

Total Quality Management And Organizations Performance. A Case Study Of Mukono Municipality Mukono District.

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Abstract

The aim of the study was to examine the relationship between TQM and organizational performance in the utility Mukono municipality TQM was operationalized into three dimensions: top management commitment, process management and quality data reporting. Specifically, the study sought to examine the relationships between: top management commitment and organization performance; process management and organization performance, and quality data reporting and organization performance. A cross-sectional survey design was used and both quantitative and qualitative data were collected using questionnaires and interviews from a sample of 32 respondents, in addition to documentary reviews. Descriptive analysis revealed a lot of variations in responses with regard to: visible leadership, timely recognition and appreciation, authority to correct problems, sharing of quality data and motivation as shown by the SD of: 1.044, 1.012, 1.167, 1.020 and 1.029 respectively. Inferential analysis revealed positive and significant correlations among the TQM dimensions and organization performance ($r = .728$, $p < .05$ for top management commitment; $r = .851$, $p < .05$ for process management and $r = .763$, $p < .05$ for quality data reporting). The above-mentioned dimensions explained 74.6% variance in organization performance. The study recommended a well-built mechanism for recognition, appreciation and motivation; the need for continuous training and provision of a certain degree of autonomy to personnel in correcting problems deemed to affect achievement of set standards and targets. To increase organization performance, the TQM dimensions should be applied simultaneously, with careful allocation of resources if systems are to be optimized. Within the scope of this study, generalizability of findings would be higher if there was a larger sample size.

Keywords: Quality, Management, Organizations and Performance

Background of the study

Operations management as a management discipline involved the effective and efficient conversion of inputs into outputs, i.e. the conversion process. The process mainly involved the management of people, products, parts and programs (Ivan et al., 2023). Nowadays, if a company did not create a competitive advantage in the market, surviving the competition was a difficult task. This turnaround can be attributed to the competitive environment due to globalization and the increased adoption of the operations management discipline (T. Christopher, 2022). As a result, many firms have sought to create a competitive advantage over others by establishing a set of operational management objectives based on quality, speed, reliability, flexibility and cost. This collectively defined operational performance. In addition, over the years, many firms have sought to improve their performance, and one of the ways to do so is through the adoption of total quality management (TQM) practices (Ntirandekura, Ainebyoona, et al., 2022).

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TQM was a management approach that originated in the 1950s and became increasingly popular from the early 1980s (Promise et al., 2024). Total quality was a description of the culture, attitude and organization of a company that strives to provide customers with products and services that meet their needs. The culture required quality in all aspects of the company's operations in Mukono Municipality, with processes carried out first and defects and waste removed from operations (Racheal, Kazaara et al., 2023).

Total quality management, TQM was a method by which management and employees could engage in continuous improvement in the production of goods and services. It is a combination of quality and management tools aimed at increasing trade and reducing losses due to waste (Racheal, Enock et al., 2023). TQM practices were important to ensure customer satisfaction by improving product performance and sustained towards the organization. The aim of this study was to analyze the relationship between TQM practices, process innovation and employee performance (Margaret & Kazaara, 2024). Six critical success factors of TQM were identified in this study, namely customer focus, leadership, training, teamwork, communication and top management (Benard, 2023).

Statement of the Problem

Total quality management in Mukono municipality consists of management, employees, workforce and suppliers (Julius, 2024). The income and skills gained by this sector contribute to faster national income growth; expanding the system contributes to a more equal sharing of national income (Okello, 2014). The quality of firms' performance can be improved by implementing quality management models such as Total Quality Management (Varghese, 2016). TQM consists of quality control, quality control assurance in Mukono Municipality (Connor 2020), (Gracious, 2023). However, total quality management (TQM) promotes customer satisfaction, employee involvement, increased market share, productivity, less waste of resources, and improved processes (Ntirandekura & Christopher, 2022).

Despite the fact that TQM total quality management leads to increased costs, customer dissatisfaction, among others, it is difficult and time-consuming (Sophie & Crispus, 2024). Past studies have also focused on the manufacturing industry, but little has been done (F. Christopher et al., 2022). This confirms that there is very limited literature on the impact of TQ practices on other organizations. The study therefore seeks to determine the impact of TQM practices on organizational performance using a case study of Mukono Village, Mukono District (Ntirandekura, Friday, et al., 2022).

