Akhism, Total Quality Management and a Suggestion for Moral-Oriented Turkish Quality Management System

Ahilik, Toplam Kalite Yönetimi ve Ahlak Temelli Türk Kalite Yönetim Sistemi Önerisi

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Abstract: Today, quality management systems are established in every field, continuously developed and implemented. Zero-defect policy in products and services have been embraced. Although all these developments have been made for people, they did not help and increased the discontent of people in the role of employee, employer and customer. While quality management systems are built on stakeholder satisfaction, it has been recently recognized that human values are also important. Foremost among these values is morality. Moral approach has become even more significant nowadays when there are rapidly increasing efforts on artificial intelligence. Business ethics is important in that it is the building block of business life and affects the social life of society. It can be argued that such an important concept has not taken its well-deserved place in today's quality management systems. This article analyzes the Turkish culture and the tradition of sufism as well as the Akhi system that depends on them for decades. It forms the Turkish Quality Management System by examining the codes of the Akhi organization based on the principles of quality management system and the logic behind system analysis. The Turkish quality management system can be characterized by its ability to question the system which totally aims to earn money and above all, by its nature which is missing in existing systems. It can be argued that the principles of TrQMS will create value and ensure business excellence for the related companies. Turkish Quality Management system, which enriches other QMSs through this interaction, seems to increase productivity in practice.

Structured Abstract: Quality Management Systems (QMS) and Total Quality Management (TQM) are implemented by continuously developed in every field. Zero-defect policy in products and services have been embraced. Although all these developments have been made for people, they did not help and increased the discontent of people in the role of employee, employer and customer. While quality management systems are built on stakeholder satisfaction, it has been recently recognized that human values are also important. Foremost among these values is morality. Moral approach has become even more significant nowadays when there are rapidly increasing efforts on artificial intelligence. Business ethics is important in that it is the building block of business life and affects the social life of society. It can be argued that such an important concept has not taken its well-deserved place in today's quality management systems.

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Cite as/ Atıf: Karatop, B. (2020). Akhism, total quality management and a suggestion for moral-oriented Turkish quality management system, *Turkish Studies - Social*, 15(3), 1245-1259. <https://dx.doi.org/10.29228/TurkishStudies.42028>

Received/Geliş: 05 March/Mart 2020

Accepted/Kabul: 25 April/Nisan 2020

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Checked by plagiarism software

Published/Yayın: 30 April/Nisan 2020

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The 5 basic principles of TQM which was discovered in 19th Century are leadership of management), contribution of all employees, stakeholder satisfaction, sustainable development, the goal of perfection and these principles are existing in the Akhi order as well. (Karatop et al., 2011). The impressive matter is these principles were initially used in Anatolia 600 years ago. The Akhi order can be defined as a system that involves more than just the principles of TQM. Indeed, it refers to a human-driven system that organizes its activities for humans and does not consider people as tools in practice.

This article analyzes the Turkish culture and the tradition of sufism as well as the Akhi system that depends on them for decades. It forms the Turkish Quality Management System (TrQMS) by examining the codes of the Akhi organization based on the principles of quality management system and the logic behind system analysis. The structure / system formed based on the Akhi order and the Turkish cultural structure is named the TrQMS in this study. This system has been formed by drawing on the inferences from examples that were widely applied in the Akhi geography in the past, integrating the hundreds of years of cultural knowledge and information into business life and considering current information.

This study aims to provide a new perspective for business life by establishing the foundations of TrQMS and to offer a method that has been overlooked so far in order to improve productivity in business life. This method can be achieved by emphasizing the elements that affect happiness and peace like a true human-centered approach and ethics in business life. It can be argued to be a system that can achieve great success when it is integrated with existing quality management systems. The suggested system is a model aimed at increasing peace of mind in business life and enhancing the productivity of the people who control the processes.

The fundamental sources and the assessments of researchers on the Akhi order were thoroughly reviewed and evaluated from the perspective of a quality specialist. The degenerated culture was not into consideration while constituting the principles and it was focused on the ancient Turkish culture and the Akhi Order. These principles are true human-centered management, moral rules, synergistic structure, merit, participative management, collaboration, belonging, value adding and waste reduction, lifelong education, knowledge management, continuous improvement and unlimited service to the community.

TrQMS values human on the basis of morality in accordance with “the true human-centered management.” Money should be means to provide service to people; it should not be a goal. The premises of TrQMS is being ethical and acting ethically. Since problems are correctly identified, solved and even prevented (preventive approach) when one has moral awareness. This principle is valid for both business life and social life to run smoothly.

