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ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON ORGANIZATION PERFORMANCE: A CASE OF CASTEL MALAWI

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ABSTRACT:

This study was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of Total Quality Management (TQM) on organizational performance. The research focused on the influence of TQM practices and their effectiveness on the performance of Castel Malawi LTD. In light of the growing competitive market, the company must explore strategies for survival, and TQM, as a strategic management tool, can enhance the competitiveness, quality, effectiveness, and flexibility of the entire organization. A sample of 36 employees, including both senior and junior staff, was utilized for this study. Primary data was gathered through a questionnaire consisting of closed-ended questions. The principal findings indicated that Castel Malawi is engaged in TQM practices; however, it has not yet fully adopted a quality award system. The current implementation of TQM is limited to the quality assurance level. It was observed that management inaction has compromised leadership commitment to quality, thereby rendering TQM practices ineffective. The study concluded that there is a necessity to acquire modern equipment to promote healthy and safe production. It is recommended that the company should strive to implement the TQM practices that are currently not being effectively executed at Castel Malawi to enhance organizational performance. Additionally, there is a need to adopt quality functional deployment, which will facilitate the development of quality systems based on customer needs and desires, ultimately exceeding customer expectations. By doing so, the company can address issues related to poor customer relations and prevent the loss of customers due to failure in meeting their expectations regarding pricing.

Keywords: Total Quality Management, Organization Performance

INTRODUCTION

The impact of Total Quality Management (TQM) methods on organizational performance has been examined. Total Quality Management is a management approach that prioritizes the customer by engaging all employees in a continuous improvement process. It utilizes data and effective communication to influence the culture and quality of business operations.

Total Quality Management is fundamentally a management framework predicated on the belief that an organization can attain lasting success through the collaborative efforts of all its members. It asserts that by involving employees at every level of management, from entry-level staff to senior executives, an organization can concentrate on enhancing quality and achieving customer satisfaction. Organizations implementing TQM must emphasize continuous development, with a primary focus on customer needs. (Pratt, 2022). The research has assessed the impact of Total Quality Management practices at Castel Malawi and investigated the relationship between organizational performance and the effectiveness of TQM practices adoption. The results have shown that TQM can either positively or negatively influence organizational performance, contingent upon its effectiveness in helping firms meet their goals.

A quality management system is a procedure or any quality program that is communicated from senior management down to the lowest levels. Management is essential for any organization across all industries. Each department within an organization must have quality processes customized to its specific needs, yet these processes should be developed and refined in alignment with the overarching principles of the quality management program. Total Quality Management is one such high-quality initiative. It is a strategy designed to enhance performance and quality in accordance with customer expectations. (Murray, 2019).

The capacity of total quality management to provide the industrial sector with a competitive edge has prompted both academics and managers to embrace this strategy within the service industry. Leading service providers globally have adopted Total Quality Management as an effective management approach to enhance the quality of their services (Jaca, 2015). Quality has increasingly been recognized as a principle that extends beyond the production process to encompass the entire organization. It is perceived as a concept that influences the whole company, as all functions of Total Quality Management (TQM) are regarded as a comprehensive solution to various challenges, including organizational per formance. Presently, successful enterprises acknowledge that quality confers a competitive advantage (Dhalla, 2010).

Castel Malawi Limited, a subsidiary of the Castel group, produces both alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages, including water and soft drinks, for retail outlets across Malawi. At present, the company operates within bars and clubs. Castel LTD manufactures international brands and has been supplying

authentic refreshments to numerous households based on widespread trust for several years. The Malawi Bureau of Standards (MBS) compelled the manufacturer to cease the use of the food additive tartrazine, referencing MS 237:2008. Furthermore, in March, the MBS mandated Castel to withdraw all Squash orange squash from the market following laboratory tests conducted in response to public inquiries regarding the product's visible sedimentation. This information was sourced from MBS. Regarding the banned squash reported by Maravi Express, as noted by (Mlalinja, 2019), individuals who consumed the Sobo squash drink reported experiencing stomach issues, and over time, the product exhibited signs of fermentation and sedimentation after being stored. Therefore, the circumstances justify Castel to adopt a strategic management strategy, such as Total Quality Management, to allow it to compete successfully, enhance its performance to meet global standards, and satisfy customer demand.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Total quality management

Total Quality Management (TQM) is a strategic approach designed to enhance performance and quality to a standard that meets or surpasses client expectations. This can be achieved by integrating all quality-related tasks and processes throughout the organization. TQM evaluates a company's comprehensive quality measures, including the management of quality design and development, quality control and maintenance, quality improvement, and quality assurance (Murray, 2019).