Specific Objectives

1. To determine the effect of top management commitment (TMC) on organizational performance.
2. To examine the effect of customer focused (CF) on organizational performance.
3. To assess the effect of employee involvement (EI) on organizational performance.

Study Hypotheses

Ho₁: There was no significant relationship between top Management commitment (TMC) and Organizational performance.

Ho₂: There was no significant relationship between customer focus (CF) and organizational performance.

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H03: There was no significant relationship between employee involvement (EI) and organizational performance.

Methodology

The study adopted an explanatory research design. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2014) an explanatory research design is one which collects data in order to test hypothesis or to answer questions concerning the current status of the subjects under study (Olanrewaju & Abiodun, 2021). An explanatory research design is an attempt to collect data from members of a population in order to determine the current status of that population with respect to one or more variables (Olanrewaju et al., 2021b). The ultimate goal is to learn about a large population by surveying a sample of that population that was used to explain what is in existence in respect to conditions or variables that are found in a given situation without influencing the variables (Olanrewaju et al., 2021a). The study is to establish the correlation and causal relationship between total quality management practices and performance of an organization.

This study was carried out at Platform for labour actions Uganda–Kampala branch. Mukono Municipality was a national civil society organization founded in 2000 (Olanrewaju et al., 2021b). PLA focused on promoting and protecting the rights of vulnerable and marginalized workers through empowerment of communities and individuals in Uganda. They target women, youth, and children. The population of the study comprised of CEO, head of departments of and employees from different departments (Nafiu et al., 2013).

The sample size was comprised of 80 Employees and heads of department. The following formula shall be used,

$$n = \frac{Z^2 PQ}{d^2}$$

Where n was the desired sample size (if the target population is greater than 10,000)

Q is 1-p

Z was the standard normal deviate at the required confidence level

p-was the proportion in the target population estimated to have characteristics being measured

d-was the level of statistical significance set

According to (Anwar et al., 2022) simple random sampling was a subset of individuals chosen from a larger set in which a subset of individuals are chosen randomly ,all with the same probability .it is used to choose a sample from a large population (Nafiu et al., 2012). This method works if there was an equal chance that any of the subjects in a population was chosen .The following are the advantages of Simple random; Lack of Bias, The use of simple random sampling removes all hints of bias ,or at least it should simplicity ,its name implies ,producing a simple random sample was much less complicated than other methods, Less knowledge required (Aslam et al., 2022).

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Total Quality Management practices were measured using scalar developed by (Nafiu & Ph, 2012). A measurement method for organization performance developed by the researcher and internal consistency reliability should be above 0.6 (Jallow et al., 2022). Data was screened to ensure that responses are legible and understandable and that responses are within an acceptable range and are complete. Collected data will be coded and entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences Program for analysis (Nelson et al., 2022). The analysis was done in three stages. The first stage involved checking data reliability by applying Cronbach's Alpha (α) (Nelson et al., 2022).

RESULTS

Table 1: Respondents' Opinions on Top Management Commitment

	Statement	n	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	SD
1	Top management provides visible leadership in maintaining an environment that supports operational performance.	31	2	0	3	14	12	4.097	1.044
2	Top management has set clear quality objectives for the company.	31	0	0	2	14	15	4.419	.620
3	Top management provides training on how to achieve the set objectives.	31	0	0	1	19	11	4.322	.540
4	Top management provides timely recognition and appreciation of workers' efforts and successes.	31	0	6	4	15	6	3.677	1.012
5	Top management allocates enough organizational resources (e.g., finances, people, time, and equipment) to improving operational performance.	31	0	1	1	18	11	4.258	.681
6	Top management consistently participates in activities to improve operational performance at the plant.	31	0	1	3	21	6	4.032	.657
7	Top management is involved with customers and suppliers.	31	0	0	6	14	11	4.161	.735
8	Top management acts on suggestions to improve operational performance at the plant.	31	0	2	3	18	8	4.032	.795

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9	Top management ensures that every worker knows the company's mission and objectives.	31	0	0	3	18	10	4.226	.617
10	Top management strongly promotes staff involvement in quality management and improvement activities.	31	0	0	3	20	8	4.161	.583

