QUALITY & CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN THE MIDST OF THE CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY OF BANKS

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Abstract
On the saturated market area by the banking service offers, the interest rate isn't certainly the only factor which determines the customers' freedom choice between formal and informal because certainly it keeps in touch with the other factors such as the flexibility of loan terms is at stake understanding of the customers' habits and their expectations that are essential to understand their perception of the banking products quality. This paper aims the banks' contribution to develop a process of financial inclusion of the target-groups of population based on the social responsibility of banks because, we consider that a sustained financial inclusion can be achieved only when the banks give high quality services focused to the customers' or clients' needs. The financial habits complexity of the target-customers and the deep connection between financial practices and codes of society, may promote to a vision about the financial services quality very unconventionally. The evaluation of financial services quality is very complex and the consumers/clients don't always the same standard of the evaluation criteria, reason for which the banks must find a vector which proves to be the link between the prevention non-quality services and the customers' satisfaction that determines their loyalty to the bank. Thus the performance on the market become the result of the Quality management implementation-vector that orientates the stakeholders towards client and environment and the mission of the bank as a responsible company will be full attend.
Keywords: Services quality, Sustainable responsibility, Marketing vision focus to client, Total quality.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Lisbon Summit conclusion focused a new European social model made priority the social integration and the need to action by investing in people and the fight against social exclusion maintaining a good macroeconomic policy to sustainability growth.

Financial inclusion process may be considered as the primary mission of the banks and certainly, this mission can't be achieved, efficiently, if the services aren't tailored according to the target-consumers' needs.

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Despite "social responsibility" of the banks to locate primarily in financial inclusion target populations and the tool is strongly associated with an objective of the struggle against poverty and its positive effects to reduce the poverty should not overshadow its potential as a tool financially in expanding access to financial services (Servet, 2009).

By this reason, in our opinion, the banking services quality is a key-criterion to assess the banks' social corporate responsibility even if it isn't easy to define and assess the service quality. So, to provide the appropriate services requirements, to know the customers and their expectations are also very accustomed to the informal financial relationships (Collins et al., 2009).

The complexity of the financial habits of the target-groups and the deep connection between financial practices and codes of society then likely promote a divergence regarding the perception of the quality between service providers and their customers (Guérin, 2011).

The multidimensional nature of the definition concerning the service quality, highlighted by the authors specialists in Quality management (Callon et al, 2000) and services economy also (J. Gadrey, 1996) aims a lot of sense in the case of banking services, and given this thing, the social performance indicators are considerate logically as a part of the social responsibility evaluation made by the banks.

We considered still useful that the banks must improve their social responsibility into the business area, focus to banking services' quality assessment and due to this reason we will explore the benefits and the challenges interlinking ages of this analytical approach.

2. A THEORETICAL APPROACH OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) concept is defined as "a set of institutionalized standards and rules" and, even a still that's linking the organizational activities and questions about the future of the planet and the concept of sustainable development which encompasses both the economic and social environment (Depuis and Le Bas, 2006). The concept of CSR is widely regarded as a voluntary business contribution to the societal guiding model of sustainable development and an active corporate engagement (e.g. European Commission 2001, 2002) that goes beyond legal compliance (European Commission, 2008b).

CSR reveals a moral and ethical character that explains a consensus of all those who are related (see figure 1).