TrQMS, when integrated with other available quality management systems and excellence models, has the potential to make a great success. The difference between TrQMS with complementary features of quality management systems and other QMSs is as follows:

- Its greatest difference is that it focuses on human and thus moral rules, which are created to make people happy, are a priority in the system.
- However one of its most important differences of TrQMS with other quality management systems is that it pays attention to and incorporates moral rules.
- Also, the trainings offered by TrQMS are not limited to professional trainings and the trainings aimed at enhancing the social life of employees are performed as systematical as these professional trainings.
- With its philosophy requiring unconditional service to the society, TrQMS is indeed relevant to all segments of society.
- TrQMS is a system that performs a quality evaluation not only for the institution but also for the employees at that institution.
- Merit is valued by all businesses, but it is included in TrQMS as a principle so that it cannot be overlooked.

Keywords: Total Quality Management, Quality Management System, Turkish Quality Management System, Akhi Order

Öz: Günümüzde kalite yönetim sistemleri her alanda oluşturulmuş ve sürekli geliştirilerek uygulamaya alınmıştır. Üründe ve hizmette sıfır hata amaç olmuştur. Tüm bu gelişmeler insan için gerçekleştirilirken aynı zamanda hem çalışan hem işveren hem de müşteri rolündeki insanın mutsuzluk katsayısının artmasına engel olunamamıştır. Kalite yönetim sistemleri paydaş memnuniyeti üzerine kurulmakla birlikte en son gelinen nokta bu sistemde insani değerlerin de önemli olduğudur. Bu değerlerin başında ahlak gelmektedir. Ahlakî yaklaşım yapay zekâ çalışmalarının inanılmaz hızla devam ettiği günümüzde daha da önem kazanmıştır. İş ahlakı, iş hayatının temel taşı olması ve toplumun sosyal hayatını da etkilemesi oldukça önemlidir. Bu kadar önemli bir kavram olan ahlakın günümüz kalite yönetim sistemlerinde hak ettiği önemde olmadığı söylenebilir. Bu makalede Türk kültürü ve tasavvuf geleneği ve bunlardan beslenen Ahilik Sistemi yaklaşık yirmi yıl boyunca incelenmiş, Ahilik teşkilatının şifreleri sistem analizi mantığı ve kalite yönetim sistemi ilkeleri dikkate alınarak değerlendirilmiştir. Bu değerlendirmeler neticesinde Türk Kalite Yönetim Sistemi oluşturulmuştur. Türk kalite yönetim sisteminin tamamen kazanmak üzere kurulan, sistemi sorgulayan ve asıl önemlisi mevcut kalite yönetim sistemlerinde eksik olan ruhu veren bir yapıya sahip olduğu söylenebilir. Türk kalite yönetim sistemi ilkelerinin şirketlere değer yaratacağı gibi iş mükemmelliği sağlayabilir. Diğer kalite yönetim sistemleriyle bütünleşik olarak uygulanabilir ve bu şekilde verimliliği de artıracağını öngörülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Toplam Kalite Yönetimi, Kalite Yönetim Sistemi, Türk Kalite Yönetim Sistemi, Ahilik.

Introduction

Armand Vallin Feigenbaum is the developer of Total Quality Control and argues that quality should be managed, not controlled. Total Quality Management (TQM) is defined as “*a thought revolution in management*” by Ishikawa (Özkan, 2005). TQM is a human-centered management approach that enhances its system while improving its employees, supports teamwork instead of individual work, establishes a system to prevent errors and embraces a zero-defect policy, and seeks to perfect its system by constantly questioning itself, for the current and future satisfaction of all stakeholders.

According to Karatop et al (2011) “The concepts used in TQM such as shareholders' content, sustainable education and development, teamwork (Imece), zero error, awareness of neighbourhood, social order etc. are very essential in Ahilik system.” The 5 basic principles of TQM which was discovered in 19th Century are leadership of management, contribution of all employees, stakeholder satisfaction, sustainable development, the goal of perfection and these principles are existing in the Akhi order as well. (Karatop et al., 2011). The impressive matter is these principles were initially used in Anatolia 600 years ago.