Source: Primary Data (2017)

From Table 1, majority, 83.9% (26) of the respondents agreed that top management provides visible leadership that supports operational performance at the plant (mean = 4.097, SD = 1.044). 6.5% (2) of the respondents disagreed with the statement while 9.7% (3) of the respondents were not sure. The general agreement with the statement was supplemented by information from key informant interviews where it was discovered that leaders' influence is evident in ensuring equipment is available and policies are instituted. However, the high standard deviation (SD = 1.044) was an indication of varied responses pertaining the element, an expression of the broad views respondents had about visible leadership (Margaret & Kazaara, 2024).

About setting clear quality objectives for the company, 93.5% (29) of the respondents agreed that top management does this (mean = 4.419, SD = .620). This trend was supported by the quality and performance objectives pinned up on noticeboards at the premises. Only 6.5% (2) of the respondents were not sure of the statement. None of the respondents disagreed with the statement though (Lydia et al., 2024).

Furthermore, the majority 96.8% (30) of respondents agreed that top management provides training on how to achieve the set quality objectives (mean = 4.322, SD = .540) while only 1 respondent was not sure about this. The general agreement was in line with discoveries from interviews as it was noted that a series of quality management related workshops had been organized during the previous months.

When asked whether top management provides timely recognition and appreciation of workers' efforts and successes, 67.7% (21) of the respondents agreed (mean = 3.677, SD = 1.012), 12.9% (4) were not sure about this happening at the plant while 19.4% (6) of the respondents disagreed. Additionally, the high SD of 1.012 is an indication of the varied nature in the responses thus respondents expressed mixed views about this element (Margaret & Kazaara, 2024).

About allocating enough organizational resources to improving operational performance, the majority 93.5% (29) of respondents agreed as shown by mean of 4.258, SD of .681, that top management provides these and as discovered from interviews, top leadership ensured that personal protective equipment and manpower were readily available, especially during periods of many orders. Only 1 respondent was not sure if this really happened at the plant and 1 also disagreed with the statement.

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When asked whether top management consistently participates in activities to improve operational performance at the plant, still majority 87.1% (27) agreed (mean = 4.032, SD = .657), 9.7% (3) were not sure about this and only 1 respondent disagreed that this happens at the plant.

Majority, 80.6% (25) of the respondents agreed when asked whether top management is involved with customers and suppliers (mean = 4.161, SD = .735), 19.4% (6) respondents were not sure about this and none disagreed with the statement (Alex et al., 2023).

About top management acting on suggestions to improve operational performance at the plant, 83.9% (26) of the respondents agreed that this was true (mean = 4.032, SD = .795), 2 respondents disagreed while 3 were not sure about this.

When asked whether top management ensures that every worker knows the company's mission and objectives, 90.3% (28) of the respondents agreed (mean = 4.226, SD = .617) and only 3 were not sure this was the case at the plant. The general consensus from the questionnaire was further proved by a presence of the plant's objectives on several notice boards. This means that top management understands the danger if personnel were to „blindly operate with no driving forces hence the need to get everyone on board. About top management strongly promoting staff involvement in quality management and improvement activities, 90.3% (28) agreed (mean = 4.161, SD = .583) and still only 3 were not sure about this (Frank et al., 2023). No respondent expressed disagreement with the statement, an indication that at least top management understands the value personnel can add to the efforts to attain high levels of operational performance.

Table 2: Respondents' Opinion on Process Management

	Statement	n	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	SD
1	The plant has clearly documented procedures for managing its processes.	31	0	1	1	8	21	4.581	.720
2	All the processes at the plant follow some known standard.	31	0	1	1	10	19	4.516	.724
3	The procedures for quality assurances are implemented at the plant.	31	0	0	5	13	13	4.258	.729
4	All processes at the plant are clearly defined so that all workers understand how they work.	31	0	3	7	15	6	3.774	.884
5	All processes are designed to meet the set quality standards.	31	0	1	0	19	11	4.290	.643
6	Workers have enough training on achieving the set quality objectives.	31	0	3	4	18	6	3.871	.846

