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Management Commitment, Employee Training and Implementation of Quality Management Systems in Motor Vehicle Sector in Kenya: A Case Study of Isuzu East Africa Limited

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Abstract

A successful QMS implementation requires top management commitment and quality employees' training before, during and after the implementation process. This paper assessed the effects of top management commitment and employee training on implementation of quality management systems in motor vehicle sector in Kenya with reference to Isuzu East Africa Limited Ltd. This paper begins by providing a general perspective of QMS and then narrows down the literature review to top management commitment, employee training and implementation quality management systems a motor vehicle. The review was followed by data collection by administering 63 questionnaires to staff at IEAL from top management to middle managers and lower-level employees. The employees were selected by use of stratified random sampling. Primary data was supplemented by secondary data in literature review. Data was analyzed and presented using descriptive statistics including mean and standard deviation. Finally research findings, recommendations and conclusion were made.

***Key Words*:** *Employee Training, Motor Vehicle Sector, Quality Management Systems, Management Commitment, Total Quality Management.*

1.0 Introduction

It is the aim of every organization to achieve and maintain a sustainable competitive edge. This is only possible if an organization engages in operations or produces products that are

able to effectively compete in the market. Bearing in mind the nature of the current market; characterized by ever stiffening competition and ever changing customer expectations and demand, an organization must come up with unique competitive strategies and produce goods and services that continuously meet and exceed these demand and expectations. This calls for continuous quality improvement through participation of all stakeholders. One of the management approaches that can be used to achieve continuous quality improvement is Total Quality Management (Sadikoglu & Hilal, 2018).

According to Kenneth (2015), a quality management system (QMS) is a collection of business processes focused on consistently meeting customer requirements and enhancing their satisfaction. It is expressed as the organizational structure, policies, procedures, processes and resources needed to implement quality management. Early systems emphasized predictable outcomes of an industrial product production line, using simple statistics and random sampling.

Globally, a number of organizations have adopted quality initiatives. Toyota company for instance developed the philosophies of 'customer first' and 'quality first'. They set up quality assurance systems across various divisions and departments (Omware, 2013). They introduced statistical quality control (SQC) in 1949 followed by Total Quality Management (TQM) initiatives based on the unchanging principles of 'customer first' and 'total participation'. Sony Company set out to respect their customer's viewpoints and remain committed to deliver quality products and customer service that exceed their customers' expectations. To achieve this, Sony implemented continuous, decisive efforts in enhancing product quality and continuously improves its quality management system (Sony Company, 2012). The Coca-Cola Company focused on developing consistency and reliability in their products. The company created an integrated quality management program which is used in all operations of the organization to ensure they deliver quality to customers (Weinberg, 2011).

In Kenya, many organizations, especially at the manufacturing industry have embraced quality management techniques such as ISO standards and TQM programs. For instance, all government parastatals and Public Universities in Kenya are currently ISO certified (Kenya Bureau of Standards, 2014). Management plays a critical role in any key business decision. Consequently, the success of any critical decision made in an organization is highly dependent on top management support and commitment (Barney, 2015). Quality issue has

become of great importance to every organization and no management can afford to let nature take its course when it comes to quality. The top management must play a leading role by making available the critical resources, establishing an organization wide quality policy that is well communicated to all stakeholders, establishing a quality management structure and managing the entire process through close monitoring and evaluation. This must be supported by an organization culture and climate of open cooperation and team work among stakeholders in quality management.

Myers and Newman (2017), considered training as an important factor that boosts employees' efforts towards improvement. To him, quality training includes educating and training of employees at all levels in the organization with an intention of broadening their knowledge on quality issues and programs and providing them with information about the organization's quality mission, vision and general desired direction. According to Liao (2015), employee training is one of the most important requirements in a successful TQM implementation. Management personnel, supervisors and other employees require skills and knowledge on quality dimensions and management as well as their roles in TQM implementation. Owing to the fact that market quality needs are very dynamic, organization must ensure continuous employee development and training on quality management.