The Akhi order can be defined as a system that involves more than just the principles of TQM. Indeed, it refers to a human-driven system that organizes its activities for humans and does not consider people as tools in practice. The Akhi order was a non-governmental organization based on voluntary work and the new members to join this organization were meticulously selected. There were rules against misconduct by those who deteriorate the quality of life in society and the sanctions required by these rules were strictly applied (Ekinci, 2001). Customers determined the quality and the rights of customers were protected by the system itself.

The structure / system formed based on the Akhi order and the Turkish cultural structure is named the TrQMS in this study. This system has been formed by drawing on the inferences from examples that were widely applied in the Akhi geography in the past, integrating the hundreds of years of cultural knowledge and information into business life and considering current information.

This study aims to provide a new perspective for business life by establishing the foundations of TrQMS and to offer a method that has been overlooked so far in order to improve productivity in business life. This method can be achieved by emphasizing the elements that affect happiness and peace like a true human-centered approach and ethics in business life. It can be argued to be a system that can achieve great success when it is integrated with existing quality management systems. The

suggested system is a model aimed at increasing peace of mind in business life and enhancing the productivity of the people who control the processes.

The Underlying Structure of Turkish Quality Management System: The Akhi Order

Researchers argue that the Akhi order dates back to the 7th and 8th century (Erarı, 1999), was institutionalized by Ahi Evran in the 13th century (Çağatay, 1981; Çalışkan et al. 2001; Köksal, 2007, Ekinci, 1990; Doğan, 2006) and survived until the 19-20th century (Köksal, 2008). The documents (futuwwa-name) that define the principles and rules related to the Akhi order were written in the period of institutionalization.

The person who gains the necessary qualifications by studying the Akhi order is called an Ahi. “Ahi is a sufi with a strong faith who does his job by being completely faithful to moral principles. He is a role model who aspires to show other people the true path while he is an ordinary person doing his own job at the same time.” (Günaydın, 2015). Various researchers have highlighted that the Akhi order based on the Turkish culture and sufism embraces many good deeds such as generousness, courage, hospitality and that it requires its members to consider each other as brothers (Karatop and Kubat, 2018).

The Akhi order does not see a human as a mere material being; rather, it regards the spiritual world that a human belongs to as well (Ekinci, 2001). It seeks to strengthen the spiritual world of a human and to achieve an ethical, ideal person. Thus, it is more effective to manage with internal harmony instead of controlling them with coercive rules

Economy is a means in the Akhi order (Ekinci, 2001; Ekinci, 2002); working is a worship. Considering humans not as an enterprise, but as the most valuable asset of the universe (Doğan, 2006), the Akhi order has a true human-centered approach. There is no categorization such as young-old and female-male in the society, and no social classes such as employee-employer and producer-consumer exist. It has the understanding of a society in solidarity (Ekinci, 2002). Science is highly valued in the Turkish culture. Even top managers consult to scholars in every matter. Yazıcıoğlu (2010) reports that Yusuf Has Hacib said “to be a human, you must either teach or learn” in Kutadgu Bilig ('Kutadgu Bilig' meaning happiness knowledge). In fact, Kutadgu Bilig emphasized the need to learn from knowledgeable and wise people (Başer, 2011).

Principles of Turkish Quality Management System

Social, cultural, political and economic developments have created the concept of quality (Özveren, 1997) and are still improving it. Systems reflect the cultures of the communities in which they emerged. The system established by a company inherently includes the culture of that institution. Indeed, it is not surprising to see the traces of Japanese culture in “Toyota culture.” TrQMS thus should incorporate the principles that reflect the Turkish culture.

According to the article titled “The Epistemological Basis for Quality Management” by Barouch and Ponsignon (2016), researchers have observed that due to the lack of understanding of the quality management concepts of quality management, they are inconsistently used in practice. It can be argued that a good understanding of the concepts of quality management systems and the establishment of a common language in the institution can bring success in practice.

The fundamental sources and the assessments of researchers on the Akhi order were thoroughly reviewed and evaluated from the perspective of a quality specialist. These reviews and analyses have formed the principles of the TrQMS. The degenerated culture was not into consideration while constituting the principles and it was focused on the ancient Turkish culture and the Akhi Order.

These principles are as follows (Karatop and Kubat, 2018):

- True human-centered management
- Moral rules
- Synergistic structure
- Merit
- Participative management
- Collaboration
- Belonging
- Value adding and waste reduction
- Lifelong education
- Knowledge management
- Continuous improvement
- Unlimited service to the community

True Human-Centered Management

TrQMS values human on the basis of morality in accordance with “the true human-centered management.” Money should be means to provide service to people; it should not be a goal.

