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Determination of Factors which Influence  
the Implementation of Total Quality  
Management in Kenyan Organizations

By

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A paper Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the Independent  
Conceptual Study paper in Operations Management course. University of  
Nairobi, School of Business.

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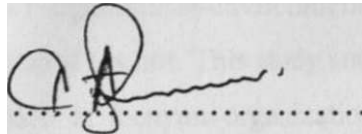
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## Statement of Originality

This paper is submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the Independent Conceptual Study paper in Operations Management course. I, the undersigned, declare that this report is my own original work. Where I have taken ideas and or wording from another source, this has been explicitly acknowledged in the text.

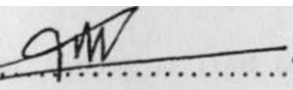
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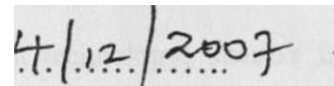
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## ABSTRACT

The interest by scholars in Total Quality Management (TQM), since its entry into the management arena just over two decades ago, has grown unabated despite the controversies, criticisms and dismissive labels that have come its way. There are those who saw it right from the beginning as a fad, just like many others before and after it. Enthusiastic proponents too have done it dis-service through hypes and selling it as a quick fix for the organizational problems arising from lack of organization-environment fit. There are situations where it has worked and there are others where it has not. This study sought to find out the factors that influence success in TQM implementation in Kenyan organizations. This was motivated by the belief that every environment may require specific conditions for the successful implementation of TQM.

Using in-depth review of the literature and case studies carried out in two Kenyan based organizations, the study finds that International Standards Organization (ISO) certification, as a tool for TQM implementation, may not, in itself, give the full picture of the integration of the concepts and principles of TQM in an organization

The conclusion is that, looking at TQM as a management technology, success in terms of outcomes in organizational systems should be the approach, and that governments and management training and education institutions have a greater role to play in making TQM a successful tool of transforming organizations in Kenya. Finally, areas for future empirical study are identified as TQM-based organizational socio-technical systems outcomes and their impact on achievement of organizational goals. The results of this paper will form a basis for my intended doctoral research project.

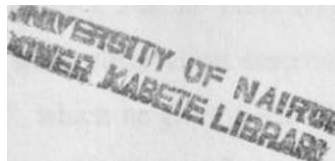
Keywords: TQM; management field evolution; outcomes thinking.

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Owino Okwiri  
October, 2007



# 1 INTRODUCTION

## **1.1 Background**

Organizations being social arrangements, their management issues are basically social. A limitation of traditional methods in decision-making relating to social issues at strategic level was aptly demonstrated by Mbeche (1996) in a case of a department of the government of Kenya. According to Dean and Bowen (1994) there is a lack of prescriptive theories on decision-making in the traditional management theories. While management science has provided managers of operations with analytical decision-making tools for use at strategic level to arrive at strategic content, it has been argued that TQM has filled this gap through development of an array of tools for application at strategy implementation phase of the strategic planning process.

Total Quality Management is defined as "managing the entire organisation so that it excels in all dimensions of products and services that are important to the customer". It is a management framework based on fundamental principles and practices of strategic planning, human resource focus, leadership, customer and market focus, process management, information analysis and business results.

The interest in TQM, since its entry into the management arena nearly three decades ago, has grown unabated despite the controversies, criticisms and dismissive labels that have come its way. A good mix of hypes, mixed perceptions, disappointments, successes, and, in instances, even unsavory labels such as "fads" has accompanied this growth. In reference to the many change techniques that have dotted the management scene since the fifties, Nahmias (2001) makes the following remark:

"Seemingly on schedule, every few years a hot new management technique comes along, almost always described by a three-word or two-word acronym"

The "hot new management techniques" Nahmias is referring to obviously include TQM, Organizational Development (**OD**), Management By Objectives (MBO), Business Process Reengineering (BPR), Just In Time (JIT) and Value Management (VM). Massie (1998) makes the same observation asserting that the last few decades have seen "one fad after another", which he gives a life of no more than two years at the most. Oxford dictionary defines a "fad" as a "fashion, an interest, a preference, an enthusiasm, etc that is not likely to last". But it is the mixed perceptions, expectations,

and the differing views of what constitutes TQM implementation that has raised most issues in reviewing the factors that influence TQM's role in organizational performance.

To many people, TQM is ISO certification; to others, it is simply TQM or one of the many implementation frameworks - sometimes referred to as self-assessment models, Business excellence models, or simply, excellence models. Notwithstanding these differences in perception, TQM has now found its way into every sector serving the society in one way or the other - from commercial sectors to public service.

In a program dubbed "Policing 2000", a New Zealand Police Service challenges the traditional policing assumptions and uses TQM approach in aligning itself to a more customer-focused strategy akin to the commercial sector (Duncan et al. 2001). The Citizens' Charter in the United Kingdom uses TQM based framework in the same way (Economic Commission for Africa - ECA, 2003). In the United States of America, the National Performance Review Report (1993) goal of provision of customer service "equal to the best in business" (ECA, 2003) is based on the "focus on the customer", one of the fundamental principles of TQM. It has been cited in public sector reform forums as one of the means through which a customer-driven government, which is efficient and with high productivity, can be achieved in the poor under-developed nations of the world (Ibid.p39).

In the Sub-Saharan Africa, and Kenya in particular, TQM, in the form of ISO certification or other frameworks, has been tried in sectors as diverse as manufacturing, construction, education, and public utility areas. In each of these cases, appraisal of the returns from implementation has been handicapped by mixed perceptions of the factors that constitute successful implementation and those that influence the implementation.

Outcomes from TQM implementation have been mixed, and judging from locations of the empirical studies that report these successes and failures, geography has not been a determinant either way. Studies reporting mixed outcomes, in terms of business and or operational performance, have been carried in North America (Choi and Eboch, 1998; Forker et al., 1997; Hendricks and Singhal, 2000; Withers and Ebrahimpour, 2000 and 2001), Europe (Gustafsson et al., 2003, Hemsworth et al., 2005; Heras et al., 2002; Santos and Escanciano, 2002; Science and Engineering

Policy Studies Unit. 1994). Australia and New Zealand (Sharma and Gadenne, 2002; van Der Wiele and Brown, 2002) and Asia (Issac, 2004; Pun, 2002; Shaukat et al., 2000). While many of these studies report positive relationship between implementation of TQM practices and business results, findings of a significant number reject such linkages. Questions that come to mind relate to universality and organizational contexts issues. Clearly Sub Saharan Africa lags behind as far as studies examining TQM and business performance relationships are concerned. Studies examining the international dimensions, in particular those specifically specified as "international", mostly relate to studies done in Europe, Australia, North America and Asia.

Apart from the numerous studies carried out by graduate students, a limited number of published papers reporting studies in the continent of Africa, especially Sub Saharan Africa, exist. The few internationally published studies that have attempted to examine TQM applicability in Africa have been descriptive and prescriptive (Madu, 1997; Mersha, 1997; Temtime. 2001 and 2003). A notable exemption has been Lakhali et al. (2006), a survey study in Tunisia, North Africa, which examines the relationship between adoption of TQM practices and operational and business performance. The extent one can make generalization from the findings of this study to the rest of the African continent is debatable. Pagell et al. (2005) has enumerated the problems of basing classification from a geographical perspective without considering the cultural element. The extent the socio-economic and cultural context in North Africa and that prevailing in Sub-Saharan Africa are similar is an issue that should be examined before the continent of Africa can be classified as one geographical unit of study of the issues involved. One aim of this study is to fill this gap, by examining TQM implementation in the Kenyan organizations and the factors which influence the success of these initiatives.

Models and frameworks have been developed for deployment of TQM practices to enable businesses to achieve excellence and gain competitive edge in the market through quality products/services and high productivity. In the Kenyan context, ISO 9000 series standards for quality has been the key framework for implementation of TQM. The hope has been that through ISO 9000 framework, an organization can implement customer and market focused strategy and action plans.





## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Achievement of ISO certification has often been taken in the Kenyan organizations as synonymous with implementation of TQM. Yet implementation of TQM in diverse regions, using whichever framework, has brought mixed results as reported in the empirical studies (Huarng et al., 1999; Franceschini et al., 2006; Dale, 1999; Choi and Eboch, 1998; Forker et al. 1997; Hemsworth et al., 2005; Heras et al., 2002). The fanfare and publicity that usually accompany such awards and certification achievements has led to some scholars dismissing it as "iconic quality" in the sense its publicity value is often more emphasized than the means to achieving the requirements of all stakeholders (Howard and Hoverstadt, 2005). Indeed, one of the motives for TQM adoption, according to unpublished study by Miyurno R. M. (2003), is market image. According to Miyurno, there is no significant difference in the change management practices in TQM implementation within Kenyan organizations - a possible standardization by the framework of choice, ISO 9001.

The dilemma managers find themselves in is whether to adopt or not to adopt. If to adopt, how does one avoid falling into the trap of "iconic quality", as Howard and Hoverstadt (2005) refer to some aspects of implementation? The reality of this dilemma can be gauged by the visible differences in outcomes reported in the studies examining the different implementation frameworks as indicated in Table 1. This table summarizes some of the studies by the direction of the findings and the indicator of adoption.

Table 1: ISO Certification and Quality Award Framework Studies Summary

TQM implementation and organizational performance improvement.	ISO 9000 certification as indicator	Quality framework award as indicator	Total
Studies reporting positive relationship	5	6	11
Studies reporting no evidence of relationship	5	2	7
Total number of studies examined	10	8	18
<b>Percent reporting positive relationship</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>61%</b>

In Kenya, a case study carried out at a state-owned Kenya Posts & Telecommunications Corporation (now split into two organizations - Telkom Kenya and Postal Corporation of Kenya) provides an excellent example of the dilemma

managers face in their decisions relating to TQM implementation. According to the study (Otulia, 1995), the organization's practices, at the time of the study, "conformed to TQM principles", albeit "low TQM culture". But with publicly available data (for Telkom Kenya Limited), obtained ten years later, indicating a return on investment of negative 0.07, sales volume, in terms of units of service, down 15 percent, and productivity, in terms of call-units per employee, that is much worse than its competitors, then questions are bound to be asked about the gain from the initiative.

There is clearly a problem of unidentified factors preventing some organizations from achieving business and operational gains from TQM implementation when others, within the same socio-economic and cultural contexts are able to achieve significant gains.

### ***1.3 The Research Aims***

Apart from Otulia (1995) and other unpublished studies, little if any in-depth study has been published internationally that examine the issues stated above in the Kenyan context. This study aimed to fill this gap by conducting an in-depth comparative study of two organizations that have implemented TQM using a common framework.

The objectives of this study were:

1. To conduct literature survey on TQM
2. To conduct case study on TQM implementation in two case organizations in Kenya
3. Using the literature surveyed and the two case studies, develop a basis upon which factors affecting implementation will be identified for further study.

### ***1.4 Research Design and Methodology***

The issue, as explained in the background text, has been one of to adopt TQM or not to adopt, in view of the mixed results of implementation. To achieve the main aim of this study, which is to examine the issues in the Kenyan context, an understanding of the theoretical and empirical body of knowledge relating to TQM is necessary. Essentially, this means carrying out an exploratory review of the literature and determining what constitutes TQM adoption. It means identifying the different views on TQM adoption and how these can affect the outcome or the direction and content of implementation constructs. Using the constructs identified from the exploratory

literature study to crystallize the issues into researchable hypotheses for a further examination using a formalized research approach.

#### **1.4.1 Research approaches**

Decisions on the appropriate research approaches to take were informed by the research objectives and the specific research questions to be answered. This study had two main objectives:

First, it sought to achieve some understanding of the theoretical background of TQM in the context of organizational practices and views held in the organizations that have adopted the approach in some way. An in-depth examination of the literature in the subject of TQM in an exploratory study provided the constructs required for further empirical examination of these issues in the specific context of Kenya. Using the identified constructs, the issues under examination could now be crystallized into the following research questions:

- What is the level of adoption of TQM in the case organizations?
- Does the certification under ISO 9001 standard indicate the same level of acceptance of TQM philosophy and principles as the ethos of managing within the organization, the quality maturity, as it is in any other ISO 9001 certified organizations?
- Would the quality maturity level matter or affect the organizational performance gains achievable?
- Which factors are preventing the organizations from achieving higher level of integration of TQM principles into their management system?

According to Cooper and Schindler (2003), a formalized research approach is the appropriate one when an issue has been crystallized into researchable questions. Another issue informing the methodological decisions was the purpose of the study. This was, to a greater extent, to examine and identify the existence of views and attitudes and relate these with best practices and grids that have been developed in other studies. Essentially, this was a "what" question, at a fixed point in time, using few cases and a **case study, cross-sectional, descriptive research** are the appropriate approaches (Ibid. 149).

## **1.5 Importance of the Study**

Studies around the world have found that there can be mixed perceptions of TQM within organizations that have made decisions to adopt quality management as the guiding philosophy behind their management systems. These perceptions have the following impact:

1. Sustainability of the approach's adoption
2. Success in using TQM as a means to achieving competitive advantage.

This study should help identify potential roadblocks in the path to sustainability and go some way towards explaining some of the factors that cause the mixed results. It would also help put TQM and ISO 9001 certification in the right perspectives.

## 2 TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT AS A MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Published texts discuss Total Quality Management in ways that can be categorized into two: Total Quality Management as a **program** (Oakland, 1993; Dale 1999) and Total Quality Management as a **management approach** resulting from the ongoing evolution of the field of management (Bounds et al., 1994; Evans and Lindsay, 2002). Published works relating to the theory underlying TQM suggest this may be more of a question of maturity level (Crosby, 1979;) or eras in the evolution path of quality, the basis of Total Quality Management (Garvin, 1988; Bounds et al., 1994; Dale, 1999; Kaye and Dyason, 1995; Howard and Hoverstadt, 2005).

In the literature supporting maturity criteria, the argument is that at the highest maturity level, when an organization is operating at what Kaye and Dyason (1995) calls the fifth era, then Total Quality Management becomes "just about effective management" (Dale, 1999 quoting Bertsch and Williams (1997)). At this level, according to Bertsch and Williams as quoted in Dale (1999), "many companies are practicing the basic Total Quality principles at high level and yet have never realized that such a thing as Total Quality exists".

Crosby (1979) proposes five stages of an organization's maturity in the Total Quality maturity ladder: uncertainty, awakening, enlightenment, and wisdom and certainty. A similar categorization along the Total Quality maturity path has been proposed by Chin, Dale and Pun (2000) and Dale (1999). In Crosby's maturity grid, the uncertainty stage is characterized by autocratic and bureaucratic management by directive, and the customer is only talked about in terms of the revenues obtainable. The awakening and enlightenment stages see some participation in a directed management-driven fashion, management by objectives, statistical quality control tools in use, with quality assurance in product/service areas and the customer has become important. Wisdom and certainty stages provide an environment when management is not only supportive and participative but provides an environment for active teamwork.

Chin et al. (2000)'s maturity measures categorize levels in terms of the TQM concepts, the principles, practices, tools, and continuous improvement. At the lowest status, the "Unaware" status, there is no familiarity with any of the above in the organization, even though the organization itself may think otherwise - some may even have had quality systems certified under ISO quality standard. Gaining some understanding of TQM principles, practices and tools can move the organization to the status of the "uncommitted", even though acceptance of the principles and the need to adopt the given practices is still in contention. A status of "initiator" starts the organization to the path of real TQM adoption since the TQM concepts will have been well understood and accepted, awareness for means to achieve continuous improvement high and frameworks for implementation of the mechanistic aspects such as process and information-based-practices are in place. An "improver" status organization typically has the continuous improvement processes in place, principles adopted through implementation of appropriate practices and tools and techniques' usage matured, but with sustainability issues remaining due to lack of internalization. An organization achieves "Achiever" status when TQM concepts have been integrated into the organization's strategic management processes.