The issue of quality has become of great importance especially with the ever growing concerns and demands from various players in the market. These demands arise due to the increased number of reported quality issues in the motor industry (Quazi & Jacobs, 2004). General Motors and Toyota had their massive scandals. Now it was Volkswagen's turn. The company, which owns 70 percent of the U.S. passenger-car diesel market, is in major trouble for cheating on diesel-emissions tests. According to Marcus (2019), the Volkswagen emissions scandal (also called "emissionsgate" or "dieselgate") started on 18 September 2015, when the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a notice of violation of the Clean Air Act to German automaker Volkswagen Group. All these scandals and failures were caused total quality management failures.

Few studies have focused specifically on examining quality management standards implementation in Kenya. Kenneth (2015) did a study on the role of quality management system adoption in growth and management of small and medium enterprises in Kenya. The findings indicated that entrepreneurial management, marketing orientation and capacity enhancement of employees had a significant linear 7 relationship with quality. Kenneth

(2015) carried out a study on the effect of quality management systems on the performance of food processing firms in Kenya. They found out that quality practices are critical in achieving and maintaining this competitive performance. These practices include top management support, capacity enhancement, adoption and utilization of information technology and control measures. Ogada (2012), studied the quality management practices adopted by sugar manufacturing companies in western Kenya. The study found out that quality management practices that were practiced by the sugar factories were top management commitment, organization for quality, employee training/education, employee involvement, supplier quality management, customer focus, quality system improvement and statistical quality techniques.

To respond to these failures, most organizations have resorted to adopt and implement TQM and operations management strategies that have been seen to work elsewhere in as much as quality management is concerned. However, this has not been successful (Sadikoglu & Hilal, 2018). A number of studies that have been done on TQM have identified two focus areas: the factors within TQM and the critical factors for implementation of TQM (Ogada, 2012). While many studies have looked at these factors, it is important to note that most of these studies have been done mostly in the USA and European countries. In Kenya, very limited concrete research if any has been done in motor vehicle sector with none having been conducted in Isuzu East Africa Limited. This study will aim to bridge this gap by looking at the factors that affect implementation of TQM systems in Motor vehicle sector in Kenya using Isuzu East Africa Limited as a case study.

The aim of this paper was to find out the effects of top management commitment and employee training on implementation of quality systems in motor vehicle sector in Kenya with reference to Isuzu East Africa Limited, Kenya. The Study Hypotheses which guided this paper was to find out what is the effects top management commitment on implementation of quality systems at Isuzu East Africa Limited and to what extent does employee training affect the implementation of quality systems at Isuzu East Africa Limited?

This findings from this paper will be of help to the managers make TQM policies that are purpose driven, while being clear on the organization's vision for the future and staying focused on it. With the practice of TQM it will be a powerful technique for unleashing employee creativity and potential, reducing bureaucracy and costs, and improving service to

clients. This will give the organization competitive edge over competitors who do not practice total quality management.

2.0 Literature Review

Theoretical Literature Review

Systems Theory

General systems theory was first proposed by von Bertalanffy (1968), as a universal theory of the organization of parts into wholes. A system was defined as "a complex of interacting elements". A system is a cohesive conglomeration of interrelated and interdependent parts that is either natural or man-made. Every system is delineated by its spatial and temporal boundaries, surrounded and influenced by its environment, described by its structure and purpose or nature and expressed in its functioning. Wang (2004), the goal of systems theory is systematically discovering a system's dynamics, constraints, conditions and elucidating principles that can be discerned and applied to systems at every level of nesting, and in every field for achieving optimized equifinality.

A deeper incursion into system theory is thus required in order to better characterize QMSs. Depending on their features, systems can be classified in many ways. According to Pfeffer (2013), their interactions with the environment, systems can be defined as isolated systems, with no communication with the exterior; closed systems, exchanging only energy; and (open systems, exchanging both energy and matter. Even if organizations are sometimes characterized as closed systems in conventional approaches (assuming that the behavior of an organization mainly depends on its internal elements), it is useful to correctly recognize QMSs as open systems due to their essential need to exchange matter, energy, and information with the exterior (Mu-Jeong Kho, 2009).