TQM aims to foster a unique culture that encourages all members of the organization to fulfill customer needs and desires while minimizing costs, effort, and time. This signifies that TQM has gained significance for organizations by reducing expenses, boosting profits and productivity, enhancing customer satisfaction, achieving a competitive edge, and ensuring high returns (Fernandes, 2017). The implementation of TQM in institutions is essential for obtaining various international quality certifications, which enhance the organization's reputation in the eyes of external customers, as well as promote a sense of shared purpose, teamwork, and mutual trust among individuals, in addition to strengthening the sense of belonging within the work environment (Zidane, 2010; Wann & Shih 2004).

(Watts, 2022) describes total quality management (TQM) as a management strategy focused on achieving enduring success by providing unparalleled customer satisfaction through consistent, high-quality IT services. For organizations to thrive, they must function as a cohesive unit, and TQM practices must be effectively implemented. Your organization must embrace the responsibility of meeting these expectations.

Organizational performance

The actual output of a business in comparison to its intended production is termed organizational performance. This concept encompasses various topics related to what an organization can achieve and does when interacting with its different stakeholders as noted by (Miles, 2022)

Organizational performance, as defined by (Satyendra, 2020), serves as a gauge of an organization's effectiveness or lack thereof regarding its corporate image, capabilities, and financial outcomes. It emphasizes the organization's efficiency, productivity, effectiveness, excellence, or quality. In today's competitive landscape, it is vital for the organization's ongoing survival. The process of enhancing organizational performance is crucial for boosting the organization's overall effectiveness.

Organizational performance denotes the efficiency and effectiveness with which an organization meets its objectives. This success metric encompasses various elements, such as financial performance, productivity, customer satisfaction, employee engagement, and overall accomplishments. Leadership, organizational culture, strategic planning, resource allocation, and employee involvement are significant determinants of organizational performance. Strong leadership sets clear objectives and nurtures a collective vision. A positive organizational culture inspires employees, thereby improving performance and commitment, while strategic planning facilitates effective resource distribution and alignment with long-term goals. Assessing organizational performance is essential for making informed decisions and fostering improvements. Financial key performance indicators (KPIs) include metrics such as revenue growth and profit margins, whereas customer satisfaction KPIs involve retention rates and feedback systems. Evaluating performance data helps identify strengths and weaknesses, allowing for targeted enhancements for future success (Soleimani et al., 2022).

Financial performance

Financial Performance is an essential aspect of managing financial risk and pertains to the degree to which financial goals are being or have been met, as noted by (Verma, 2022). It involves the process of determining the monetary value of the results stemming from a company's policies and operations. This method is utilized to assess a company's overall financial health over a specified timeframe and can also facilitate comparisons among similar companies within the same sector or across various industries. A company's financial activities and status are officially recorded in financial statements. Financial information is presented in a clear and structured manner.

Nevertheless, as stated by (Fatihudin, 2018), financial performance encompasses the analysis and interpretation of financial records in a manner that engages stakeholders. The current state of a business's finances is a significant concern for the company and interested parties, including management, shareholders, creditors, and tax authorities, who seek to address it. These inquiries can be resolved through a company's financial analysis. Financial statements are employed in this analytical process.

Customer satisfaction

As stated by (Szyndlar, 2023), customer satisfaction serves as a measure to evaluate the extent to which a company's products and services meet the expectations of its clients. It stands as one of the key indicators of consumer loyalty. Consequently, it plays a crucial role in predicting revenue and the growth of the business.

Customer satisfaction reflects the degree to which a company's products, services, and overall customer experience align with consumer expectations. By illustrating how positively your products or services are perceived by customers, it indicates the overall health of your business (Franklin, 2022).

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

The influence of Total Quality Management (TQM) practices and strategies on organizational performance was analyzed (Al-Qahtani, 2015). TQM is defined as a mechanism that primarily aims to develop and deliver high-quality products and services that meet all customer requirements. The research investigated the relationship between organizational performance and the effective application of total quality management in Pakistan. The three types of TQM implementation strategies in Pakistan include quality assurance, continuous improvement, and quality control. The findings indicate that TQM affects organizational effectiveness.