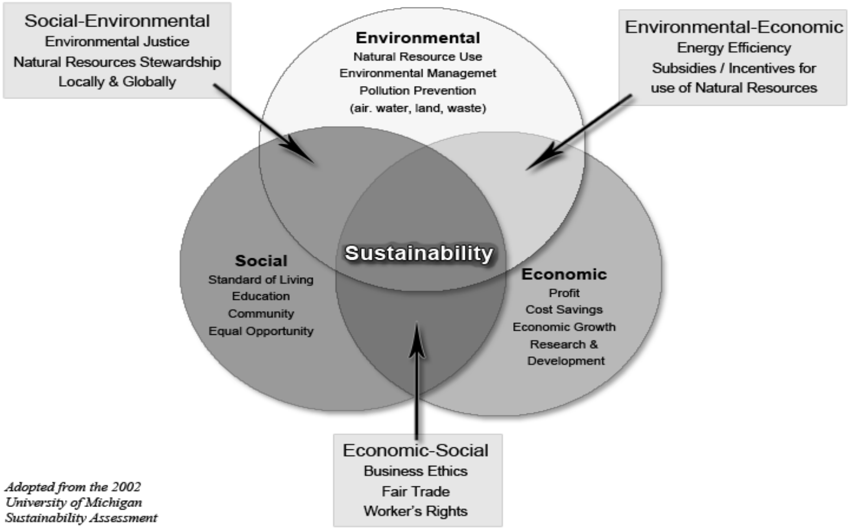

FIGURE 1.SUSTAINABILITY AREAS

According to "stakeholders theory", a responsible company takes into account the expectations of all parties addictive in the creation of wealth (Bloy et al., 2011), that they may be investors, employees, customers, suppliers, managers or social community members (e.g. government, civil society, etc.).

The financial services sector, the CSR of the banks it's analyzing the relationship within the socio-economic objectives, particularly social inclusion (De Serres and Roux, 2006).

Indeed, it proved during nowadays, into the modern services economy, the financial services needs may be lack of financial exclusion and social exclusion also (Servet, 2006). As such, the actions promoted by the financial organizations, such as the banks have a social character that may provide to a social inclusion extend.

CSR refocus to quality in the banking services trade and provides a necessity when one wishes to disambiguate this notion and, indeed, it's common that there's a confusion in some areas, regarding "social corporate responsibility" of the banks and it may be an inherently confusion that seems significant in the bank's case.

A brief review of the theoretical approach of SCR concept allows us to distinguish between the SCR in the media and the intrinsic responsibility of the banking institutions following the second section, by exposing on one side the limits of the evaluation of the SCR of the banking sector as it's currently done through the social performance indicators. On the other hand, the need to regrame this evaluation leads us to consider the interests and challenges of our proposal through social responsibility who can appreciate the quality of the services offered.

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2.1. Corporate Social Responsibility measured by the banks

The struggle against poverty involves a social, ethical and moral connotation, which explains why the church membership are involving into the problem promoted by the micro credit (Lelart, 2010).

While the fight against poverty has contributed to a positive media image of microfinance, its true capabilities, which can not go beyond those of any financial institution, were obscured.

The SCR concept must be incorporated into the banks' activities because it recognizes that the financial exclusion extent of the developing countries or banking rate rarely it's affecting 20% of the population, and so, it's easy to understand that the poor and non-poor are affected by this exclusion banking (Ballet, 2010).

SCR of the banking sector can be defined "as its contribution to financial inclusion, it must be understood in the provisions' terms in financial services that meet the needs effectively and efficiently of the different population categories, to costs in according to their abilities to cover it" (Servet, 2009).

In these conditions the gap between the social responsibility of the organizations & satisfaction of their clients must be reduce fully.

The failure impact studies to prove that the actual efforts of the banking institutions into the struggle against poverty have deteriorated the bank's image of Romania which confirms the opinion expressed during the recent years that "... companies that build on enhancing their image on the public space as an organization focus to clients and environment improve their social performance". They can be more prone to assigning a higher degree of responsibility than others" (Ballet, 2010).

CSR measurement may be attended as a major challenge by all stakeholders of the organization. Indeed, a commitment to a responsible approach by a company can be limited to speeches, measurable evidence that are always necessary and yet measure social responsibility is nothing obvious (Gond and Igalens, 2012).

Due to the complexity of the CSR concept, the multiplicity of the approaches and subjectivity of its components (e.g. ethical, moral, cultural), it is difficult to reach and obtain valid measures of convergent social responsibility in a given sector.

The social performance indicators' implementation was particularly followed in banks due, no doubt, the social mission devoted to the tool from the start. These indicators reflect the difficulties to quantify the CSR mentioned above, the concept's complexity and its multiple dimensions too.

The social mission combination with a financial objective of the organizational performance has been the goal of the modern microfinance history and must observe that the social mission definition isn't unique, IT springs with a plurality of possible objectives for the banking institutions (Copestake, 2007).

Measuring social performance takes a broad view of the social mission of the banks it covers both, financial inclusion, diversity of services and targeting low-income populations.

