest problem and the city council does not want to do anything about it for obvious reasons!"

CONCLUSION

The connection between TQM and the problems U.S. cities are facing is missing. Most city managers complain about the lack of time and resources. They indicate that they have to do more with less. Therefore, they belive that they do not have the time to dedicate to TQM neither do they have the resources to invest in its implementation. According to city managers, money and time are the major barriers to successful TQM implementation. These views reveal lack of understanding of TQM and what it provides.

All quality gurus assert that the benefits of TQM exceed the cost of its implementation. Successful TQM implementation will significantly reduce the operating cost and improve productivity. It will also maximize the utilization of time and resources (AL-Khalaf 1995). TQM will not only enable organizations to be effective, but it will enable them solve the problems that are preventing them from implementing it.

Evidently, the problem is not as it may seem. It is not lack of resources and time; rather, it is the connection between the problems and the benefits of TQM. Therefore, if TQM is to be implemented and to be successful, a major effort to educate managers that there is a significant connection between the benefits of TQM and the challenges organizations are facing is needed.

REFERENCES

Ackoff, Russel L. 1993. Beyond Total Quality Management. *The Journal for Quality and Participation* 16 (March): 66-78.

AL-Khalaf, Abdullah M. 1996. *The Role of Employee Participation in Promoting the Success of TQM Implementation in Small US Cities*. A paper presented at the IIAS' 3rd International Conference, Beijing, China, 8-11 October.

AL-Khalaf, Abdullah M. 1995. *The Missing Connection: How TQM Contributes to Solving the Public Sector's Problems*. A paper presented at the IIAS' 23rd International Congress of Administrative Science, Dubai, UAE, 1-5 July.

AL-Khalaf, Abdullah M. and J. Steven Ott. 1994. *TQM Implementation in Small US Cities: Factors that Affect Successful Implementation*. A paper presented at the ASPA's 55th National Training Conference, Kansas City, MO, 23-27 July.

Alloway, James A., Jr. 1994. Laying the Groundwork for Total Quality. *Quality Progress* 27 (January): 65-66.

Atkinson, Philip E. 1990. *Creating Culture Change: The Key to Successful Total Quality Management.* San Diego, CA: Pfeiffer & Company.

Axline, Larry L. 1991. TQM: A Look in the Mirror. *Management Review* 80 (July): 64.

Barclay, Charles A. 1993. Quality Strategy and TQM Policies: Empirical Evidence. *Management International Review* 33, pp. 87-98.

Boyce, Graham W. D. 1992. Why Quality Programs Aren't -- and How They Could Be. *Business Quarterly* 57 (Autumn): 57-64.

Bremer, Michael S. 1988/1989. Linking Strategic management and Ongoing Quality Improvement. *National Productivity Review* 8 (Winter): 11-22.

Brocka, Bruce, and Suzanne Brocka. 1992. *Quality Management: Implementing the Best Ideas of the Masters.* Homewood, I.L.: Business One Irwin.

Brooks, George, and J. R. Linklater. 1986. Statistical Thinking and W. Edwards Deming's Teachings in the Administrative Environment. *National Productivity Review* 5 (Summer): 271-280.

Brown, Mark Graham, Darcy E. Hitchcock, and Marsha L. Willard. 1994. *Why TQM Fails and What To Do About It.* Burr Ridge, Illinois: IRWIN.

Brown, Mark Graham. 1989. Commitment ... It's Not the Whether, It's the "How TO". *The Journal for Quality and Participation* 12 (December): 38-42.

Brown, Mark Graham. 1993a. Calculating Your Total Quality Commitment. *The Journal for Quality and Participation* 16 (September): 28-34.

Brown, Mark Graham. 1993b. Why Does Total Quality Fail in Two Out of Three Tries? *The Journal for Quality and Participation* 16 (March): 80-89.

Carman, James M. 1993. Continuous Quality Improvement as a Survival Strategy: the Southern Pacific Experience. *California Management Review* 35 (Spring): 118-132.

Cassell, Ron H. 1993. Organizing to Achieve Continuous Improvement. *The Journal for Quality and Participation* 16 (July/August): 30-33.

Chang, Richard Y. 1993. When TQM Goes Nowhere. *Training and Development* 47 (January): 22-29.

Chaudron, David. 1993. A Tale of Three Villages: Approaches to Implementing Quality. *The Quality Management Forum* 19 (Winter): 4-5.

Cohen, Steven, and Ronald Brand. 1993. *Total Quality Management In Government.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Cole, Robert E. 1990. U. S. Quality Improvement in the Auto Industry: Close But No Cigar. *California Management Review* 32 (Summer): 71-85.

Cole, Robert E. 1993. Guest Editor's introduction. *California Management Review* 35 (Spring): 7-11.

Cole, Robert E., Paul Bacdayan, and B. Joseph White. 1993. Quality, Participation, and Competitiveness. *California Management Review* 35 (Spring): 68-81.

Crosby, Philip B. 1979. *Quality Is Free.* New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company.