The term of human-centered management first emerged in the 21st century; back then, money was an end and efforts were made to turn money into a means by paying attention to service to people. This cannot be considered as a principle of the true human-centered management. To fully comprehend the difference between the understanding of “the human-centered management” and “the true human-centered management”, it is essential to compare the views of Turkish culture and the Akhi order perceive, and of the capitalist system towards employees/people.

With the transition from labor-intensive production to capital-intensive production following the industrial revolution, small industrialists and craftsmen disappeared and turned into workers who work based on machine orders. New social classes were formed with the bosses who owned the machines: the working class and the employer class. The system encouraged to make profits and with the transition to mass production, human beings were seen as a part of the machine. The workers still suffered from such problems until the 21st century (Küçükcalay, 1997). The historians and observers who analyzed this period remark that industrialization clearly deteriorated the quality of life of the poor, although it brought prosperity to some in the UK. According to a group of other observes, while the economic change bothered some workers, most of them benefited from great earning opportunities (Deane, 1988). With these developments, “capitalism” became the new economic order and the society was divided into two classes based on economy: the owners of capital (the bourgeoisie) and the workers (the proletariat). This new system mostly ignored the working class, while looking after the interests of the owners of capital (Çoban, 2010). Thus, with the increasing number of occupational accidents after the First Industrial Revolution, the concept of occupational health and safety emerged. The 19th century witnessed the efforts to eliminate these problems affecting employees (Çiçek and Öçal, 2016). On the other hand, as the Akhi order considers employee rights based on a humanitarian and moral basis, it has not led to any problem.

According to Türkdoğan (1996), the structure of the old Turkish society was not based on class conflicts. Throughout their history, Turkish people have not tolerated any kind of slavery and the sense of social justice has prevailed in the society (Zelyurt, 2010). The culture formed through this historical tradition is also present in business life.

The Akhi order does not divide business life into classes. There is no class distinction in the literature on the Akhi order, since there is no class distinction in the Turkish culture. All members of the hierarchy, including new members in the Akhi order, were considered individuals in continuous improvement by furthering their education to contribute to the system. There was no class distinction; yet, the subordinate had for the superior. This was based on 3 main elements. The first is ethics; the second is the corporate culture driven by the Turkish culture and the third is continuous education.

In short, human-centered management approach values human on the basis of economy (earning money). In other words, human (both employee and customer) is important as s/he makes money. TrQMS values human on the basis of morality within the framework of “the true human-centered management.” That is, a customer deserves the best service and product while an employee is someone whose legal and social rights need to be protected and who should be provided with continuous training and development.

TrQMS seeks to satisfy people/customers/shareholders. A customer is a benefactor. If the customer is satisfied, one can easily make money. The philosophy of this principle regards economy as a means and service to people as an end. The understanding of an economy for people and the true human-centered management is predominant in the system. Otherwise, the system does not work. Since, if making money becomes an end, service to people turns into a means, which is not favoured in the system.

The stakeholder demand in conformity with business ethics is met in TrQMS. Stakeholder satisfaction measurement should be done periodically and “sustainable stakeholder satisfaction” should be achieved. The protection of consumer rights is part of the system. When a faulty product/service is produced, all individuals performing the production are responsible for it. For that reason, an auto-control system (product and semi-finished product monitoring system) should be established to hold everyone responsible for the production of high-quality products/services. Since a customer is a benefactor.

Moral Rules

The set of rules, which are used to define the way whereby information is exchanged to the mutual benefits of members of society, is generally called morals. Morals are the mainstay of human civilization and responsible for the impressive fund of knowledge that forms the basis of our modern societies (Freiesleben & Pohl, 2004). Organizations require an ethical culture to put their quality initiatives into practice (Maguad & Krone, 2009). The response of the society to unethical behavior has been increasingly harsh (Ahmed and Machold, 2004).

Professional ethics are very important for Turkish people. Ziya Gökalp, a Turkish philosopher, once said: “For Turkish people, professional ethics comes second following patriotic morality. In the ancient times, a profession was called a road by Turkish people and an elder on the road was considered to be ahead of an elder on the lineage.” (Köksal, 2007). Although the family ties are very strong and important for Turkish people, a senior in the profession was valued more than a senior member of the family.