According to Sadikoglu & Hilal (2018) from a systemic point of view, QMSs are preferably handled according to "classic" GST rather than Complex adaptive systems because of their "planned" activity, which is required by the standards with which they have to comply; thus their control mechanisms are treatable under the theoretical frame of conventional Thermodynamics and Cybernetics. Thus QMSs are systems in which new properties emerge with difficulty (Mu-Jeong Kho, 2009). Their organizational patterns seem to be unsuitable to promote the rise of new outcomes and innovation. The need to avoid misleading goals is probably incompatible with the ideas of innovation inherent to the CAS model. However, it

should be noted that some elements of the most recent ISO 9001 standard seek to give QMSs an arrangement closer to the more recent complex system approach. Some aspects, in fact, such as a certain peripheral responsibility in managing processes, breakthrough improvements, and enhancing internal competence as a development factor, seem to be an attempt to embrace more recent approaches based on complexity (Aström & Murray, 2008).

Findings from The TQM Journal by Tito (2010), shows the real incorporation of the modern systems view into quality management; the second is the key role of joint quality and systems thinking in value generation. Techniques and technology are absolutely necessary, but they will not produce the necessary changes. Among the competitive factors, they are no longer the most critical. The fragmented view of management is not just a quality management problem, but also a general management problem. At the roots of the problem of approach and tool fragmentation there is a strategic fragmentation, the lack of systemic perspective, silos-type organizations, and excessive specialization.

Customer Satisfaction Theory

Customer satisfaction emerged as a distinct area of inquiry in the 1970s by Churchill & Surprenant in 1982 and companies both big and small have realized the strategic benefits of service quality and customer satisfaction as competition become more intense and global. The achievement of customer satisfaction has become a good business practice that businesses strive to achieve (Aderson, 2015). The marketing and consumer behavior literature has traditionally suggested that customer satisfaction is a relative concept, and is always judged in relation to a standard (Bruhn & Grund, 2010). Satisfaction exists when consumers perceive their output/input ratio as being fair. According to this theory, parties to an exchange will feel equitably treated (thus, satisfied), if in their minds, the ratio of their outcomes to inputs is fair. Whether a person feels equitably treated or not may depend on various factors including the price paid, the benefits, the time and effort expended during the transaction and the expectations (Liao, 2015).

Quality and satisfaction are very often inter-related. As said earlier, the term “customer satisfaction” became popularized in the 1980’s with the total quality movement. Customer Driven Excellence and Customer Focused Results remain important aspects of the Baldrige National Quality Program. However, it is a fact that there exists a gap between these two concepts. According to Sadikoglu & Hilal (2018), this distinction is important to both

managers and researchers alike, since service providers need to know whether their objective should be to have consumers which are satisfied with their performance or to offer the reinforce customer service excellence. Many of the theorists of customer satisfaction like Oliver and Rust viewed that satisfaction is a highly personal based assessment and as such, it emerges as a response to a single or prolonged set of service encounters.

The input in all quality systems are the customer requirements which are processed internally as dictated by factors affecting the implementation of the quality system to produce customer satisfaction. Quality systems culture is about getting it right first time and always. Systems realize growth through continual improvement and are aimed at better customer satisfaction. It is considered that customers judge products on a limited set of norms and attributes (Liao, 2015). Equity disconfirmation has been supported empirically, though it applies primarily to social interactions (Kenneth 2015). The very essence of quality systems is customer satisfaction (Holyle, 2009).

Empirical Literature Review

Management Commitment and Implementation of TQM

Top Management plays a critical role in any key business decision. Consequently, the success of any critical decision made in an organization is highly dependent on top management support and commitment (Barney, 2015). Quality issue has become of great importance to every organization and no management can afford to let nature take its course when it comes to quality. The top management must play a leading role by making available the critical resources, establishing an organization wide quality policy that is well communicated to all stakeholders, establishing a quality management structure and managing the entire process through close monitoring and evaluation. This must be supported by an organization culture and climate of open cooperation and team work among stakeholders in quality management (Liao, 2015).