At Merhan University of Engineering and Technology, other empirical studies, such as those by (Kalwar, 2022), explored the impact of overall quality management practices on sustainability and the performance of both private and public organizations. In both public and private sectors, total quality management (TQM) has been recognized as a crucial factor in enhancing organizational performance. Extensive research has been conducted to understand how organizational culture, TQM, and sustainability collectively influence performance within organizations. Given the ongoing growth and expansion of the global manufacturing sector, TQM has become a vital foundation for advancement and development. TQM practices are considered essential for the successful implementation of TQM, although they may differ across manufacturing organizations. Nevertheless, it was found that if TQM strategies are effectively managed in manufacturing firms, organizational performance can be achieved.

The influence of comprehensive quality management on the performance of organizations was investigated within the manufacturing sectors of northern India, as noted by Singh (2018). The aim of this research was to analyze the effects of Total Quality Management (TQM) on the performance of organizations in Indian enterprises. The study involved five manufacturing firms and three service providers located in northern India. The Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) provided a list of the selected companies. The results indicate a positive correlation between TQM and both sustainability and organizational performance. Based on these findings, a framework was established to explore the relationships among key TQM practices, sustainability, and organizational performance. The overarching idea is that effective quality management can lead to sustainable competitive advantages for organizational performance.

According to this research, selected breweries in South East Nigeria were examined for their organizational effectiveness and overall quality management (Chucks, 2019). The specific aim of the study was to ascertain the relationship between factors associated with total quality management, customer focus, and strategic quality planning. The findings revealed a strong correlation between customer focus and organizational effectiveness. Furthermore, organizational effectiveness and strategic quality planning were found to be significantly positively correlated. Similar results were noted regarding the substantial positive relationship between supplier quality management and organizational effectiveness. Additionally, a strong positive link between knowledge and process management and organizational effectiveness was identified. The study concluded that total quality management has a significant positive relationship with organizational success in the selected breweries in South East Nigeria, based on the information presented above. Among other recommendations, the study suggested that breweries in South East Nigeria should enhance employee engagement/skills, organizational structure, and resource allocation to effectively implement comprehensive quality management.

A research study regarding the influence of Total Quality Management (TQM) methods on manufacturing companies was carried out by Dale (2021) from the Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technological Education. The primary objective of this study is to focus on assessing the overall quality management performance within manufacturing firms. Data was collected through a standardized questionnaire and interviews with selected manufacturing companies located in the Ampara region of Sri Lanka. The findings indicate a significant and positive correlation between TQM training and several of its essential components, such as employee commitment, enhanced leadership, skill enhancement, continuous improvement, and customer satisfaction.

In a separate study, Al-Ettayyem and Al-Zu'bi (2015) investigated the impact of Total Quality Management practices, including customer satisfaction, education and training, continuous improvement, teamwork, and top management commitment, on both financial and non-financial organizational performance within the Jordanian banking sector, specifically across 11 commercial banks. The results demonstrated that TQM practices significantly influence the financial performance of organizations' investments.

METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of this research, a quantitative research methodology was adopted. The study utilized simple random sampling to select a sample of 36 employees. The structured questionnaire employed for data collection was meticulously crafted with three distinct sections, specifically focusing on Total Quality Management and organizational performance. Respondents, who were central to this empirical study, were tasked with indicating their level of agreement or disagreement regarding each question related to Total Quality Management and organizational performance on a detailed 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree." During the data collection phase, significant attention was given to maintaining the confidentiality and anonymity of participants, thus ensuring the integrity and reliability of the collected data. The data gathered was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)

MAJOR FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to identify whether Total quality management practices had an impact on Castel Malawi Limited. The data obtained from the questionnaire was analyzed using Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS). The results are discussed according to the sections of the questionnaire. Therefore, this section presents research findings.

Total quality management practices lead to improved quality of products and services at Castel Malawi.

Employees of Castel Malawi were asked their level of agreement on whether they agree if Total quality management practices leads to improved quality of products and services at Castel Malawi.



Figure 4.1: Total quality management practices leads to improved quality of products and services at Castel Malawi.

The participants were requested to indicate their level of agreement regarding whether they believe that TQM leads to enhanced quality of products and services at Castel Malawi. It was observed that 26 respondents strongly concurred with this assertion, which accounts for 72.22% of the total respondents. Additionally, 8 respondents agreed with this statement, representing 22.22% of the respondents. This outcome aligns with a similar study conducted by (Al-Qahtani, 2015) entitled the impact of TQM and strategies on organizational performance. TQM is defined as a mechanism that primarily seeks to create and deliver high-quality goods and services that meet all customer requirements. The findings indicated that TQM influences organizational effectiveness and performance.