The premises of TrQMS is being ethical and acting ethically. Since problems are correctly identified, solved and even prevented (preventive approach) when one has moral awareness. This principle is valid for both business life and social life to run smoothly.

In the Akhi organization, which underlies TrQMS, each member was called “akhi” when the system was first established. In a sense, akhi means brother. The logic here is: consider your stakeholder as if he was your brother and be honest. The most common issue faced by people today is immoral behaviors from other people around them; but, usually they react in the same way. This vicious circle only harms the involved parties. For that reason, acting ethically is the focus of TrQMS. The other principles in the system revolve around this focus.

“The true human-centered management approach” is a reflection of ethical conducts. Or, to put it another way, morality is a must to achieve the true human-centered management approach. These two principles complete each other.

Akhism is a human science based on four pillars: Mind, Ethics, Science and Work (Soykut, 1976; Soykut, 1980). Science and morality are required to coexist in the Akhi order. In fact, true science should lead an individual to do good deeds, to be ethical. Science and morality are indispensable in TrQMS. Science that does not benefit humanity is unethical and thus should not be done. People used to and still pray: “I seek refuge in you from the science which is of no use” Science should be an act that adds value to our lives. Any piece of information that does not add value to an individual is merely a burden on the individual (Doğan, 2006). Therefore, to alleviate this burden, all of the valuable information learned should be put into practice in the system. The morality of an organization/institution should be transformed into a measurable value. Since measurement is necessary to control identification is necessary to measure.

The rapid production of robots through artificial intelligence software causes both happiness and anxiety in people. Nobody wants to think about what a robot created by a programmer with no morality can do. Thus, this principal in TrQMS becomes more and more important in today’s world.

Synergistic Structure

Teams should be formed to allow for continuous development and a synergistic structure should be established to ensure the systematic and coordinated operation of these teams. This system is called collective work (*imece*) in TrQMS.

“Collective work” (*imece*), which has its own system and allows for the continuous improvement of an organization, is a problem prevention and resolution team working on a voluntary basis. That is, while problem prevention teams focus on the solution of a problem after it occurs, “collective work” (*imece*) strikes to prevent a problem before it occurs. The focus of *imece* is to take measures to prevent problems and to create solutions. There are two different teams in the system of *imece*. The first team is the one to deal with the problem and “the owners of the process.” The second team consists of those responsible for the relevant processes that support the primary process and those who work on a voluntary basis. The teams may change place in the next case.

The hierarchical structure of the system of *imece* is quite simple; for each collective work (*imece*), there is a collective work architect, a head *yaren*, and several *yarens*. (‘Yaren’ meaning bosom friend). Stakeholders such as customers, employees, suppliers may participate in the teams that form the collective work. However, team members must be experts, knowledgeable or at least relevant to the task.

The person who supervises the collective work is called “architect” in the tradition of collective work dating back to ancient times in the Turkish culture and the collective work is carried out by the order of this person (Temel, 2011). Similarly, the person who manages the collective work system in TrQMS is called “collective work architect” and those who work on a voluntary basis are called “*yaren*.” A collective work architect is respected for his personality and knowledge. Like *yarens*, collective work architects receive education from “birth to death.” A head *yaren* is the one to deal with a problem when it is not resolved. Thus, this person is like a host and also the right hand of a collective work architect. A head *yaren* informs a collective work architect about the problem – a potential problem. The collective work architect asks *yarens* to perform the collective work. When the collective work is organized, *yarens* come together frequently and periodically until the relevant measures are taken or the problem is resolved. They can use any problem-solving techniques they want, and their training requests are planned by the head *yaren* who then informs the collective work architect.

Merit

Merit was very critical in the Akhi order. As Akhis advanced in their profession and did well, they promoted and ceremonies were held for them. These ceremonies were highly motivating and reassuring, by raising awareness among them on their responsibilities. A document called *icazetname* (diploma) was awarded to those (craftsmen) who were also merit holders in their jobs and successfully achieved their spiritual development. This actually means that those people were accredited.

A merit holder employee does his job and offers education at the same time. The philosophy of “leave it to the experts and learn it from them” should be embraced. Life-long learning should be achieved by the help of qualified instructors.

The choice of profession and division of labor is very important in the Akhi order. Education was offered in promising branches of profession according to the abilities of young people based on the needs of the country (Doğan, 2006). It can be argued that the system known today as talent hunting and talent camps was implemented at that time in a different way. Akhis, making progresses in hierarchical structure in the Akhi order, received their Akhi education from experts. Experts were the ones assessing events from a wider perspective and making decisions. Thus, the experts did their job and socially beneficial activities were performed. Apprentices took theoretical, practical and life lessons from their masters (about morality, courtesy, culture, etc.)