Crosby, Philip B. 1984. *Quality Without Tears.* New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc.

Crosby, Philip B. 1992. Managerial Arrogance. *Across The Board* 29 (October): 32-35.

Curry, Martha J. 1991. *Quality Beginnings: Implementing the Employee involvement Program at the Cincinnati Service Center.* A paper presented at the AQP Spring Conference Transactions. 04-IAP0491P-017.

Deming, W. Edwards. 1986. *Out of the Crisis.* Cambridge, M.A.: the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Ebel, Kenneth E. 1991. *Achieving Excellence In Business.* Milwaukee, WI: ASQC Quality Press.

Eskildson, Loyd. 1994. Improving the Odds of TQM's Success. *Quality Progress* 27 (April): 61-63.

Federico, F. J. 1989. Six Steps to Quality Improvement. *National Productivity Review* 8 (Spring): 113-119.

Feigenbaum, Armand V. 1991. Quality: an International Imperative. *The Journal for Quality and Participation* 14 (March): 16-18.

Feigenbaum, Armand V. 1993. A Senior Manager's Quality Mindset: Edge for the 90s. *The Journal for Quality and Participation* 16 (March): 36-39.

Fuchs, Edward. 1993. Total Quality Management from the Future: Practices and Paradigms. *Quality Management Journal* 1 (October): 26-34.

Gilbert, James D. 1992. TQM Flops--A Chance to Learn from the Mistakes of Others. *National Productivity Review* 11 (Autumn): 491-499.

Goodman, John A., Gary F. Bargatze, and Cynthia Grimm. 1994. The Key Problem With TQM. *Quality Progress* 27 (January): 45-48.

Greising, David. 1994. Quality: How To Make It Pay. *Business Week* n. 3384 (August 8):54-59.

Hamilton, Mary R., and Gilbert M. Mayhugh. 1992. *Implementing TQM in a Government Audit Organization Presents Unique Challenges.* A paper presented at the AQP Spring Conference Transactions. 04-IAP0492-352.

Harari, Oren. 1993a. Ten Reasons Why TQM Doesn't Work. *Management Review* 82 (January): 33-38.

Harari, Oren. 1993b. Three Very Difficult Steps to Total Quality. *Management Review* 82 (April): 39-43.

Hare, Lynne B. 1993. Pedal Faster -- They're Gaining on Us. *Statistics Division Newsletter, ASQC* 13 (Winter): 4-8.

Harrington, H. James, and Wayne S. Rieker. 1988. The End of Slavery: Quality Control Circles. *The Journal for Quality and Participation* 11 (March): 16-20.

Heath, James A. 1994. A Few Good Ideas for a Good Idea Program. *Quality Progress* 27 (January): 35-38.

Holpp, Lawrence. 1989. 10 Reasons Why Total Quality Is Less Than Total. *Training* (October): 93-103.

Hull, Kevin, and Dean Neptune. 1991. The Data Quality Objectives Process. *The Journal for Quality and Participation* 14 (December): 72-78.

Hunt, V. Daniel. 1993. *Quality Management for Government: A Guide to Federal, State, and Local Implementation.* Milwaukee, Wisconsin: ASQC Quality Press.

Jordan, Jennifer. 1992/1993. Everything You Wanted to Know About TQM. *The Public Manager* 21 (Winter): 45-49.

Juran, Joseph M. 1991a. Made in USA -- A Quality Resurgence. *The Journal for Quality and Participation* 14 (March): 6-8.

Juran, Joseph M. 1991b. Strategies for World-Class Quality. *Quality Progress* 24 (March): 81-85.

Juran, Joseph M., and Frank M. Gryna. 1993. *Quality Planning and Analysis.* 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc.

Kane, Edward J. 1992. Implementing TQM at Dunn & Bradstreet Software. *National Productivity Review* 11 (Summer): 405-416.

Katz, Albert. 1993. Eight TQM Pitfalls. *The Journal for Quality and Participation* 16 (July/August): 24-27.

Keehley, Pat. 1992. TQM for Local Governments. *Public Management* 74 (August): 10-16.

Kordupleski, Raymond E., Ronald T. Rust, and Anthony J. Zahorik. 1993. Why Improving Quality Doesn't Improve Quality (or Whatever Happened to Marketing?). *California Management Review* 35 (Spring): 82-95.

Lawler, Edward E., III, Susan Mohrman, and Gerald E. Ledford, Jr. 1992. *Employee Involvement and Total Quality Management: Practices and Results in Fortune 1000 Companies.* San Francisco, C.A.: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Leddick, Susan. 1990/1991. Teaching Managers to Support Quality-Improvement Efforts. *National Productivity Review* 10 (Winter): 69-74.

Lefevre, Henry ed. 1992. *Government Quality and Productivity: Success Stories.* Milwaukee, Wisconsin: ASQC Quality Press.

McCormack, Shaun P. 1992. TQM: Getting it Right the First Time. *Training and Development* 46 (June): 43-48.