Total quality management practices result to increased customer satisfaction at Castel Malawi

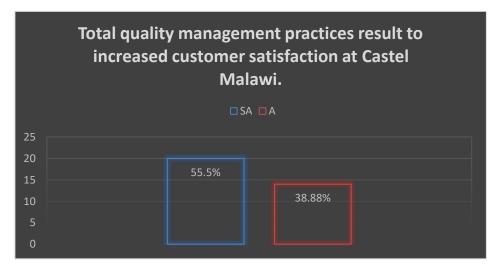


Figure 4.2: Total quality management practices result to improved quality of products and services at Castel Malawi.

The figure above illustrates the results gathered from respondents who were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the provided statement. It was observed that 20 respondents strongly agreed with this statement, accounting for 55.5% of the total respondents, while 14 respondents agreed, representing

38.88% of the respondents. This finding aligns closely with a study conducted by Kenneth (2012) titled "The Effects of TQM on a Company's Performance." Total Quality Management (TQM) is a management strategy that emphasizes quality, fosters member engagement, and seeks enduring success through customer satisfaction. Consequently, the aim of the study was to assess TQM practices and their impact on the organizational performance of Intravenous Infusions Limited Koforidua (IIL). It was concluded that acquiring modern equipment was essential to enhance cost efficiency. To foster teamwork, management should strive to build employee trust by implementing Total Quality Management practices to meet customer needs.

Practicing Total Quality Management practices at Castel Malawi assist with efficient delivery of products.

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement if TQM at Castel Malawi assist with efficient delivery of products.

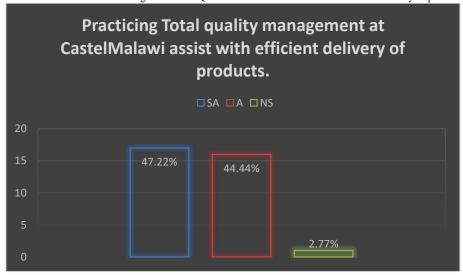


Figure 4.3: Practicing Total quality management practices at Castel Malawi assist with efficient delivery of products.

The figure presented above illustrates the level of agreement that respondents were requested to express regarding the provided statement. It was observed that 17 respondents strongly agreed with the statement, accounting for 47.22%, while 16 respondents agreed, which corresponds to a percentage of 444.44%. Only 1 respondent expressed uncertainty about the statement, representing 2.77%. This research finding contradicts the study conducted by Singh (2018), titled "Examining the Impact of Total Quality Management (TQM) on Organizational Performance in Indian Companies." The findings indicate a positive relationship between TQM and sustainability as well as organizational performance. In light of these results, a framework was established to explore the connections between key TQM practices. The overarching idea is that quality management can lead to long-term competitive advantages for organizational performance.

Total quality management practices establish and uphold cultural values that create long term success to both customer and the company itself.

The respondents were asked to state their level of agreement if TQM practices establish and uphold cultural values that create long term success to both customer and company itself. The results are shown in the figure below:



Figure 4.4: TQM practices establish and uphold cultural values that create long term success to both customer and company itself.

The findings indicate that 11 respondents expressed strong agreement with the provided statement, accounting for 30.55% of the total respondents, while 17 respondents agreed with the statement, representing 47.22% of the respondents. Additionally, 5 respondents were uncertain about the statement, which corresponds to 13.88%, and only 1 respondent disagreed with the statement, representing 2.77%. These research results contrast with the study conducted by Bulger (2014) regarding the influence of total quality management (TQM) techniques on various performance metrics. This study examined the impact of TQM techniques on multiple performance indicators, as well as the factors that facilitate and obstruct TQM adoption among Turkish enterprises. The findings reveal that the primary challenges faced by Turkish businesses include insufficient employee engagement, lack of knowledge, and commitment among staff. To enhance performance, it is recommended that businesses continue to implement TQM across all relevant variables.

Total Quality Management Practices take a major role in helping Castel Malawi with higher Performance.

Respondents were also asked to provide their level of agreement on whether TQM takes a major role in helping Castel Malawi with higher performance. The results are shown in the figure below.

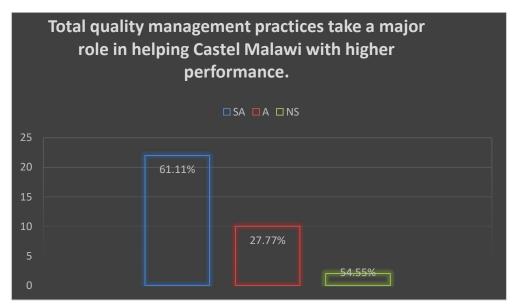


Figure 4.5: Total Quality Management Practices take a major role in helping Castel Malawi with higher Performance.