Arshida and Agil (2012), points out top management commitment as an essential element for ensuring successful TQM implementation. The top management must be on the fore front of the quality management process starting from the initial stages. According to Omware (2013), adoption of TQM for the first time is associated with development of new organizational policy, new procedures and new tools that must be learned. TQM is an organizational change process that is often associated with instability, confusion, and

employees' resistance and must be carefully initiated through consistent management involvement. This was consistent with Sadikoglu & Hilal (2018) that top management must develop clear quality mission and goals and identify quality values and communicate them to all employees. They must put in place a proper quality planning process, and a good quality management structure to ensure successful implementation.

Management role is said to be a very important role in success of TQM. Without proper guide line from the top management the implementation of TQM will be difficult for the successful of TQM Crosby, Deming, Feigenbaum, Garvin, Juran and Gryna. According to Pfeifer (2013), the degree of support that management takes in the Management role has been given very importance in success of TQM. TQM cannot be fully implemented if there is a lack of coordination from top management. So for the success of TQM is necessary that proper guide line is necessary from top management otherwise there would be complete failure.

Good quality leadership by top management has been highlighted and supported by many researchers management as the basis for proper implementation of TQM in order to achieve job satisfaction (Arshida and Agil, 2012). To achieve total quality it is important that the top managers should guide their subordinates to achieve goals and as well treat quality as an important matter. They should give quality a first priority to set standards and allocate sufficient resources to continuous quality improvement and reward employees according to their performances (Minjoon, 2013). Most organizations have declared unsuccessful to follow practices of TQM because of the negligence form top management in delegation some authorities and empower employees (Minjoon, 2013). This is a very important factor because if the managers are serious looking after employees and empowering the employees, the employees will be responsible for the quality of their work and they are accountable for the work and this how there would be improvement in the organization.

Employee Training and Implementation of TQM

Employee training has frequently accompanied the introduction of Total Quality Management programs. According to Myers & Newman (2017), training is an important factor that boosts employees' efforts towards improvement. Training program geared towards quality initiatives includes training employees at all levels in the organization aiming to increase employees skills and knowledge on quality management; systems, process, programs

and providing them with information about the organization's quality mission, vision and the strategic direction. According to Liao (2015), employee training is one of the most important requirements in a successful TQM implementation. Skills and knowledge on quality dimensions and management are required by all human resources from management, supervisors and employees as well as their roles in QMS implementation. Owing to the fact that market quality needs are very dynamic, organization must ensure continuous employee development and training on quality management.

Myers and Newman (2017), considered training as an important factor that boosts employees' efforts towards improvement. To him, quality training includes educating and training of employees at all levels in the organization with an intention of broadening their knowledge on quality issues and programs and providing them with information about the organization's quality mission, vision and general desired direction. According to Liao (2015), employee training is one of the most important requirements in a successful TQM implementation. Management personnel, supervisors and other employees require skills and knowledge on quality dimensions and management as well as their roles in TQM implementation. Owing to the fact that market quality needs are very dynamic, organization must ensure continuous employee development and training on quality management. As Bruhn & Grund (2010), points out that employee training that is focused on quality management determines how effective an organization's quality management initiatives will be. While to Zhang (2010), investment in employee training and development is a critical component to successful TQM implementation. Omware (2012), identified two elements which must be considered before training employees on quality. These are: Knowledge and understanding of the quality management process and an understanding on quality management tools. A TQM training program must equip employees with an understanding on the TQM program and their role in it.

Conceptual Framework

The framework below is adopted in the paper to show the relationship between independent and dependent variables. The following variable has some relation with implementation of quality systems in the motor vehicle sector in Kenya.