While achieving specialization, TrQMS respects the expert as well. The prerequisite for specialization is to place the right person in the right job. Also, ensuring a proactive talent management and supporting the employee with the necessary trainings are essential for specialization. Applied trainings allow for the transfer of implicit knowledge that experts have, and this is the aspect that makes these trainings important and valuable.

In TrQMS, the expert knows his value in the system and seeks to convey information to people around him by benefiting from these trainings in the best way possible to increase the added value of the information that he has.

Participative Management

As reported in the Orkhon inscriptions, which is an important resource in history on the lifestyles of Turkish people, uninformed and incompatible (with their superiors) managers bankrupt the organizations which they are in. The Orkhon inscriptions emphasize that being compatible and informed are one of the elements that positively affect success among managers. There is no sharp distinction between the ruler and the ruled in Turks (Türkdoğan 1996). According to Ögel (2017) “One of the major duties of the head of state of the old Turkish people is to protect and comfort his nation with a paternal affection.”

The two most important characteristics of a leader in the Turkish culture are to be strong against his rivals and compassionate to his subordinates. The leader must balance between these two characteristics. TrQMS requires a leader to have all the above-mentioned characteristics but in a balanced way. That is, characteristics such as discipline-compassion, confidence-caution, compatible-determined, knowledgeable- advisee to (an expert) should be present in a leader in a balanced way. The employees should obtain a promise from the leader for his continued service. A leader counts for nothing on his own. Only with his team, a leader is valuable. Thus, a leader and his employees both add value to each other. In this way, working in collaboration and harmony will enhance the value of the leader and his team. In other words, team members (employees) who participate in the management on various occasions will find themselves valuable and thus this will increase their productivity and motivation. They then help identifying trivial problems which could not be seen by the management and resolving them or taking measures against potential problems.

Collaboration

A structure that brings about collaboration among stakeholders should be established. According to Ekinçi, “One of the principles shaping the management structure of the Akhi organization is the understanding of collaboration which represents the unity of life and property.” This understanding of collaboration does not involve a class difference, rather it has balanced individual-society interests (Ekinçi, 2001). There are three parties to be affected when the system runs with due diligence on the collaboration between stakeholders: two mutual stakeholders in communication with each other and other stakeholders in the relevant environment. The synergy generated by this collaboration will encourage other joint efforts.

There are two dimensions to build a structure that brings about collaboration among stakeholders.

- ✓ The first dimension supports collaboration with the stakeholders in the immediate environment,
- ✓ The second supports collaboration among the stakeholders in indirect communication.

The collective work is a structure achieving collaboration among stakeholders while attempting to prevent problems. When a company improves its products or service quality, it should support the development of all stakeholders, including its suppliers and employees.

Belonging

Strategies to enable all stakeholders, particularly employees, to develop a sense of ownership should be followed. It is very important to ensure trust in the organization and thus to exhibit ethical behaviors in order to create a sense of belonging in the society. Opportunities to involve stakeholders in the efforts to improve the organization are a major motivation that enhances the sense of ownership. The most critical factor that motivates an employee is that s/he feels that s/he belongs in that company. Alienation, which is the opposite of the sense of belonging, emerged following the industrial revolution.

According to Güven (1999), alienation is “one of the most important problems of modern industrial societies. The over-division of labor brought about by the industrial revolution is at the core of alienation.”. In TrQMS, a new recruiter has a coach (a master of the Akhi order) who is responsible for his/her orientation training, other trainings and career plans. This helps the employee to find himself/herself valuable and to create a sense of belonging for the organization. Also, the participation of the employee in the collective works enhances his/her sense of belonging and motivation.

As in the Akhi order, in TrQMS, managers and employees start the day with a short motivational ritual to offer “the best production/service that day.” This is a ceremony that motivates employees and increases their commitment to the organization. It should not be long enough to bore them or unserious.

Adding Value and Waste Reduction

People are valuable to the extent that they are beneficial to the society in the Turkish culture, like in the Japanese culture. A good example of this also reflects the Turkish traditions: the old Turkish people did not name a newborn child; the child was given an appropriate name after he/she accomplished a job. The child would start his/her life by first adding value to his/her name.