The findings presented above indicate that 22 respondents strongly agreed with the provided statement, accounting for 61.11% of the total respondents. Additionally, 10 respondents expressed agreement with the statement, representing 27.77% of the respondents, while 2 respondents were uncertain about the statement, which corresponds to a response rate of 5.55% of the total respondents.

A study carried out by Kalwar (2022) investigated the impact of comprehensive quality management practices on sustainability and the performance of both commercial and public organizations. It has been recognized that total quality management (TQM) serves as a crucial factor influencing organizational performance in both public and commercial sectors.

Total quality Management practices improves customer loyalty and retention

Respondents to the study were also asked to provide their level of agreement on whether Total Quality Management practices improves customer loyalty and retention and the results below were provided.



Figure 4.6: Total quality Management practices improves customer loyalty and retention.

The findings presented above indicate that one respondent disagreed with the statement, which accounts for 2.77%. Additionally, seven respondents expressed uncertainty regarding the statement, representing 19.444%. Furthermore, eleven respondents agreed with the statement, reflecting a response rate of 30.55%, while fifteen respondents strongly agreed with the statement, corresponding to a response rate of 41.66%.

A study conducted by Aarti (2011), titled "The Effectiveness of Complete Quality Management on an Organization's Performance," aimed to investigate the origins and effectiveness of the term "Total Quality Management." The research study consisted of an extensive survey administered to employees in Haryana's manufacturing industries. The results of the study revealed a positive impact and effectiveness of Total Quality Management practices that are commonly implemented in the manufacturing sector. However, it was also noted that many employees do not possess a clear understanding of what Total Quality Management (TQM) entailed.

Total quality Management practices lead to strengthened competitive position.

Respondents were asked to provide their level of agreement on whether Total Quality Management practices lead to strengthened competitive position and the results below were provided.



Figure 4.7: Total quality Management practices lead to strengthened competitive position.

The figure presented above indicates that 2 respondents were uncertain about the statement, which accounts for 5.55%. Additionally, 10 respondents expressed agreement with statement a, representing 27.77%, while 22 respondents strongly agreed with the statement, which corresponds to 61.11%. In a study carried out by (Chucks, 2019) regarding organizational effectiveness and overall quality management, the specific aim of the research was to identify the relationship between factors associated with total quality management, customer focus, and strategic quality planning. The findings revealed

a strong correlation between customer focus and organizational effectiveness. Furthermore, organizational effectiveness and strategic quality planning were found to have a significant positive correlation.

Adaptability to changing or emerging market conditions and environment is effective due to total quality management practices.

Respondents were also asked to provide their level of agreement on whether adaptability to changing or emerging market conditions and environment is effective due to total quality management practices. The results are presented in the figure below.



Figure 4.8: Adaptability to changing or emerging market conditions and environment is effective due to total quality management practices.

According to the data illustrated in the figure above, 20 respondents expressed strong agreement with the statement, which corresponds to a percentage of 55.55%. Additionally, 13 respondents agreed with the statement, representing 36.11%, while only 1 respondent was uncertain about the statement, accounting for 2.77%. In the research conducted by Smith (2011), which investigated the influence of Total Quality Management (TQM) on organizational performance, doubts were raised regarding the prevailing assumption. The study argued that the misuse of TQM by management is a contributing factor. The four essential pillars of effective TQM include customer satisfaction, continuous improvement, transparency, and respect for individuals.

Castel Malawi is losing customers due to ineffective Total Quality Management practices.

The study wanted to find out if Castel Malawi was losing customers due to ineffective Total Quality Management practices. The figure below shows the response rate of the respondents on the statement that states that Castel Malawi is losing customers due to ineffective Total Quality Management Practices.

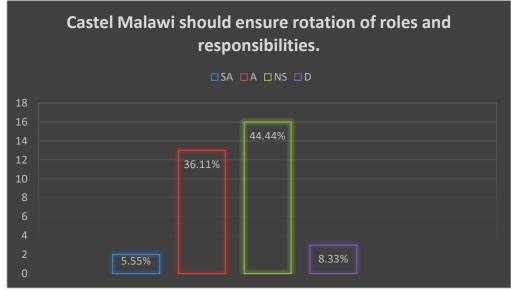


Figure 4.9: Castel Malawi is losing customers due to ineffective Total Quality Management Practices.