Dale (1999)'s maturity status categorization starts at the "Uncommitted" but, unlike Chin et al. (2000)'s maturity grid, this status extends much further to cover organizations fitting the description of the "initiator" organizations in Chin et al.'s grid, and gives way to the "Drifters". Dale argues that organizations at the "Drifters" state of maturity are usually susceptible to the latest fads as the managers with short-term view start expressing disappointment and cycles of renewals and declines with myriad of programs and tools being introduced become common. "Tool pushers" may correspond to "Improvers" in Chin et al.'s grid, with tools and techniques not used strategically or systematically. These organizations are still quick fix oriented, with TQM related actions being largely reactive. "Improvers" in Dale (1999)'s maturity grid correspond to higher levels of improvers in Chin et al.'s grid and will have recognized the cultural aspects of TQM and set in motion plans for it. Dale's other categories are "Award Winners" and "World class" organizations.

Garvin (1988) lists four eras in the process of evolution of Total Quality Management: Inspection, Quality Control, Quality Assurance, and Strategic Quality

Management eras. The differentiating characteristics of the organizations in each of these eras is in the primary concern, view of quality itself, what is being emphasized when talking of Quality, the methods employed, the role of Quality professionals, where the responsibility for Quality lies, and Quality orientation (as quoted in Bounds et al., 1994). While the motivation in inspection, quality control, and quality assurance eras has been cutting costs, the strategic quality management era, taking a value-based view of quality, sees it as a means to increase customer value and gain a competitive advantage. The TQM principles are applied to organization's value creating processes in order to have products and services that fulfill the customer's needs.

Kaye and Dyason (1995) suggest that beyond the strategic quality management era, an organization can go on to achieve horizontal and vertical integration of organization-wide continuous improvement, competitive improvement through external benchmarking, and use of customer feedback as a key component of the business planning process. The customer and market focused Strategy and action plans drive the organization. In this fifth era, Kaye and Dyason suggest, continuous improvement begins and ends with the customer.

## ***2.1 Total Quality Management - a Program or an Outcome of Management Field Evolution?***

In the "Total Quality Management as a program" category, is the literature that looks at the management of quality in an organization in terms of Total Quality Management (Hendricks and Singhal, 2000; Dale, 1999; Easton and Jarrell, 1998; Terziovski and Samson, 1999) and ISO 9001 certification (Huang et al., 1999; Franceschini et al., 2006; Dale, 1999), as opposed to those that see managing quality as the essence of managing any organization. This literature defines TQM variously as "an approach to improving the competitiveness, effectiveness and flexibility of a whole organization" (Oakland, 1993); "a management approach of an organization centered on quality, based on the participation of all its members and aiming at long term success through customer satisfaction, and benefits to all members of the organization and society" (ISO 8402); "all activities of the overall management function that determine the quality policy, objectives and responsibilities, and

implements them by means such as quality planning, quality control, quality assurance and quality improvement within the quality system" (Dale, 1999).

Research studies falling under this category tend to treat management of quality in a programmatic fashion, with TQM looked on as a bolt-on system - something one allocates dedicated resources to, implements and sees changes desired. As a consequence, this literature suggest, there is significant dependence on the driving forces behind the initiative, customer orientation of the organization and the organization's information systems prior to implementation, tenure of the CEO and the organization's executive board and audits, assessments and specific quality frameworks selected (der Wiele and Brown, 2002). Common threads in the "TQM as a program" literature are the emphasis placed on the program implementation, management of the quality system itself and observed instances of dedicated resource for the initiative.

Even among those who see management of quality and Total Quality Management as "just effective management" and a result of expected evolution of the field of management, there are still issues of terminologies that appear to have connotations emphasizing different thinkings. While the term "Total Quality Management" (TQM) is still used in some of this literature, it is used as a concept rather than a program (Portsmouth University, 2001). While this view uses the same definition of TQM as that used in the "TQM as a program" view, it holds that TQM is a philosophy and hence a standard cannot be appropriate nor a start and end implementation initiative.

Other studies have even taken the view that, the term, Total Quality Management (TQM), is merely a "buzzword and a convenient label for the thoughts and practices currently being adopted that is different from the traditional management" (Bounds et al., 1994; Sousa and Voss, 2002). Literature in this category considers the term "TQM" as merely of "milestone" value, but an important one - in that, it marks the beginning of an era in the expected ongoing evolution in the field of management. In this new era, the literature suggest, managers focus on customer value, cross-functional systems and continuous improvement (Bounds et al., 1994), and, with the three-letter acronym done away with, Total Quality is then defined as "a people focused management system that aims at continual increase in customer satisfaction at continually lower cost" (Evans and Lindsay, 2002); "a continuous effort to meet the



agreed requirements of the customer at the lowest cost through the full involvement of all the employees" (University of Portsmouth, 2001). It is a "Total System approach" (not a separate area or program) and an integral part of high-level strategy (Ibid.).

In reference to the evolution of Total Quality Management (TQM), Bounds, Yorks, Adams and Ranney (1994) suggests a paradigm change from the traditional management which has its basis on Fredrick Taylor's Scientific Management and Max Weber's theory of bureaucracy to one in which the key components are customer value strategy, organizational systems and continuous improvement. From a management paradigm in which the manager's job involve setting goals, defining roles, providing technology, and motivating employees through inducements to one in which the managerial role itself is redefined and theory and actions in the practice of management changed (Bounds et al., 1994). In a preface to their publication titled "Beyond TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT - Toward the emerging paradigm" (McGraw-Hill), Bounds, Yorks, Adams and Ranney argue that Total Quality Management (TQM) is a convenient label to signify the beginning of this change, which is expected to disappear leaving only the word "Management" once the shift to the new paradigm is complete, and the buzzword is no longer needed.

Sousa and Voss (2002) make similar observation, asserting the need to strip the management approach's practices of the "faddish connotations". Some writers consider the term Total Quality Management (TQM) to be creating one such connotation and, at least, part of the cause of the hypes that has led to some dismissing it as a "fad" (der Wiele and Brown, 2002).

## ***2.2 Total Quality Management in the Context of Management Theory***

There is consensus in the management literature on what a general definition of management as a process should be: "a process in which people in leading positions in an organization guide, direct and influence the activities of other people in the organization with the aim of efficiently providing relevant products and/or services in order to meet the needs of customers as a means of achieving the stated goals of the organization" (<http://telecollege.dcccd.edu/mgmt1374>). Theories relating to the process of management use concepts that have been developed from various view points and situations, and which tend to emphasize different aspects of the process.

These include leadership models which originate from the early military and church organizations; efficiency in the workplace aspects have their origin in the classical school; and human aspects of organizations which originate from the human relations school. Miles (1975) argues that the needed integrated view has only become a reality because of the development of the systems and contingency view points. In this regards, it is argued by Dale (1999), Total Quality Management, one of the fundamental principles of which is Systems approach to management, could just be the needed integrating concept.

A consensus among extant literature is that management principles' application to the value chain is through management practices (Flynn et al., 1995; Gustafsson et al., 2003; Maani et al., 1994; Samson and Terziovski, 1999; Terziovski and Dean, 1998; Terziovski and Samson, 2000; Baldrige National Quality Program, 2003; Zhang, 2001). Oxford advanced learner's dictionary defines the word "**practice**" as "*...a way of doing something that is common, habitual or expected*". Other definitions are "*o thing done regularly, a habit, or custom*". Citing Lyder (1994), Llewelyn (2003) describes practices as "*the primary point of connection between people and the social structures*". In the context of an organization, **practices** can be described as "*...the activities that occur within the organization's infrastructure so as to achieve the organization's goals*" (Evans and Lindsay, 2002).