Employees should be allowed and even asked to add value to their job. In TrQMS, employees are allowed to add value to their job through the collective works and coaching system. Motivating employees, this also positively impacts their sense of belonging. While improving themselves

through the collective work, employees explore their abilities through coaching system. Exploring one's own abilities and improving oneself help him/her add value to the job.

Anything that does not turn into value is futile and wasted. Waste is prohibited in the Islamic faith and Turkish culture. Waste prevents continuous development. It must be avoided. In accordance with TrQMS, poor quality costs and faulty products are considered waste and should be eliminated. More importantly, waste should not occur in the first place.

Education from the cradle to the grave

The term "life-long" is defined as "from the cradle to the grave" in the Turkish culture. Similarly, TrQMS emphasizes the need for education from the cradle to the grave. Education in the Akhi order should last a lifetime, include moral knowledge as well as professional knowledge, be practical and theoretical, be provided by authorized persons (Ekinici, 1990). The Akhi system can be defined as a morality school that seeks to improve social welfare and ensure social peace (Köksal, 2007).

While the system describes the continuity of the trainings as from the cradle to the grave, it divides the trainings into two as theoretical and practical. Theoretical trainings are divided into three:

- Vocational education
- Social education
- Education on moral rules.

Applied trainings are on-the-job trainings.

One of the differences between TrQMS and the other quality management systems is that the trainings both include professional trainings and the trainings that are performed as systematical as professional trainings to enhance the social life of employees. TrQMS seeks to make their employees to be successful both in their business and social life. This structure has a lot to offer:

- Enhances the sense of belonging (commitment to work and workplace) among employees
- Increases the performance of employees who are successful in their social life, through trainings other than professional ones
- Supports the communication/interaction between employees
- Increases the creativity of employees
- Extends the vision of employees
- Contributes to the establishment of information society.

Knowledge Management

When used appropriately and sufficiently, knowledge improves the quality of products or services and allows for the effective (efficient) management of the relevant process. Too much information, like too little, can cause damage to the process. Mohanty et al., (2006) defines knowledge as "the fact or condition of knowing something with a considerable degree of familiarity through experience, association or contact." In general, researchers state that knowledge manifests itself in two (Dinçmen, 2009) or three (Mohanty et al., 2006) ways. These are explicit, tacit, and implicit knowledge.

Explicit knowledge is that which is stated in detail and leaves nothing merely implied. It is termed "codified" or "formal" knowledge. Tacit knowledge is that which is understood, implied and

exists without being stated (Mohanty et al., 2006). Implicit knowledge is hidden in one's social relations or mind (Mohanty et al., 2006) and it takes a long time and is difficult to form implicit knowledge. Factors such as experience, observation and intuition (when not written), which build up over time, create implicit knowledge. For that reason, implicit knowledge is valuable. However, in order to increase the added value, this knowledge should be converted to explicit knowledge, i.e. it should be recorded and made available to other individuals.

In this sense, while valuable implicit knowledge is converted into explicit knowledge and recorded in TrQMS, the source from which the implicit knowledge was obtained (the individual who are our stakeholder) is always honored. This paves the way for more implicit knowledge.

One of the best examples of the recording of knowledge in Turkish history is the Orkhon inscriptions.

According to Dinçmen (2009), "As stated by many managers, the more attention you pay to the principles of *knowledge management* in the preparation and implementation of strategic business plans is, the more successful you would be."

Various empirical studies carried out by many researchers have showed that the efficient use of knowledge management increases the market share of the organization and thus the profitability by decreasing the cost and enhancing the efficiency of learning (of the organization and stakeholders). Similarly, these studies point out that it enhances the interaction between stakeholders and the organizational commitment of employees, leads to increased responsiveness to customers, facilitates decision-making, ensures rapid adaptation to change, increases the quality (İpçioğlu and Erdoğan, 2005).

The principles of knowledge management should be followed in TrQMS for strategic success. Knowledge management includes not only the management of (available) information, but also processes such as knowledge development, recording (the process of converting implicit knowledge into explicit knowledge), protection, planning and use. Information, which covers a broad area, should be managed from a single unit.

Continuous Improvement

Changing and developing market and increasingly competitive conditions require organizations to implement various methods to adapt to their environment quickly, to benefit from changes, to be least affected by unexpected developments, to sustain development, improvement and success, and to control time and costs as well as quality, in short, to survive in the market. One of these methods is continuous improvement. Today's competitive conditions and changing customer expectations entail organizations to improve themselves continuously. Studies show that with continuous improvement, stakeholder satisfaction has increased.