Despite a lack of consensus on this measure, the loan portfolio size, the number of borrowers, the average loan measures are most commonly used in the economic sciences literature (Mersland, Strom, R., 2009; Cull R., Demirguc - Kunt A.&J. Morduch, 2008). During the last years, the indicators which measure the social performance are part of a logical assessment of the corporate responsibility. The stakeholder approach is fully integrated with an emphasis on the customer as well as a multidimensional design to the banks' responsibility.

Thus, the social performance indicator proposed by CERISE is reaching 4 dimensions (http://www.cerise-microfinance.org): customers (clients) according to the idea that the banking services proposed to the poorest and most marginalized costumers bring full more effective gains over the community; quality service – the measurement of the service adaptation degree in terms of diversity of the range of banking services, cost compared to the level of interest rates, or even customer retention rate (loyal clients); "empowerment" to provide the economic benefits to the inner clients of the organization too; corporate responsibility to attend fully the interests of all our clients (stakeholders) of the banks (e.g. the indebtedness prevention by overdraft, transparency of prices or the conflicts management between the bank institution & stakeholders).

Indeed, the social objective highly implicit and oral isn't always explicitly written in the mission as defined into the statutes of organizations.

Pistelli et al. (2011) show that there's a difference between the mission mentioned in the organizational statute, and the statements of agents - such as access to financial services and financial inclusion objectives are most often written while development and the struggle against poverty. Although 85% report follows this objective and only 10% can give figures on the poverty level of their clients.

To design into a single indicator these elements concerning service liability means that the services to the poor persons than the intrinsic responsibility- to provide the services tailored responsibly makes a fairly full and rich. However, this wealth may also limit its validity as a simple criterion for assessing social responsibility of the banking sector.

Particularly, it's difficultly to carry out the comparisons between banking institutions through scores obtained by a multiple indicator also due by two main causes:

a) Diversity of the objectives and tasks of the banking institutions because the statutes and contexts of their activity are very different. Such a score conceals disparities do not allow easily decide on the involvement of an institution over another in a responsible.

b) Data collecting to create this indicator, and indeed, even if the information is collected by an external actor, banks are the main source mobilized.

Social performance is an indicator which is supply-oriented, which isn't expected to collect the views of customers, for example. A comprehensive measure of social responsibility requires, however, the multi stakeholder involvement and a comparison from different points of view (Gond and Igalens, 2012).

To give greater clarity, a separate analysis of scores by dimension seems to us to be a good first step. Then, the adaptation of services to the diverse needs of customers is the key point of approach social and solidarity in the bank, the dimension of the quality of banking products and services seems to us to be the most able to embody a convergence criterion evaluation of the social responsibility of the bank.

This focus to quality, however, requires a definition of the quality of the services accepted by the various stakeholders, especially customers.

Quality in terms of the customers, in our opinion, it's a major challenge because, may design possible differences between banks and their customers and the definition of the quality in banking services make this task very complex (Constantinescu, 2007: 11):

a. Quality = "the company's ability to supply satisfaction to their clients" (Caby and Jambart).

b. Quality = "meeting the client's expectations based on the non quality prevention" (Rosander).

c. Quality = "an optimal synthesis of the main characteristics that express the degree of usefulness in meeting the stated or implied needs" (I. Stanciu).

d. Quality = "the ability to satisfy the clients' needs or to attend that the product / service is successful to the consumer's expectations" (J. Juran). By this definition of the quality concept J.Juran adds a nuance and provides an important complementary - "employment ability" - in thus highlighting the axiom: "excellent results regarding the performance for customers, staff and the company also obtained through partnerships, resources and processes in place" (see figure 2).