Literature on Total Quality Management use various terminologies when referring to TQM practices; there are Crosby's "*fourteen steps to quality improvement*", Deming's "*fourteen points for management*" and Juran's "*seven steps to quality improvement*" (Oakland, 1993, citing works of Phillip Crosby, W. Edwards Deming and Joseph Juran). Other terms that have been used to refer to practices include "*four factors*" (Sharma and Gadenne, 2002), "*implementation constructs*" (Ahire et al, 1996; Anderson et al, 1995) and "*elements*" (Dale, 1999).

These terminologies have variously been used in studies attempting to place Total Quality Management in the context of what may be referred to as the "rational" management theories (Anderson et al., 1994; Dean and Bowen, 1994; Waldman, 1994).

### **2.2.1 Areas of Agreement with Management Theories**

Findings of some of the studies listed have reported areas of agreement or some sort of agreement, in the practices or factors/constructs of leadership, such as Total Quality Management's preferred creative leadership style, which is more of a combination of transformational and transactional leadership styles as covered in management theory literature (Dean and Bowen, 1994); practices in Human Resource Management such as employee involvement, use of teams, training needs analysis, evaluation and career management, which are also similar in the approach advocated to that which has been advocated in Management Theory Literature (Dean and Bowen, 1994; Waldman, 1994). Another area of similarity reported in the literature is in the Human Resource practices such as Total Quality Management's assumptions that people care about their work, which is very much the same as the theory Y assumptions in Douglas McGregor's Theory X/Y theories, and assumptions of people's needs for participation as argued by professor William Ouchi (Anderson et al., 1994) relating to theory Z assumptions.

Quoting Schmidt and Finnigan (1992), Bounds et al. (1994) also suggests Total Quality Management's emphasis on standardization and diffusion of best work practices throughout the organization to have roots in scientific management's concept of finding one best way to do a job; aspects of employee-based practices to theories and practices of group dynamics, Organization Development and Leadership theories; aspects of management-based practices to theories and practices of strategic planning, corporate culture, and socio-technical systems theories.

### **2.2.2 Where Quality Management has Filled Gaps**

According to the studies cited above, Total Quality Management has also filled gaps ignored or less emphasized by Management Theory: emphasis on customer focus against Management Theory's somewhat disregard of role of the customer (Dean and Bowen, 1994); relative weight given to implementation phase in strategic planning against prominence of strategic content in Management Theory (Dean and Bowen, 1994); relatively high emphasis on information processing and decision-making based on fact in contrast to Management Theory's lack of prescriptive theories on decision-making (Dean and Bowen, 1994).

The notion of "somewhat disregard of role of the customer" by the traditional management theories, as suggested by Dean and Bowen (1994), would probably need to be qualified when other works are considered. Total Quality Management looks at the concept of the "customer" somewhat different from the traditional interpretation. In TQM, "customer" is end-user of an output - a term that denotes user of a process output (internal customer) or user or buyer of finished product or service (external customer). According to Martin (1995), Scientific management, where operations management as we know it today, has its roots, does not necessarily ignore the customer. He argues that, when narrowly defined as to whether workers in Taylor's scientific management were supposed to provide "quality" product to the next person receiving it, the answer should be in the affirmative. To this extent, Taylor's scientific management does not ignore the customer. Martin suggests that what is different is the technique of addressing the customer. This argument would be consistent with Deming (1986)'s position of the profound knowledge being rather a fourth factor of production rather than a supplant of a management thought. Martin's reference to continuity of thoughts as "generations rearrange, repackage, or sometimes create new knowledge to meet new challenges", would probably be taken in this light. In conclusion, one could argue that the notion of traditional management theories somewhat disregarding the customer is somehow philosophical and most probably linked to the fact that the value-based quality concept changes and introduces the worker flexibility in shaping the product to meet the customer's needs that are now recognized as changing. The gap that has been filled by TQM is, therefore, the absence of the concept of "customer value", which is a refinement of "customer focus" theme that has come about as a result of the evolution in Total Quality Management concepts. Contributions to this development are BS EN 1325, a British standard. EN 12973, a European standard, and Bounds et al. (1994) and, from developments in strategic management discipline, the work of Michael Porter (1985) and others.

### **2.2.3 Areas of Complete Contradiction and Disagreement**

Findings of complete contradiction have been reported as regards multidimensionality and dynamism of quality, its association with cost, and extent of role in competitive advantage (Anderson et al., 1994; Dean and Bowen, 1994); greater value on process

and technical factors in contrast to social factors in Management Theory (Dean and Bowen, 1994); co-operative relationship with suppliers in place of competitive relationship in Management Theory (Anderson et al., 1994); greater reliance on system than person factors for contribution to performance (Dean and Bowen, 1994); team-based performance appraisal and compensation and emphasis on internal co-operation rather than competitive behavior (Anderson et al., 1994); emphasis on standardization and diffusion of best work practices across the organization (Hackman and Wageman, 1995).

### 3 CASE STUDIES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TQM

Earlier and ongoing cases of TQM adoption in Kenya provide exemplifications of the differing integration levels and views on "Total Quality Management". While many organizations position and promote themselves as quality leaders and, indeed, have certificates of assessments on display to prove this, the fact is that management in many of these organizations are still rooted in the eras of unscientific problem solving and decision-making. According to the literature cited in the previous sections of this paper, it is equally possible that many companies could even be practicing the basic Total Quality principles at the highest levels and yet have never realized that such a thing as Total Quality exists. Could this be the explanation for the mixed results associated with adoption of Total Quality Management? Could this provide the needed clue to the factors that influence success of TQM adoption? A possible relationship between two issues has to be examined.

First, the level of TQM maturity has to be determined. Only then can one be able to make judgment on success or failure and, in the case of failure, determine the factors preventing success. This would mean determining factors preventing the organization from achieving the optimum maturity level. On the basis of the works of Crosby (1979), Garvin (1984), Chin et al. (2000) and Dale (1999), TQM maturity would be an indicator variable representing the extent to which these case organizations have committed themselves to TQM as the ethos of managing their business. How do people in the case organizations view and perceive TQM's position in their organizations?

Another concept that must be defined is the concept of success. What constitutes success? The starting point is the definition of management process as "a process in which people in leading positions in an organization guide, direct and influence the activities of other people in the organization with the aim of efficiently providing relevant products/services in order to meet the needs of customers as a means of achieving the stated goals of the organization" (<http://telecollege.dcccd.edu/mgmt1374>). Firms complete on the following six elements or thereabout: cost, quality, reliability, speedy delivery, dependability and

flexibility. It can therefore be argued that success of a framework for management process must be in terms of the extent the organization perceives success in one or more of the above elements and consequent to this, achievement of the organization's business goals. This is where the study deviates from the path taken by Otulia (1995) at the same time adds to it.

While Otulia's study, like many others falling under TQM as a program category, sought to examine policies, procedures and leadership issues in the implementation of TQM, this study has taken the view that success is measured in terms of achievement of goals in the above listed elements or some other chosen operations performance dimensions. In taking this line, it seeks to discount what is claimed to have been implemented or certified to be in place, but chooses, instead, to determine exactly the extent TQM concepts and principles have been taken as the ethos of managing in these organizations. The theoretical position of this study is that ISO 9001 certification or putting in place symbols such as Quality policy statements, quality leadership rituals and others talked of in TQM initiatives, are not themselves enough parameter for TQM integration into organization's management system. Neither is the absence of any of the above an indicator of lack or level of such integration.

### **3.1 Case Study Methodology**

This study is based on the argument that the TQM maturity level of an organization is the strongest determinant of sustainability and ability to use quality to achieve competitive advantage. The investigative questions the answers are sought for are: How do people in the case organizations view and perceive TQM's position in their organizations? What impact has quality management adoption had on business and operations performance in the criteria or dimensions that matter in these case organizations?

The information needed is obtainable by observing the attitudes, decisions and behavior and comparing these with characteristics that have been established in empirical research studies elsewhere to provide good assessment for the TQM maturity level or quality eras. Additional information needed would relate to the benefits, as perceived by those within the organizations, of having the specific management system standard registration - in this case ISO 9001 quality management

certificate. The constructs making up the TQM maturity levels have been derived from the works of Crosby (1979), Chin et al. (2000), Dale (1999) and Garvin (1988).