The graph presented above illustrates the response rate from participants regarding the assertion that Castel Malawi is experiencing a decline in customers due to inadequate Total Quality Management Practices. Specifically, 3 respondents strongly concurred with this assertion, which accounts for 8.33% of the total, while 1 respondent agreed, representing 2.77%. Additionally, 16 participants expressed uncertainty about the statement, corresponding to 44.44%, 5 respondents disagreed, making up 13.88%, and finally, 9 respondents strongly disagreed, which represents 25%. In the study conducted, selected breweries in South East Nigeria were examined for their organizational effectiveness and overall quality management (Chucks, 2019). The primary objective of the study was to assess the relationship between factors associated with total quality management, customer focus, and strategic quality planning. The findings revealed a strong correlation between customer focus and organizational effectiveness, while a significant positive correlation was also identified between organizational effectiveness and strategic quality planning.

There is a relationship between the concept of Total Quality Management Practices and success of Castel Malawi.

The study also wanted to find out if there was a relationship between the concept of Total Quality Management Practices and success of Castel Malawi. The graph below presents the responses from respondents on the statement that states that there was a relationship between the concept of Total Quality Management practices and success of Castel Malawi.



Figure 4.10: There is a relationship between the concept of Total Quality Management Practices and success of Castel Malawi.

The graph presented above illustrates the response rate from participants regarding the assertion that Castel Malawi is experiencing a decline in customers due to inadequate Total Quality Management Practices. Specifically, 3 respondents strongly concurred with this assertion, which accounts for 8.33% of the total, while 1 respondent agreed, representing 2.77%. Additionally, 16 participants expressed uncertainty about the statement, corresponding to 44.44%, 5 respondents disagreed, making up 13.88%, and finally, 9 respondents strongly disagreed, which represents 25%. The research focused on selected breweries in South East Nigeria to evaluate their organizational effectiveness and overall quality management (Chucks, 2019). The primary objective of the study was to explore the relationship between factors associated with total quality management, customer focus, and strategic quality planning. The findings revealed a strong correlation between customer focus and organizational effectiveness, while a significant positive correlation was also identified between organizational effectiveness and strategic quality planning.

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- There is a necessity to implement quality functional deployment. This approach will facilitate the construction of quality systems that align
 with customer needs and desires, while also surpassing customer expectations. When this is achieved, it will assist in resolving the challenges
 associated with poor customer relations and will help prevent the loss of customers due to unmet needs.
- Management should dedicate its time and resources to identify multiple low-cost, qualified suppliers and select the most suitable one(s) for
 the delivery of materials. It should also ensure that it meets the needs of all contributors who play a role in achieving the organization's
 objectives. An unrealistic deadline may result in poor selection based on incomplete information regarding supplier qualifications and
 stakeholder input.
- Enhanced communication between the purchasing department and other departments, such as engineering and quality control, is essential
 when these departments are required to provide information to evaluate supplier qualifications and the manufacturing processes of suppliers.
 Establishing the level of credibility and trust necessary for strong working relationships can be challenging. Companies should utilize
 appropriate tools, techniques, and systems to foster a suitable relationship with their suppliers, integrating effective procurement systems along
 with advanced planning, scheduling, and transportation planning systems.

- It has become clear that employee participation is crucial for the successful execution of any strategy. Meaningful employee involvement
 necessitates empowerment, which cultivates a work atmosphere where individuals possess the ability, confidence, and dedication to assume
 responsibility and ownership in enhancing processes and taking necessary actions to meet customer needs within clearly defined parameters,
 thereby achieving organizational values and objectives.
- All participants in the Total Quality Management (TQM) implementation process must undergo training in communication skills, quality
 awareness (specifically TQM), and particular problem-solving techniques such as Statistical Quality Control, safety, and the technical aspects
 of their roles. It is imperative to engage front-line employees in decision-making at their workplaces, as they are the primary contributors to
 producing quality products.

CONCLUSION

In summary, this research study concludes that certain Total Quality Management (TQM) practices are present at Castel Malawi. Another conclusion derived from the findings indicates that TQM at Castel Malawi is not being executed to its fullest potential. Furthermore, management inaction undermines the commitment of leadership to quality, thereby rendering TQM practices ineffective. For instance, the essential resources necessary for implementing quality improvements were overlooked, as highlighted in the problem statement. Ultimately, the study confirmed that if TQM practices are effectively utilized at Castel Malawi, the organization could achieve the desired profits.

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