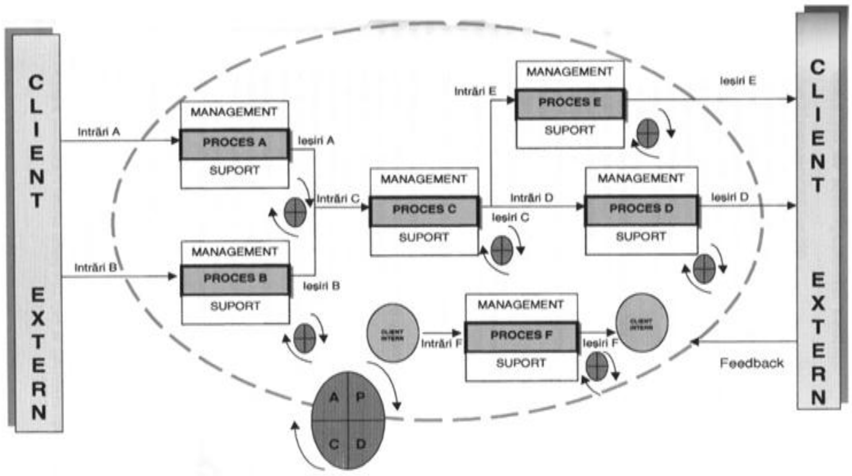

FIGURE 2 - QUALITY PROCESS INTO THE ORGANIZATION
Source: Constantinescu, 2007:121

According to ISO 9000:2000 standard a Quality Management System (QSM) is "an organizational structure of responsibilities, activities, resources and events which together provide the implementation of procedures and methods to ensure the capacity of an organization to fulfill the quality requirements" (see figure 3).

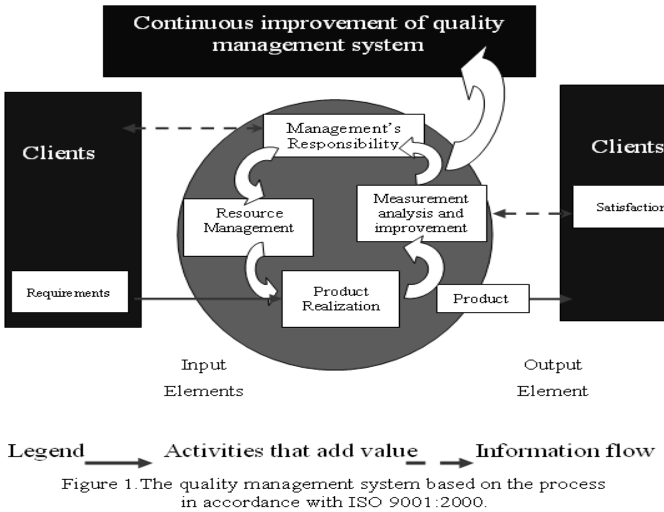

FIGURE 3 - QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM ACCORDING TO STANDARD ISO 9000:2000

In November 2008, ISO 9000:2000 standard was changed with the standard ISO 9000:2008. All organizations certified up to this moment are obliged to obtain a new certificate of their QMS up to 2010 according to ISO 9001: 2008, which introduced the changes designated to ensure the correlation with the ISO14001 demands as reference standard. There have also been introduced changes that lead to the correlation with the requirements of ISO: 14001, the referential to environmental management systems of the organization, to ensure as useful as possible the implementation of the integrate management system.

Coordination focus to customer allows the distributor and manufacturers to meet and devote the consumer/customer, integrate the client as an active player of the distribution channel to provide an "efficient consumer response”.

Into the companies focused to marketing and based on quality, the customers/clients become the manufacturer of satisfaction and focus the organizational actions to two strategic axes:

a. New characteristic features of the process along the supply chain of the banking services to deliver satisfaction to our clients.

b. Organizational sustainable competitive advantage on long time.

3. INSEPARABLE BINOMIAL: TQM & CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE BANKING SERVICE SECTOR

The strategic option to implement Total Quality management (TQM) to the all organizational levels allows the banks to design a quality policy that will oblige the banking providers to implement into company a marketing vision focus to clients.

Having as objective the “satisfaction of the customer groups” the organizations which are implementing TQM into their activity prove their abilities to mix the six dimensions (QVTLRA): Q - quality services; V - demanded quantity; T - time wanted; L - indicated place; R - efficient and required relationships; A - administrative system without errors starting with the order UP to the service delivery to theirs clients.

“Block scheme of quality processes” outlines two types of necessary structures (Constantinescu, 2011):

a) Afferent structures exclusively to process.

b) Coordination of the all organizational structures – that carry out and administrate the inner relationships “customer-supplier” (between the inner processes of supplier) and the external ones “customer-supplier”(between customer and company).

Thus:

A. All personnel is involved into the inner relationships “customer-supplier”.

B. The goal is to supply a product/service, either as part of institution (another process) or outside of this (customer).