The objective of this case study is to examine Total Quality Management implementation in the Kenyan organizations and determine factors that influence success in outcome terms. Addressing the issues involved calls for appropriate decisions to be made relating to the approaches to take for the study. First, the problem in the study has not been crystallized into researchable hypotheses. According to Cooper and Schindler (2003), a descriptive, exploratory approach is the appropriate one in this case. Another issue is the purpose of the study. This is to examine the TQM implementation in selected sample organizations and determine their levels of TQM integration and identify factors affecting their progress in the maturity ladder but at an empirical level. Essentially, this is a "what" question, at a fixed point in time, using small number of cases and a descriptive, cross-sectional case-study approaches are the appropriate ones (Ibid. 149).

The selection of the case organizations was based on the fact that the organizations have commenced quality management initiatives along the lines of ISO management system frameworks, are at-least of medium size, and can, to some extent, be good representative of the respective industries and sectors they operate in. Another factor was one of convenience and awareness by the researcher or his supervisor of TQM initiatives in the two organizations. These organizations also represent different competitive and organizational contexts in terms of management infrastructure, industry competitive structure and ownership.

Since the observation involve seeking views that could be considered intrusive, the starting point for engagement involved submitting written summary of the study topic, the research question, investigative question and the measurement questions required. Because of the cost in terms of man hours that the case organizations would have to incur, it was also necessary to submit to the management the six-page questionnaire that would guide the structured interview together with approximate time required with each informant. In each case a written authority, signed by top level managers responsible for operations, in the case of one organization, and human resource development, in the case of another, was given to the researcher giving him free access to anybody from any department and office within the respective



organizations. The respective letters were shown to each respondent when being requested to agree to an interview, which lasted between 30 to 45 minutes.

The focus of the interviews was to determine, from the observed attitudes and explanation for decisions and behaviors of management, the presence of the following indicators of TQM maturity;

1. Autocratic and management by directive behaviours
2. Extent ISO certification is looked at in iconic way
3. Extent the customer is talked about only in terms of revenue obtainable
4. Familiarity with TQM concepts (as opposed to requirements of ISO 9001 Quality Management system
5. Familiarity with TQM principles, practices, and tools/techniques

Presence of (1), (2) and (3) above would indicate the "unaware", "uncertainty" stage or "inspection era" in the TQM maturity ladder. Positive indicators of (4) and (5) above would be required to move an organization to the first stage of TQM awareness - the awakening/uncommitted or quality control era. According to Chin et al. (2000), organizations at the unaware/uncertainty stage of maturity or inspection era in TQM evolution can and very often succeed in third party ISO 9001 Quality Management System audit and qualify for the third party certification against ISO 9001.

While positive scores in the above areas would indicate awareness of the "**need**" to achieve continuous improvement in the organization, the interview looked for signs of awareness of the "**means**" to achieve the continuous improvement and the presence of framework for implementation of the mechanistic core TQM practices of process and information-based practices. Significant signs of these in an organization that has passed the threshold for awareness/committed stage would indicate an organization in the TQM "initiator" or "enlightenment" stage of TQM maturity or Quality Assurance era.

Beyond the above stages, the interview focused on detecting signs of higher level maturity in use of TQM tools (for the improver/wisdom stage of maturity), integration of TQM concepts into organizations' strategic management process and value-based quality view (for the achiever stage of maturity/Strategic Quality Management era), and use of customer feedback as a component of business planning process and use of external process benchmarking (for the 5<sup>th</sup> era in TQM evolution).

To gauge the business and operational outcome of TQM initiative, the informants were asked if they felt their organizations' performance in listed dimensions has improved since the start of the initiative. Additionally, they were asked if they felt the performance of their respective organizations' in given dimensions are better than those in similar business situations. Use of perceptual data to measure operational and business performance is widely used practice (Ward and Duray, 2000; Lakhali et al., 2006).

The following sections detail the case organizations' TQM initiative and the view that, according to those interviewed, is prevalent.

### **3.2 The Case of Organization 1 (Org 1)**

Organization 1 is a private training institution with operations in several locations within the City of Nairobi and one in Mombasa. It has a workforce of about 150, mostly youthful in their first job. The organization is owned by and managed by individual entrepreneur who is responsible for strategic direction, but, especially due to the fast speed, low transaction nature of the business, day-to-day operations are seen to by a general manager. The owner/manager is a hands-on entrepreneur with no management training while the general manager's skills area is in the information technology training. The organization had its management system audited under ISO 9001 quality management system and certified in 1999.

Persons interviewed in this organization include all the top three after the owner. The interview's with the general manager, the country manager, and the dean of the institute were especially very in-depth lasting more than 45 minutes, with the general manager's being about one hour. Others interviewed included the ISO 9001 quality system management representative, all the centre managers, the chief accountant, plus some instructors and career chancellors. In all, fifteen people were interviewed in the organization, seven of whom were managers.

In each case, a copy of the questionnaire was given to the interviewee to help guide but with answers being recorded by the researcher. Clarifications were made where the interviewee indicated they were not clear about the choices. This is especially since some choices were meant to be very close so as to determine the level of understanding of TQM concepts. There is a possibility that such clarifications can,

inadvertently, lead to interviewer influence, but with the researcher being conscious of this, it can reasonably be stated that such interviewer influence should not significantly alter the findings.

As can be assessed from the results of the interviews, this organization can be said to have some level of understanding of TQM philosophy and concepts with some element of commitment evident. Fewer people in this organization look at their ISO 9001 management system standard in a narrow sense of "a quality system", with 55 percent considering it in a broader sense of a management tool. In this organization, it is widely considered that training on quality is a must for all levels, intuitive review of work outputs, with knowledge on TQM philosophy to a greater extent coming from formal sources.

The goals spoken of are more strategic and less exclusively inward looking nor iconic. While knowledge and understanding of process control techniques and tools are evidently limited, the management and staff recognize the process of producing the services to be deserving of greater focus than the service itself in the organization's improvement efforts. There is also evidence of greater emphasis on the customer than short term financial gains when it comes to problem-solving situations and prioritization scenarios. Awareness of the "need" to achieve continuous improvement is very high with 90 percent of respondents seeing continuous improvement as part of their organization's strategy to achieve its goals.

### **3.2.1 What is Preventing Progression to Higher Level of Maturity**

Certain characteristics have been evident in the organization that prevents it from being solidly within the awakening/uncommitted or quality control era and beyond. The "TQM as a program" view is visible with a significant number looking at TQM in the narrow sense. This was evidenced by a good number, 36 percent of respondents, looking at the quality framework in terms of a "quality system", even though a narrow majority saw it as a management framework. There is still higher level of feeling that a quality system should be driven by a quality department, even though there is wide recognition that achievement of the management system standard cannot be left only to the quality department.

The most negative characteristic is overwhelming orientation towards inspection as a means of assuring output. Inspections orientation is a feature of organizations in the era 1 of TQM evolution (Kaye and Dyason, 1995). In this era, the primary concern is inspection, and is aimed at ensuring defects do not reach the customer, but still allows the cost to be passed to them.

### **3.3 The Case of Organization 2 (Org 2)**

Organization 2 is a large public utility company with offices throughout the country. Being a large organization with thousands of employees, the organization's management is professional, with top management composed of highly trained managers with several years' work and management experience. To achieve the required depth within the resources available, the study focused on only the department responsible for distribution and customer services. This department was chosen because the issues involved in the study are operations management related and this is the department in the organization that creates the core output the customers of the organization require and handles the primary customer/supplier exchanges. Narrowing down to this department, which is headed by a general manager, afforded the study more depth and more relevance to the issues being studied. The organization had its management system audited under ISO 9001 quality management system and certified in 2006.