7	The workers involved in different processes know how to evaluate those processes.	31	1	0	8	19	3	3.742	.773
8	Workers have the authority to correct problems in their areas when quality standards are not being met.	31	3	6	7	12	3	3.194	1.167
9	The causes of all possible mistakes in the processes are identified and informed to all workers.	31	0	6	7	13	5	3.548	.995
10	Continuous improvement tools (brainstorming, check sheet and other statistical process control) are applied on regular basis.	31	0	5	9	13	4	3.516	.926

Source: Primary Data (2017)

The study also sought to find out the respondents' level of agreement with process management at the plant and 93.5% (29) of the respondents agreed that the plant has clearly documented procedures for managing its processes (mean = 4.581, SD = .720). This finding revealed the level of importance attached to processes at the plant. This was proved by the clearly written work procedures and work instructions for each section as was discovered from documentary reviews. 1 respondent was not sure this was the case and only 1 disagreed with the statement. When asked whether all the processes at the plant follow some known standard, still the majority 93.5% (29) of respondents agreed that this was the case (mean = 4.516, SD = .724) and the standard was the ISO 9001: 2015 Quality Management Standard and that the company had a product certificate issued by UNBS, as it was discovered from interviews and documentary reviews. Identical to the previous element, only 1 respondent disagreed and still 1 expressed uncertainty. About the plant implementing the procedures for quality assurance, 83.9% (26) of the respondents agreed that this was being done (mean = 4.258, SD = .759) while 16.1% (5) of the respondents were not sure about this. This level of uncertainty may be a reflection and wake up call for the plant to make such things as the work procedures and work instructions more readily available to all personnel at all times.

When asked whether all the processes at the plant are clearly defined so that all workers understand how they work, 67.7% (21) of the respondents were in agreement (mean = 3.774, SD = .884) and this was supported by the presence of work instructions for all the jobs. 22.6% (7) were not sure about this, an aspect which should be taken seriously by the plant to continuously train personnel and evaluate the level of understanding of these instructions. 9.7% (3) of the respondents disagreed that this was not the case. Majority 96.8% (30) of the respondents agreed that all processes are designed to meet the set quality standards (mean = 4.290, SD = .643) while only 1 respondent disagreed with the statement. This was an indication of personnel's understanding of the important link that exists between achieving set standards and effectively managing processes.

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About workers having enough training on achieving the set quality objectives, 77.4% (24) respondents agreed with the statement (mean = 3.871, SD = .846) however, 9.7% (3) of the respondents disagreed and 12.9% (4) were not sure if the training was really enough. The level of uncertainty among respondents therefore points to the need to increase training durations for personnel and even explore the option of having refresher sessions after a given period.

When asked whether the workers involved in different processes know how to evaluate those processes, 71% (22) of the respondents agreed with the statement (mean = 3.742, SD = .773), 25.8% (8) of the respondents were not sure this was the case while only 1 respondent disagreed.

Upon being asked whether workers have the authority to correct problems in their areas when quality standards are not being met, 48.4% (15) of the respondents agreed that this was true, nonetheless, 29% (9) of the respondents were in disagreement and 22.6% (7) were not sure whether this was the case. This particular element raises concern about the level of autonomy personnel have in making decisions on their own. As shown by the mean of 3.194 and high SD of 1.167, there were also a lot of variations among the responses. About all possible mistakes in the processes being identified and informed to all workers, 58.1% (18) of the respondents were in agreement with this (mean = 3.548, SD = .995), 22.6% (7) of the respondents were not sure and 19.4% (6) of the respondents disagreed. This particular finding also points to the need to continuously reorient personnel with all processes and their functionality.

When asked whether continuous improvement tools are applied on a regular basis, 54.8% (17) of the respondents agreed as shown by a mean of 3.516 and SD of .926. Nevertheless, this statistic reveals the need to engage personnel more in the use of continuous improvement tools during daily operations as shown by the 29% (9) that were not sure about this. 16.1% (5) of the respondents disagreed with the statement.