C. Hierarchical structure (specifically to old organization) has been replaced with a new multiple structure that corresponds to a well defined process.

D. Same employers can be very well involved into more processes assuming including coordination tasks. Its position depends on the process at which it takes part; if a process becomes useless, the work post will be suppressed.

New marketing vision by the enterprise must involve "the team" that's able to growth the potential resources of the organization.

The human resource is a strategic vector that may improve the quality performance of the company and, also the Human Resources management missions can promote two polls: professional and financial (see figure 4).

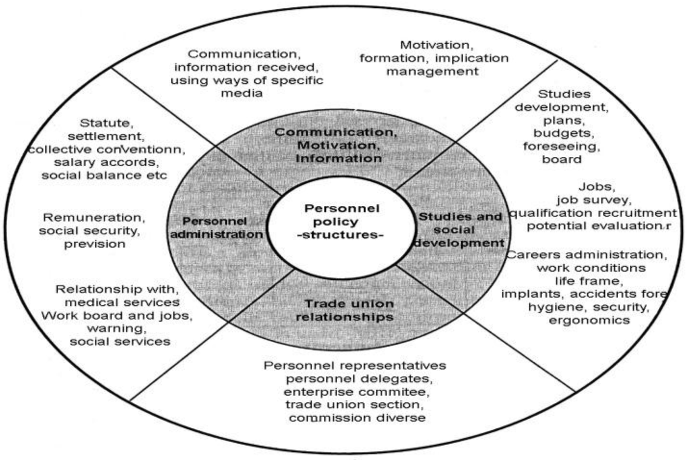

FIGURE 4 - HUMAN RESOURCE MISSIONS, AFTER STAFF APEC AGENCY OF FRANCE
Source: Constantinescu, 2007: 134

"Quality &Total Quality & TQM" relationship stands out:

a) Quality = continuous satisfaction of the consumers/costumer's requirements.

b) Total Quality =continuous satisfaction of customer's requirements at minimal level.

c) TQM = satisfying these requirements by company is carried out with the implication of the all employees of the organization, but with minimal efforts (see figure 5).

Total Quality Management regards (Constantinescu, 2007):

1) "Orientation to customer" vision which means a marketing integrative vision into the whole activity of company.

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2) Internalization of relationship between "customer –supplier" as a result of the inner marketing vision implementation into organization level that tends towards Total Quality.

3) TQM promotes an integrated management system focus to quality of the all key elements of all processes of the enterprise.

4) Keep all processes under control to quality assurance by preventive actions systematically developed conditions to a great extent effective achievement of a "zero-defects principle" or "everything must be well done first time and each time".

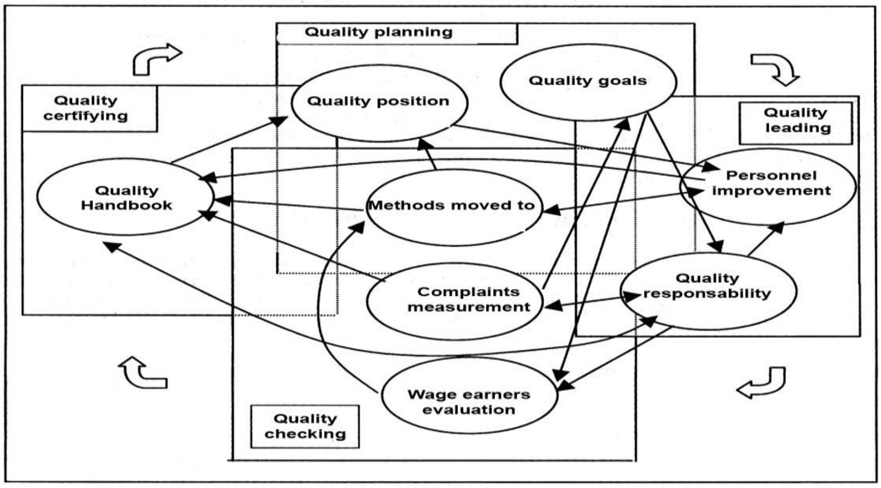

FIGURE 5 - BASIC INSTRUMENTS' INTERCONNECTIONS BY TQM
Source: Constantinescu, 2007: 149

Total Quality involves a specific mindset, thus implementing the concept of total quality to the organization produces specific positive effects to (Stanciu, 2004):

a) Customers - is appreciated the degree of loyalty/fidelity towards the offer of the company.

b) Organization – the added value will be increased and the non-quality costs REDUCED, the brand reputation and the image of the company will be assessed.

c) Management –the prevention and decrease the disruption will increase.