Merron, Keith A. 1994. Creating TQM Organizations. *Quality Progress* 27 (January): 51-54.

Metz, Edmund J. 1984. Managing Change: Implementing Productivity and Quality Improvements. *National Productivity Review* 3 (Summer): 303-313.

Mohr-Jackson, Iris. 1994. Quality-Starter Versus Quality -Advancer Organizations. *Quality Management Journal* 1 (January): 47-56.

Murphy, Paul F., and Dan McArthur. 1991. Six Steps to Quality Improvement. *The Journal for Quality and Participation* 14 (December): 24-27.

Parry, Scott. 1993. The Missing 'M' in TQM. *Training* 30 (September): 29-31.

Quimby, Charlie, Lynda Parker, and Arnold M. Weimerskirch. 1991. How, Exactly, Do You Communicate Quality? *Quality Progress* 24 (June): 52-54.

Ritter, Diane. 1993. A Total for Improvement Using the Baldrige Criteria. *National Productivity Review* 12 (Spring): 167-182.

Robson, Mike. 1989. Quality of Management & the Management of Quality. *The Journal for Quality and Participation* 12 (March): 70-73.

Roth, William. 1991. Why Aren't Leaders Leading. *The Journal for Quality and Participation* 14 (June): 76-80.

Rubinstein, Sidney P. 1991. The Evolution of U.S. Quality Systems. *Quality Progress* 24 (May): 4-49.

Rubinstein, Sidney P. 1993. Democracy and Quality as an Integrated System. *Quality Progress* 26 (September): 51-55.

Schaffer, Douglas S. 1993. Why Total Quality Programs Miss the Market. *The Journal for Quality and Participation* 16 (September): 18-27.

Schaffer, Robert H. 1989. Quality Now! *The Journal for Quality and Participation* 12 (September): 22-27.

Scott, William B. 1989. TQM Expected to Boost Productivity, Ensure Survival of U.S. Industry. *Aviation Week & Space Technology* (December 4): 64-69.

Sherwood, John J., and Florence M. Hoylman. 1993. The Total Quality Paradox. *The Journal for Quality and Participation* 16 (March): 98-105.

Smith, A. Keith. 1993. Total Quality Management in the Public Sector (Part 2). *Quality Progress* 26 (July): 57-62.

Sohal, Amrik S., Liz Ramsay, and Danny Samson. 1992. Quality Management Practices in Australian Industry. *Total Quality Management* 3 (3): 283-299.

Spitzer, Richard D. 1993. Valuing TQM Through Rigorous Financial Analysis. *Quality Progress* 26 (July): 49-54.

Steele, Jack. 1993. Implementing Total Quality Management for Long - and Short - Term Bottom-Line Results. *National Productivity Review* 12 (Summer): 425-441.

Stratton, A. Donald. 1991. StorageTek and Excellence Through Quality. *The Journal for Quality and Participation* 14 (December):6-9.

The Economist. 1992. The Cracks in Quality. *The Economist* 323 (April 18): 67-68.

Townsend, Patrick L., and Joan E. Townsend. 1988. A Quality Beginning. *The Journal for Quality and Participation* 11 (March): 26-27.

U. S. General Accounting Office (GAO). 1991. *Management Practices, U. S. Companies Improve Performance Through Quality Efforts.* Washington, D.C. GAO/NSIAD-91-190.

U. S. General Accounting Office (GAO). 1992. *Quality Management: Survey of Federal Organizations.* Washington, D.C. GAO/GGD-93-9BR.

Ublig, Keith. 1994. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Hones in on Strategic Direction. *National Productivity Review* 13 (Spring): 197-203.

Varian, Tom. 1991. Communicating Total Quality Inside the Organization. *Quality Progress* 24 (June): 30-31.

Vinzant, Douglas, and Janet Vinzant. 1993. *Integrating Strategic Management and Total Quality Management: Possibilities and Realities.* A paper presented at the ASPA/CASU 54th National Training Conference, San Francisco, C.A., 17-21 July.

Walker, Terry. 1992. Creating total Quality Improvement That Lasts. *National Productivity Review* 11 (Autumn): 473-478.

Walters, Jonathan. 1992. The Cult of Total Quality. *Governing* (May): 38-42.

Westcott, Russ. 1993. Is Your "TQM" Fragged? *The Quality Management Forum* 19 (Winter): 6-7.

Whitten, Shirley K. 1989. Award-Winning Total Quality at the Naval Publications and Forms Center. *National Productivity Review* 8 (Summer): 273-286.

Wilson, Laura A., and Robert F. Durant. 1994. Evaluating TQM: the Case for a Theory Driven Approach. *Public Administration Review* 54 (March/April): 137-146.

Wood, Patricia B. 1992. How Quality Government is Being Achieved. *National Productivity Review* 11 (Spring): 257-264.

Zangwill, Willard I. 1994. Ten Mistakes CEOs Make about Quality. *Quality Progress* 27 (June): 43-48.