Table 3: Respondents' Opinion on Quality Data Reporting

	Statement	n	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	SD
1	The plant collects data about its operations on time	31	0	1	2	17	11	4.226	.717
2	The data collected is documented and shared with the rest of the team at the plant.	31	0	6	6	13	6	3.613	1.02
3	The plant continuously tries to improve the accuracy of data collected.	31	0	0	15	10	6	3.710	.783

4	The effective use of data is of an advantage to improving operational performance at the plant.	31	0	0	2	21	8	4.194	.543
5	The plant uses the data collected in decision making and planning.	31	0	0	10	12	9	3.968	.795
6	Workers are actively involved in determining what data are collected for the purpose of improving operational performance.	31	1	2	8	14	6	3.733	.980
7	The data collected is readily available to all the workers at the plant.	31	0	8	11	9	3	3.226	.956
8	The plant compares data about its Operations to that of other plants.	31	1	1	23	5	1	3.129	.670

Source: Primary Data (2017)

Table 3 shows respondents' opinion with quality data reporting at the plant. When asked whether the plant collects data about its operations on time, 90.3% (28) of the respondents agreed with the statement as shown by a mean of 4.226 and SD of .717. 6.45% (2) of the respondents were not sure this was the case and only 1 respondent disagreed. The level of agreement is an indication of the importance attached to managing both operational performance and quality at the plant through documenting, reporting and the active use of such kinds of data. When asked whether the data collected is documented and shared with the rest of the team at the plant, 61.3% (19) of the respondents agreed that this was always done as shown by a mean of 3.619. However, 19.4% (6) of the respondents disagreed and still an equal percentage expressed uncertainty about the statement. The high SD of 1.020 reveals the level of variations among the responses, an indication that however much data may be collected and documented; it may not be readily available for everyone.

About the plant continuously trying to improve the accuracy of the data collected, 51.6% (16) of the respondents agreed that this was always done (mean = 3.710, SD = .783). However, 48.4% (15) of the respondents were not sure about this but none of the respondents disagreed.

The majority 93.5% (29) of the respondents agreed that the effective use of data is of an advantage to improving operational performance at the plant (mean = 4.194, SD = .543), 6.5% (2) were not sure whether this was of an advantage and no respondents disagreed though.

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When asked whether the plant uses the data collected in decision making and planning, 67.7% (21) of the respondents agreed that it did, as shown by a mean of 3.968 and SD of .795, and 32.3% (10) were not sure about this. No respondents expressed disagreement. Asked whether the workers are actively involved in determining what data are collected for the purpose of improving operational performance, 64.5% (20) of the respondents agreed that indeed they were (mean = 3.733, SD =.980), 25.8% (8) were not sure and only 9.7% (3) of the respondents disagreed.

Table 4: Respondents' Opinion on Operational Performance

	Statement	n	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	SD
1	Measurement of operational performance is based on defined standards.	31	0	2	1	11	17	4.387	.844
2	The plant has set objectives known to everybody.	31	0	4	3	17	7	3.871	.922
3	The plant uses the extent to which its objectives are achieved to measure its efficiency levels.	31	0	1	9	17	4	3.774	.717
4	The quality program has improved the plant's operational performance in general.	31	0	0	5	20	6	4.032	.605
5	Efficiency of operations is used to measure performance at the plant.	31	0	1	8	18	4	3.807	.703
6	The quality program has helped reduce overall waste at the plant.	31	0	1	8	15	7	3.903	.790
7	Workers are motivated and give their best capabilities resulting in high levels of operational performance.	31	0	8	4	15	4	3.484	1.029
8	The plant has had zero lost time accidents due to adoption of a "safety first" culture.	31	0	0	5	12	14	4.290	.739
9	There have been few customer complaints with the quality program.	31	0	2	16	12	1	3.387	.667

Source: Primary Data (2017)

From Table 4, 90.3 % (28) of the respondents agreed that measurement of operational performance at the plant is based on defined standards as shown by a mean of 4.387 and SD of

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.844. This is a clear indication of how management makes an effort to create awareness about the adopted standards at the plant. However, 6.5% (2) of the respondents disagreed with the statement and only 1 respondent expressed uncertainty.

When asked whether the plant has set objectives known to everybody, 77.4% (24) of the respondents agreed (mean = 3.871, SD = .922). From the interviews, this was also evident as stipulated in the quality manual; *satisfy customers, improve staff competence, achieve operational efficiency* among others. 9.7% (3) were not sure about the objectives and 12.9% (4) of the respondents disagreed with the statement.