TrQMS seeks small but consistent improvement/developments, rather than large improvement/developments. The same philosophy can be seen in Islam as well. The Islamic Prophet Muhammad once said: "He whose two days are equal is in loss." The great Turkish leader, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, mentions a relevant point: "The greatest life principle is: today I am better than yesterday; tomorrow I will be better than today." As obvious in both statements, TrQMS aims to make *continuous improvement a philosophy of life*.

The critical method to achieve continuous improvement in TrQMS is the collective work. The team of collective work, which follows a proactive approach to solve problems, is a problem prevention and resolution team on a volunteer basis. That is, while problem prevention teams focus on the solution of a problem after it occurs, "collective work" strikes to prevent a problem before it occurs. The focus of collective work is to take measures to prevent problems and to create solutions.

Unlimited Service to the Community

The service provided to the society must be unconditional, unlimited and have high-added value. One of the characteristics of the Turkish culture is solidarity. In TrQMS, organizations allow for systematic service to the society and the continuity of this service is of importance. The service must be unconditional, unlimited and add value to the society. Organizations should understand that each project that adds value to the society add value to them too.

One of the activities that serve the society in the Turkish culture, which recognizes the importance of knowledge, is the establishment of an information society. All parties presenting, receiving and using information are responsible for the establishment of an information society in TrQMS. Organizations should strive for the recognition of information by the society and ensure that information enters the level of consciousness. This can be considered as an important community service project.

Information society “is a society that recognizes the value and power of knowledge and actively uses information technologies.” Although the transition from the information age to the information society is not an easy process, education plays a critical role in this transition. Universities have a great role in the formation of an information society (Tonta, 1999). Thus, joint efforts with universities should be given importance and information transfer from universities to business life should be achieved. This allows for mutual development. In this regard, Köksal (2008) expressed his views as follows: “*The information society* created in the world seeks not only material production or capital, but also information production. Information production marks the beginning of a growth and development process for entrepreneurs, craftsmen and artisans.”

Sharing information with the society and increasing their level of knowledge and awareness would have a positive effect on business life as well.

Overview and Conclusion

The system proposed by examining the Ancient Turkish culture and Islamic Sufi tradition and the Akhi Order nourished from them and making inferences, has been named the Turkish Quality Management System(TrQMS). It was not focused on the degenerated culture while this system was being designed. However the calibration is carried out with the reference measurement device which is definitely accurate in order to make the correct measurement in the quality systems, the reference points of the proposed system are ancient Turkish culture and the Akhi Order.

Management systems widely applied in organizations can be listed as quality, environment, knowledge safety, food safety, occupational health and safety. The decision for management system depends on the added value it would provide to the organization (Kuru et al. 2012). It can be argued that the principles of TrQMS will create value and ensure business excellence for the related companies. This system, which enriches other QMSs through this interaction, seems to increase productivity in practice.

In conclusion, the TrQMS, when integrated with other available quality management systems and excellence models, has the potential to make a great success. The difference between TrQMS with complementary features of quality management systems and other QMSs is as follows:

1. Its greatest difference is that it focuses on human and thus moral rules, which are created to make people happy, are a priority in the system. Unlike the systems that lead to loneliness, unhappiness, alienation with oneself and one's own society, this system is truly human-oriented and addresses human spirit.

2. The quality management systems were control-based in the firsthand and process-based subsequently. Nowadays, it is experienced that process and risk-based quality management systems have been designed. However one of its most important differences of TrQMS with other quality management systems is that it pays attention to and incorporates moral rules.
3. Also, the trainings offered by TrQMS are not limited to professional trainings and the trainings aimed at enhancing the social life of employees are performed as systematical as these professional trainings.
4. With its philosophy requiring unconditional service to the society, TrQMS is indeed relevant to all segments of society.
5. TrQMS is a system that performs a quality evaluation not only for the institution but also for the employees at that institution. The employees are individually subject to evaluation, which guarantees the working qualifications of the employees in a TrQMS and their compliance with TrQMS principles.
6. Merit is valued by all businesses, but it is included in TrQMS as a principle so that it cannot be overlooked.

Also, there is an increasing number of studies on artificial intelligence. These studies are significantly of use to people and alarm them at the same time. In that regard, studies on artificial intelligence should be accredited through a morality-based quality management system, which can relieve people's minds.

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