Persons interviewed in this organization included 15 managers and 3 non-managerial professional staff- all engineers. Among the 15 managers were the then acting ISO 9001 quality management system management representative, an ISO 9001 internal auditor, a chief manager, a distribution manager and a customer services manager. The intention had been to interview all the managers in the department but the general manager and his deputy were not able to allocate time for the exercise. Data collected related to the attitudes, decisions and behaviours in the organization and for this reason, information from the majority of the managers in a department at the head office provided a reasonably close indicator of the ethos and understanding of TQM in the department.

Unlike in organization 1, the informants requested to be allowed to remain with the six page questionnaire over night. In most cases, there was a need for the researcher to make some clarifications the following day on one or two areas the informants said

they had not understood or where the researcher detected omitted questions. In the opinion of the researcher, this deviation was unlikely to cause difference, as it could be argued that having more time with the questionnaire compensated for the more intense clarifications given during the interviews with informants in organization 1. In addition, the chance for interviewer induced bias was less for organization 2.

In terms of Dale's maturity grid, data collected suggested this organization was still at the "uncommitted" stage in TQM evolution. In terms of Chin et al.'s classification, the organization is in the status of "unaware", meaning that familiarity with the concepts, principles, practices, tools and continuous improvement have still not reached a significant level. As explained in earlier text, lack of familiarity with the above has not been a bar to achieving success in 3<sup>rd</sup> party management system audit and certification under ISO 9000 family quality management system (Chin et al. (2000).

While TQM initiative is widely seen in the organization in -terms of business results, quality framework is seen much less in terms of a management tool than as a quality system. Quality assurance department is seen as the driver for this quality system, with a significant number considering the achievement of the certification as primarily dependent on the department. While review of output is intuitive, the method for assuring output is still largely inspection, even though many of the managers give, as source of their knowledge on quality philosophy, formal sources connected to their academic and professional training.

Key areas of strength for advancement in the TQM evolution are recognition that quality knowledge is a must for all levels in the organization, and the importance of building the quality of service at the upstream stages of service realization.

### **3.4 Findings**

A number of factors influencing implementation and success of TQM in Kenyan organizations can be identified from the three cases.

One significant factor influencing TQM initiatives in a positive way is the awareness and acceptance that TQM can lead to improvement in performance of organizations. Informants in the two organizations from which primary data was collected overwhelmingly feel performance in their organizations have improved since

commencement of their TQM initiative. The relative levels of perception of improved performance also appear to be reflected in the data indicating the level of acceptance of TQM principles as the ethos for running the organization, that is. TQM maturity level. See bar graphs in charts 4(a), 4(b) and 4(c).

Chart 4(a): Percentage of informants that felt performance had improved.

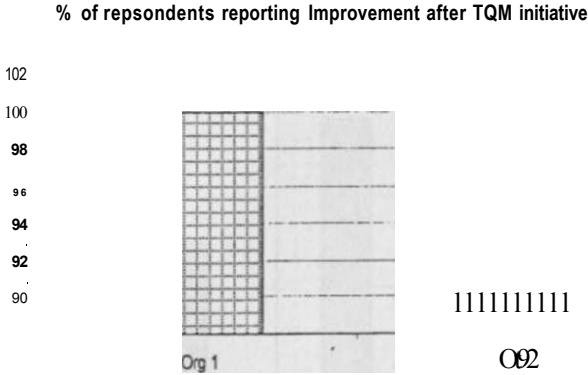
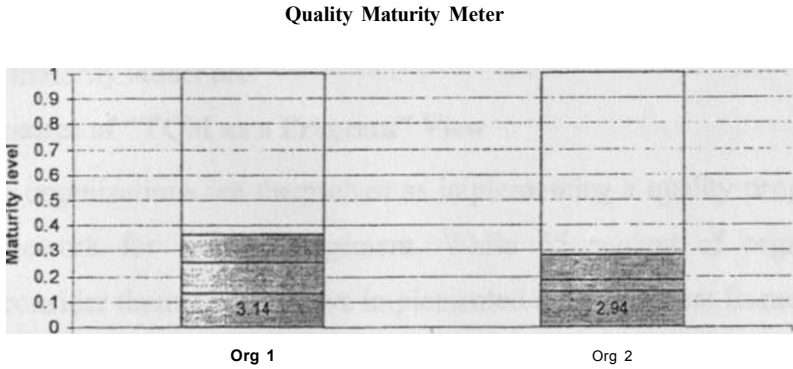


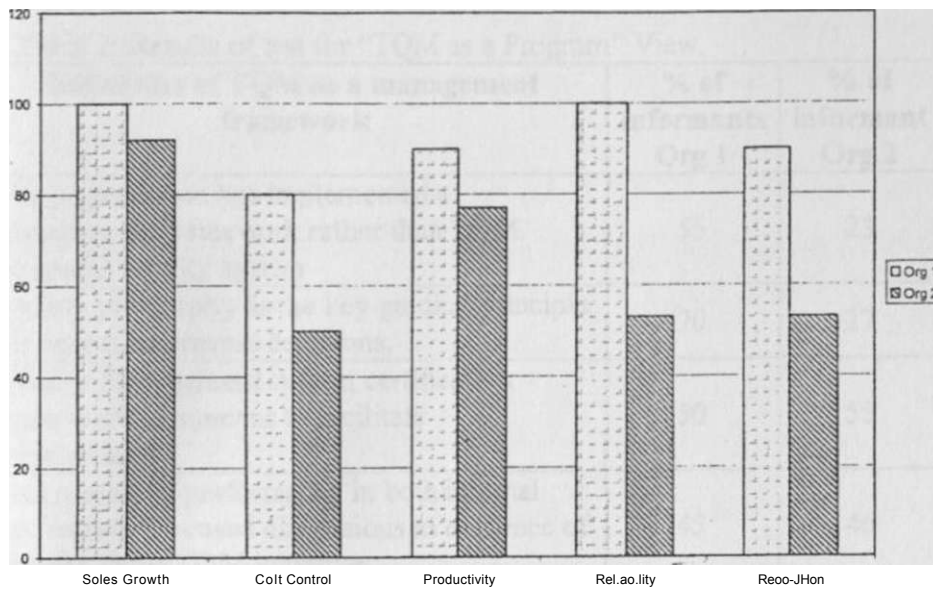
Chart 4(b): Scores against characteristics of organizations in the first stage of TQM maturity - being indicator for the levels of understanding of quality concepts, principles, practices, and tools in two Kenya-based ISO 9001 certified organizations.



Organization's strategy as a factor is clearly illustrated by the differences in levels of perception of improved performance when placed against different operations and competitive strategy dimensions. This is illustrated in the bar graph in chart 4(c) below.

Chart 4(C): Comparative percentages in the two organizations that felt performance had improved specified by performance dimensions.

Performance as perceived by the respondents following TQM initiative



Findings suggest that factors holding back the case organizations from moving ahead in the TQM maturity ladder are:

### 1. Predominance of "TQM as a Program" View

Many in the organizations see themselves as implementing a quality program rather than a framework for good management. While 55 percent of organization 1 informants consider themselves to have implemented a management framework, only 23 percent of informants from organization 2 (org 2) see the same way, with the overwhelming majority - 77 percent see the framework in use purely as quality program. When asked what guides decisions on operating processes, only 27 percent of informants in organization 2 thought these decisions are guided by TQM philosophy in their organization, with an overwhelming majority, 70 percent, saying quality policy.

The TQM as a program view is further indicated by the extent the iconic element of the organizations' ISO certification is emphasized. About half of the informants in the two organizations saw ISO certification as a means to make the customers confident, while only about the same percentage saw the certification framework as a means to

facilitate improvement. Less than half of the informants in the two organizations said they would look to the assessment of performance in both internal and external focused dimensions as evidence of success in their TQM initiative (45 percent and 46 percent for organization 1 and organization, respectively).

Table 2: Results of test for "TQM as a Program" View.