The inner customers' loyalty and the external clients, also, are a component of the objectives system of the enterprise is achieved through an offer oriented to customer and customer satisfaction performance against the supplier.

If the "cause – effect" relationship between QMS focuses to customer and the customer satisfaction is positive, then the customer expectations were exceeded and him loyalty can be developed toward the product or the services providers and the “cause - effect chain” is closed by the market performance of the company.

An efficient marketing strategy focused to clients provides the positive effects over the company costs. It optimizes the organizational effort to reduce the related costs to conducting relations with customers by focusing the company's marketing activities, primarily to the loyal customers. In this way the non quality costs are reduced through involving customers in the creative process and product development. It may be also possible to obtain a reduction of the transactional costs economy through new customer interaction solutions and other market players.

As a business strategy promoted firstly on the industrial products market (B2B), later Total Quality strategy will raise the interest of practitioners and address long-term relational exchanges to the C2C markets also.

4. CONCLUSION

Starting with the Lisbon Summit in 2000, CSR in Europe has become a main concern, as a result of the set goals: “maintenance of a sustainable economic growth, greater social cohesion and a more competitive knowledge-based on economy overall”. Since the private sector plays a major role in achieving these objectives, the European Council particularly stressed out the social responsibility of companies.

CSR is an emergence concept that has provided the changes into society and the business strategy of the companies since the beginning of the XXIst Century and its supposed new responsibilities to the company/organization. The CSR proposes to identify, understand and improve the balance between entrepreneurship and ethical practices in business.

By this reason CSR concept took a global dimension and, in fact, a growing number of European companies have developed their activities in several countries gaining profit due to the opening of markets. Globalization and trade relations, investment and sustainable development have become key points in the business strategy for social responsibility. Knowledge of the issues and concerns related to this concept will promote the investments that will develop cooperation and technology transfer between the countries of the world. This approach is expected to support smart, sustainable and inclusive growth as stated in the Europe 2020 Strategy.

The new “Europe 2020 Strategy” developed a vision about the solutions how the European Union can be turned into a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy delivering high levels of employment,

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productivity and social cohesion and CSR is identified as a key element in ensuring long-term employee and consumer trust.

Faced with these many challenges and opportunities, the companies are positioning them -selves as major force to positive climate changes, indeed to the point where sustainability is being welcomed as a listing requirement for the enterprises.

CSR European Forum (2004) established by the European Commission initiative defines CSR as "a concept where companies integrate, voluntarily, social and ecological aspects into their business operations and into interaction with their stakeholders. CSR is complementary to specific approaches to ensure greater social and environmental performance and shouldn’t be seen as a substitute or a legislative commission of the responsibilities of public companies, which are still mainly in regard to governments" (Final Resultants and Recommendation of European Multi-Stakeholder Forum to CSR).

The change process by the Total Quality implementation into companies is finally designed by the integration of two dimensions: size of outs-puts/benefits and organizational performance; marketing axe to improve the clients’ satisfaction.

In our opinion, Total Quality may be a new source of the competitive advantage for the bank organization because attend:

a) Superior abilities of the stuff with higher responsibilities that distinguishes it from the their concurrent and **key business skills** of the firm which represents the areas where the company excels to provide its customers a superior value that the one provided by the competition, supported by a customer culture specific to the business.

b) Resources that allowed to organize to pursue their ability and experience, as an expression of the learning process held by the company in international business, including marketing activity.

c) Excellence in marketing that it will provide a symmetrical treatment of all inner and external clients.

d) Enterprise competitive ability as a function of the innovation differentiation, penetration and response speed that a business vision which can obtain benefits on the education services market.

The top management may provide a favourable influence into company's activities on the international market by the reason that it can implement into the business processes at the all organizational levels a new performance vector called Total Quality.

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