Upon being asked whether the plant uses the extent to which its objectives are achieved to measure its efficiency levels, 67.7% (21) of the respondents agreed with the statement (mean =

3.774, SD = .717) and 29% (9) of the respondents were not sure it was the case. Only 1 respondent disagreed.

Majority 83.9 % (26) of the respondents agreed that the quality program has improved the plant's operational performance (mean = 4.032, SD = .605). 16.1% (5) of the respondents expressed uncertainty and none disagreed. Asked whether efficiency of operations is used to measure operational performance and whether the quality program has helped reduce overall waste at the plant, respondents equally answered on both statements and 71% (22) agreed with the both statements, 25.8% (8) of the respondents were not sure about both statements and only 3.2% (1) respondent disagreed in each case. The level of agreement was as shown by means of 4.032 and 3.807, and SD of .605 and .703 respectively. Asked whether workers are motivated and give their best capabilities hence resulting into high levels of operational performance, 12.9% (4) of the respondents expressed uncertainty, 61.3% (19) of the respondents agreed (mean = 3.484). However, 25.8% (8) of the respondents disagreed with the statement. The high SD of 1.029 indicates a lot of variance in the responses to this element.

In regard to the plant having had zero lost time accidents due to the adoption of a safety-first culture, majority 83.9% (26) of the respondents agreed (mean = 4.290, SD = .739). From the key informants' interviews, it was also discovered that there had been no life-threatening accidents in the past 3 years, something management attributed to the strict policy of „safety first. “ 16.1% (5) expressed uncertainty about the statement (Moses & Nancy, 2024). In terms of the number of complaints since the adoption of the quality program, 41.9% (13) of the respondents agreed that indeed these were few, 51.6% (16) were not sure about this, as shown by a mean of 3.387 and SD of .667. Even so, 6.5% (2) of the respondents disagreed.

Conclusions

Top Management Commitment and Operational Performance

As pointed out by several earlier studies, performance in any organization can best be driven and directed by top management. Findings from the study showed a positive and significant relationship between top management

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commitment and operational performance and from the relationship, it was concluded that top management commitment was important in enhancing the level of operational performance at the plant. Given its influence in setting up a company-wide culture encompassing all objectives and the strategic direction of the organization, it thus means that managers should be concerned about this dimension because by impacting other TQM practices, it is most likely to enhance operational performance levels.

Process Management and Operational Performance

Findings from the study indicated a significant and positive relationship between process management and operational performance. Process management literature reveals that most of quality related problems are associated with processes and very few are caused by employees and that these problems can best be mitigated by good process management. This entails the use of systematic processes to pursue high levels of quality and operational performance. Given that Many of the operations are process centered, respective management teams are thus charged with the responsibility of revising and continuously improving the processes with which individuals work.

Quality Data Reporting and Organization Performance

Study findings showed that a positive and significant relationship exists between quality data reporting and operational performance. It can therefore be concluded that timely collection of data on processes and operations is useful in identifying problems in production processes. Based on the data collected, it can then be possible to take a proactive stance on most operations thereby improving operational performance levels.

Recommendations

Top Management Commitment and Organization Performance

There is need for top management to exhibit more visible leadership in all operations at the plant and consider the option of having a well built in mechanism for providing timely recognition and appreciation of workers' efforts and successes. This will help serve as motivation for personnel. However, the adopted mechanism ought to be well defined for both individuals and teams, relevant, meaningful and in line with the TQM philosophy.

Process Management and Organization Performance

There is need to provide continuous training for personnel in their respective operations and enhance capacity to understand that process management is a collective effort as is quality management, and not just for the quality department alone. Additionally, the provision of a certain level of autonomy regarding correction of problems once personnel judge that standards are not being achieved ought to be considered. However, exercising of such autonomy should be Guided. To further address the different processes and the effects these may have on the environment as a whole, there is need for the company to consider adopting an integrated management system.

Quality Data Reporting and Organization Performance

Following the findings of the study, there is a need to share data collected from organization across teams, given the interdependent nature of operations. This could be done through frequent workshops which can also double as training platforms for all personnel across the board, irrespective of the perceived level of impact on operational performance.

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