<b>Indicators of TQM as a management framework</b>	<b>% of informants Org1</b>	<b>% of informant Org 2</b>
The organization has implemented a management framework rather than TQM program/ Quality system	55	23
Quality philosophy as the key guiding principle for operating process decisions.	70	27
Quality Management system certification framework as a means to facilitate improvement	50	55
Assessment of performance in both internal and external focused dimensions as evidence of success in the TQM initiative	45	46
TQM as a strategy and a management philosophy	70	27

## **2. Lack of Process Orientation**

Product-centric management of value creating activities is a major hindrance to achievement of success through TQM. Nearly half the informants in organization 2 considered products to be the greater focus for their organization's performance improvement activities, while 63 percent of informants in organization 1, with higher level TQM maturity, would focus more on the process of producing the products or services. On a 1 - 5 scale, both organizations scored 3 for process orientation measure - 5 being the best.

## **3. Lack of Awareness of the Means to Achieve Continuous Improvement**

While there is indication of awareness of the "need" to achieve continual improvement, awareness of the "means" to achieve this is lacking. Less than half of informants in the two organizations are aware of process control techniques as a tool to control variability and management of value creating processes, a key factor in continuous improvement. This is further confirmed by presence of some element of pre-occupation with numbers. Fifty Four percent of informants in organization 1 agree there is an element of pre-occupation with numbers in their organization. This is a



major cause of arbitrary standards and treatment of each outcome as if it were a singular event.

### **3. Inspection Orientation**

The organizations are still locked in the inspection era of TQM evolution. An overwhelming majority of informants report inspection as the key means to control quality of work outputs. 82 percent and 85 percent of respondents in organization 1 and organization 2, respectively, report that inspections are carried out on the work outputs in their organization before they are sent out to the external customers. Inspections, normally in the form of a series of approval signatures signifying checks and inspections, constitute rework, and major cause of wastes in terms of non-value adding activities and delay in customer-supplier chain.

### **3.5 Discussions of Findings**

While Organization 1, with somewhat higher level of TQM maturity, appears to score much higher in performance perception across all the indicated dimensions, it is organization 2, which appears to record strong and positive correlations between perceived performance score and TQM maturity score. There can be two interpretations for this: one, that the linkage between TQM and performance, at least in the two organizations, is inconsistent. Two, that TQM is merely a moderating factor, which must be integrated into good rational management system, and, on its own, cannot bring about improvement in performance. Other factors could be at play: The two organizations are distinct in the level of management skills available. Organization 2, a public organization, has been in existence for much longer, has several times the turn-over of organization 1, and has a management cadre with much higher level of management training.

One could probably argue that organization 2, currently at the unaware stage, has potential to benefit much more from integration of TQM principles into its management system than organization 1, and this can be credited to higher level of management skills. The fact that this organization only managed to put in place the ISO 9001 quality management system requirements eight months before this study support this view. A view advanced by many TQM proponents that TQM's gain comes from its integration into the organization's management system would also support this position. As a moderating factor, TQM would not be expected to bring

quick returns or any returns if the organization's other strategic decisions are not based on rational grounds or where management skills are lacking.

An alternative argument for the higher level commitment in organization 1 can be that, being a young organization, with limited management skills at the top level, TQM provides the needed management system guide, providing a level of management system framework. In this case, TQM plays a role as the better way of managing. An empirical study, in terms of organizational outcomes, would probably provide further information in this regard.

These findings probably explain the contradictions in the case organization referred to in Otulia (1995), in which the findings suggest organizational practices that "conform to TQM principles" albeit "low TQM culture" at the same time published data relating to the organization suggests disappointing performance 10 years down the line. In-fact information gleaned from the report of the case study describes an exemplification of "TQM as a program view", with high level of "implementation" orientation, dedicated resources, and emphasis placed on the implementation program not strategic imperatives. Otulia (1995) case is a clear example of awareness of the "need" without corresponding awareness of the "means" for continuous improvement of organizational effectiveness.

The findings explain the inconsistencies between the studies reported in Huarng et al. (1999), Franceschini et al. (2006). Dale (1999), Choi and Eboch (1998), (Forker et al. (1997), Hemsworth et al. (2005) and Heras et al. (2002) as listed in Table 1. One could probably argue that 50-50 success rate, in terms of achievement of business and operational gain as a result of ISO 9001 certification arise from the limitation of the management system standards as indicators of TQM adoption. The findings of this study explain this very well. The 50 percent improvement in findings of TQM/performance relationship when the adoption indicator is quality framework award is consistent with this argument: that ISO 9001 certification is a poor indicator of acceptance of TQM philosophy and principles as ethos of managing.

One could argue that "quality as a program view" exemplifies "solution thinking" as defined by McDermott and O'Connor (1997). The findings of the case studies reported here and that reported in Otulia (1995), Miyumo (2003) and many other unpublished works appear to point to a predominance of "solution thinking" when

talking about TQM implementation within the organizations in Kenya. "Solution thinking" encourages focus on the elements of TQM without any consideration for the imperatives of organizational management. According to McDermott and O'Connor (1997), "solution thinking", just like "ideas thinking" or "problem thinking" fails to consider that for every desired outcome, there are multiplicity of solutions. Whether TQM would be the answer to the problems organizations face would depend on the individual managers and their training, and the feeling of the various participants becomes a factor in the implementation.

TQM as a management framework would have to come from an "outcome thinking" when considering management techniques and technologies. The outcomes, in this respect, would be customer-value orientation and organizational systems that are consistent with the belief that quality leads to higher profit - as described by the Deming Chain Reaction (Deming, 1986). ISO certification then becomes a tool for helping integrate the TQM concepts and principles into the general management practice. At this stage, TQM becomes just the better way of managing and one does not talk of TQM implementation but rather in terms of outcomes in organizations systems, and operating mechanism. Looked at in terms of the literature reviewed earlier, TQM becomes a moderating factor to achieve the desired outcomes by filling the gaps in traditional management principles and practices, realigning management practices where the traditional management has become out of synch with the current socio-technical environment, and making the best of what is still in synch from the traditional management.

The moderating effects of TQM are outcomes in terms of "customer-value orientation" signified by a comprehensive customer needs measurement approach, techniques of translating customer needs to products and services, and a comprehensive customer value delivered measurement system, TQM oriented "organizational systems" signified by process orientation, systems approach, cooperative supplier relationships management, teamwork-based operating mechanism, work standardization and diffusion of best work practices across the organization. The outcome of TQM as a management framework essentially means integration of TQM philosophy into the organization's strategic management process, hence, a greater role of operations function in the organization's strategic planning.

One of the major weaknesses found in the case organizations was lack of awareness of the "means" to achieve continuous improvement, even when awareness for the "need" is evident. The philosophy behind TQM is built around Deming's principle of "profound knowledge". One element of profound knowledge relates to variability and its handling. A TQM initiative based on "outcome thinking" would bring an organizational outcome that emphasizes availability of operational knowledge as well as operational data. This is the concept of **fact-based decision-making**.

## 4 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings in the literature and the case studies would suggest that a predominant view, at least in the investigated cases, in Kenya is one of "TQM as a program" to implement, get audited against ISO 9001 standard and obtain the certificate to use for making the customers confident, and get more business. It is however encouraging that, despite earlier disappointments, the recognition of TQM as something that can bring about performance improvement is overwhelming. Perhaps TQM itself, as Sousa and Voss (2002) asserts, is now mature.

It has taken decades for management theories relating to the traditional process of management to reach the level when it can now be seen as the rational way, the norm. Classical management theories, the social relations and the contingency approaches, as well as the concepts that they have borrowed from, among others, the early church and military organizations, have become the norm because they constitute the curriculums in business and management schools. "TQM as a program" view will definitely give way to "TQM as a management framework" when its concepts and principles have become the norm. At this stage, awareness of the "means" to achieve continuous improvement will have become part of every manager's toolkit.

Just like it was with the management theories relating to the traditional management process. TQM concepts and principles will require knowledge dissemination to be part of every manager's toolkit. Just like many countries and regions have taken steps to aid and make this possible through Quality Award frameworks such as the Deming Prize, the Baldrige Award, the European Quality Award and Business Excellence Model, governments in Sub Saharan Africa and the institutions involved in management knowledge dissemination have critical roles to play. The traditional roles of governments, management training and higher education institutions to bring about technology transfer applies, TQM being one such technology - a management technology (Fukuda, 1994) cannot be emphasized enough. The mentioned sectors or institutions should help expand awareness of the "means" so that organizations in the country can move from awareness of the "need" to awareness of both - and TQM will be able to become a better way of managing - a management framework, to many and

our industries and public organizations will have the key technology of managing productive systems in a competitive way.

An important conclusion that can be drawn from the investigated cases is that very often, what is considered as an implementation of TQM, using whichever framework, may, in fact, be a mere superficial audit of an organization's management system as it concerns the customer requirements. It can, in no way be used to determine the impact of TQM adoption on performance, since, as proved in the cases of Organization 1 and Organization 2, certification is not an indicator.

Future studies should now empirically test the impact of having in place organizational systems and methods as listed for TQM outcomes, in the Sub Saharan Africa. Specifically, would an organizational outcome in which there exists customer-value orientation in the management system, TQM-based organizational systems, fact-based decision making, continuous improvement, and higher level emphasis on strategic implementation have a significant impact on achievement of goals? According to van der Wiele and Brown (2002) such an organization would probably be having the highest level TQM-based management system, even when the organization's management and members are not calling it so. A formalized, statistical empirical study of these issues in Sub-Saharan Africa, and Kenya in particular, would help in understanding of the outcome issues in TQM.

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## 6 APPENDICES

### 6.1 Appendix 1: Questionnaire

#### SURVEY SECTION A

Date of interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (for administrative purpose only): \_\_\_\_\_

Job/role level in organization:     managerial         non-managerial

Joined the organization:

before the start of quality initiative     After the start of the quality initiative

Quality Management framework: \_\_\_\_\_

1. In your own perception, which of the phrases below is closest to how you would describe the framework that is guiding your organization's quality initiative?

It is a quality System     It is a management tool

I Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_.

2. In your own opinion, to what extent is each of the following statements true of your

I	Very true	Some-what true	Cannot comment	Some-what not true	Absolutely not true
Quality department/section drives our organization's quality system,					
Achievement and retention of the ISO certification registration is totally dependent on the quality department/section _____					
In our organization, we carry out inspections of work outputs before they are sent out or they reach the external customer					
In my organization, people in managerial positions are considered to require training on quality.					

3. In your organization, what would you say would provide the clearest evidence, to you and your colleagues, of success in the quality initiative?

Successful audits by third parties

Successful internal audit

Not sure/No comment

Successful 3rd party audit and business performance.

Assessment of performance in both internal and external focused business performance dimensions.

Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_:

4. What are your goals and gains in initiating the quality management adoption?

5. Which one, between the pair of factors is the greater focus of your organization's performance improvement
- the products                       the process of producing the products
6. Which one, between the two phrases best describes what happens in your organization as regards work outputs
- We review work outputs if, and when we receive a complaint or complaints from customers
- Review of work outputs is generally intuitive and is not necessarily dependent on customer complaints.
7. In your organization, if the following problem solving situations arise, which one, between each pair in a row, would be given more attention?
- Problem encountered prior to shipment or release which have potential impact on revenue turn-over
- Problem detected or occurring after the product or service has been paid for.
- Problem encountered prior to shipment or release which have potential impact on revenue turn-over
- Problems occurring over a period of time
- Problem encountered prior to shipment or release which have potential impact on revenue turn-over
- Problems or problems relating to service design or plan.
8. Which the following statements about training on quality is closest to the general view held or what happens in your organization?
- Training on quality is given to both managerial and non-managerial staff to more or less equal extent.
- Non-managerial staff receive training on quality more than managerial staff.
- Senior managerial staff do not really need training on quality.
9. One of the requirements in ISO 9000 management system standard is continuous improvement in effectiveness through management reviews. Which of the following statements is closest to your own time allocation over the years to this activity?
- I attended all review meetings until we got certified/registered.
- I attend review meetings when time allows
- I am not required nor have I been required to attend review meetings.
- I attend most of the review meetings.
- I attend all review meetings.
10. Which of the two sources below best describes the source of your knowledge on the quality management philosophy?
- Informal sources through our organization's quality initiatives
- Formal sources through education/formal training on quality management
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

11. Please indicate by ticking the scale that, in your opinion, best represents your organization's

	Much worse than other organizations					Moderate/slightly better					Much better than others				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Return on investments	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Return on assets	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Sales growth	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Cost control	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Productivity	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Reliability	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Reputation	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

12. What would you say about your organization's performance in the above listed criteria/dimensions (taken together as average) since the start of the quality initiative?
- Performance has remained relatively the same
  - Performance has improved
  - Performance has declined

## SURVEY SECTION B

13. Which one, between each pair in a row, is closest to perception and views in your organization, especially, your own view?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Continuous improvement is a requirement of our quality certification.  | <input type="checkbox"/> Continuous improvement is part of our organization's strategy to achieve our <u>goals</u> .                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Our quality policy guides all our <u>decision on operating processes</u> .   | <input type="checkbox"/> Quality Management philosophy guides all our <u>decisions on operating processes</u> .   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> We are open and ready to explore other change strategies and philosophies to see how and where they can fit into our situation and <u>goals</u> .        | <input type="checkbox"/> We have decided on and adopted this path and prefer to follow it to achieve our goals.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quality Management can help our organization obtain higher productivity from the organization's <u>human resource pool</u>                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Quality Management is a strategy and a management philosophy.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Our achievement of certification or success in third party assessment will make customers feel confident of our quality awareness and <u>reliability</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> Achievement of certification or success in third party assessment will facilitate improvement in our organization's performance. |

14. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

- |   | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|
| Meeting the requirement for the ISO standard and being certified was our <u>greatest triumph</u> .                                  |                |       |                            |          |                   |
| In our organization, managers are judged by the number of quality teams they have initiated in their areas of <u>jurisdiction</u> . |                |       |                            |          |                   |

15. Your view on the current reporting system for errors, mistakes or defects in documents or service.

- Reporting level is inadequate
- Reporting level is somewhat inadequate
- Cannot comment.
- Reporting level is somewhat adequate
- Reporting level is adequate.

16. Your view on your organization's achievement of ISO certification.

- Achievement of certification is very important.
- Achievement of certification is somewhat important
- Cannot comment.
- Achievement of certification is somewhat unimportant
- Achievement of certification is unimportant.

17. How true is the following statement: During the implementation, the greatest fear we had was failure of the ISO implementation program.

- Absolutely not true
- Not really true
- Cannot comment.
- Somewhat true
- Absolutely true

18. Which one, between the pair of statements, is closest to perception and views in your organization, especially, your own view?

- |                          |   |                           |
|--------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| We have put in place ISO | [ | We have put in place good |
| I 1 9000 quality system. |   | management principles and |
|                          | ] | <u>practices</u>          |

**SURVEY SECTION C**

19. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement about your

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I					
In my organization, structure and framework for deployment of policies is in place	1	2	3	4	5
In my organization, a structure and framework for solving problems is in place.	1	2	3	4	5
In my organization, process control techniques are applied to the basic operation and service processes to provide the key error or defect prevention method.	1	2	3	4	5
In my organization, there is long term and company-wide program for training.	1	2	3	4	5
In my organization. I am expected to continuously look out and seek to improve the activities within mv work area or sphere of influence	1	2	3	4	5
In my organization, there are in place cross-functional teams and forums for discussing and advising on problem solving and improvement issues.	1	2	3	4	5
In my organization, outcomes of cross-functional teams and forums are widely communicated.	1	2	3	4	5
In my organization, benchmarking studies are	1	2	3	4	5

<b>initiated and data used to facilitate improvement.</b>					
<b>In my organization, there is element of pre-occupation with numbers.</b>	<b>i</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>In my organization, there is high level of trust between organizational levels</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

initiated and data used to facilitate improvement.					
In my organization, there is element of pre-occupation with numbers.	1	2	3	4	5
In my organization, there is high level of trust between organizational levels	1	2	3	4	5