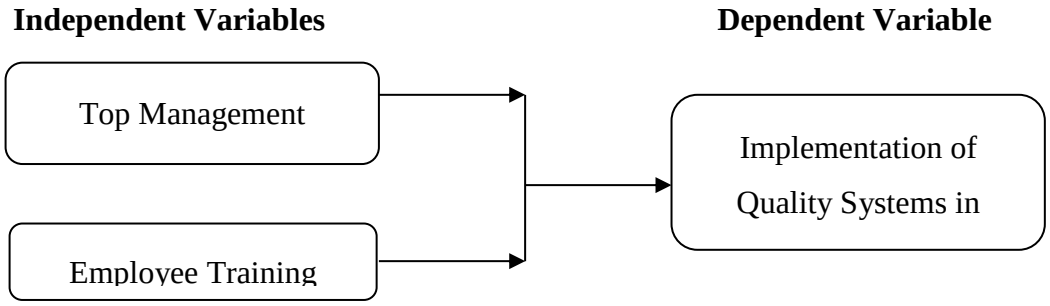

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

3.0 Methodology

The present paper used a descriptive research design since it enabled the researcher to seek new ideas from the respondents and develop an insight to the problems under study. The paper focused on all employees of Isuzu East Africa Limited as they were all involved in the implementation of quality management systems in the following categories, which had a total population of 419 numbers of persons. Stratified random sampling was used because the group was heterogeneous and the researcher wanted each member of the target population to have an equal chance of participating in the study. The study used a sample size of 15% of the target population that is 63 employees, as this sample size was in line with Myers and Newman (2017), who states that, for a small population (under 3000) a ratio of about ten to sixty is needed as a representative sample.

Table 2: Target Population and Sample Size

Category	Frequency	Sample Size	Percentage
Senior Managers	17	3	4
Middle Management	93	14	22
Low-Level Employees	309	46	74
Total	**419**	**63**	**100**

This paper used primary data collected through questionnaire. The questionnaire were made up of closed ended and open ended questions to avoid being too rigid and quantify data.

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Secondary data was collected from published materials. After designing and pre-testing the questionnaire, the researcher self-administered them to the participants in all levels in person. The researcher gave the respondents a detail procedure on how to answer the questions.

Researcher used both qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques to analyze the data. After collection, the completed questionnaires were edited and coded to facilitate Statistical analysis. Data was summarized by descriptive statistics measures including means, modes, median, variances and standard deviations. Qualitative data was categorized on the basis of common descriptive characteristics and then analyzed. Quantitative data was classified on the basis of numerical characteristics. Tables, statistical charts and pie charts were also used to present the data. The research established correlations between the various variables; since the data was on ordinal scale not interval or ratio scale, the study employed spearman's correlation coefficient. Multiple Regression equation was used to determine the relationship between independent and dependent variables

The multiple regression equation that was used takes the form of:-

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1\chi_1 + \beta_2\chi_2 + \varepsilon$$

Y= Implementation of Quality Management Systems

χ_1 = Management Commitment

χ_2 = Employee Training

Where:-

Y = Dependent Variable

β_0 = is a Constant

ε = Error Term

χ_1, χ_2 Are Independent Variables

The model was tested at 5% level of significance using F-test.

4.0 Findings

Out of 63 questionnaires distributed 51 were returned, that is 80.95% of the total population and only 12 which is 19.04% was not returned. The response rate was able to give the information needed by the researcher. In relation to top management commitment 90.19% of the respondents agreed that it does affect implementation of quality management systems at

Isuzu East Africa Limited whereas 9.8% of the respondents disagreed. Respondents indicated that success of the implementation process in the organization is highly dependent on top management support and commitment. These findings are in line with Myers & Newman (2017), that the top management must play a leading role by making available the critical resources, establishing an organization wide quality policy that is well communicated to all stakeholders, establishing a quality management structure and managing the entire process through close monitoring and evaluation. Majority of the respondents agreed that top management commitment do affect the organization.

The second factor was employee training and a response 90.19% indicated it does affect implementation of quality management systems while 9.8% disagreed. These findings concurred with Marcus (2019), that employee training is one of the most important requirements in a successful quality management systems implementation. Gupta (2008) indicated that quality training has to train all employees at all levels in the organization with an intention of equipping their knowledge on quality issues and programs and providing them with information about the organization's quality mission, vision and general desired direction. Majority of the respondents agreed that employee competence do affect implementation of quality management systems in motor vehicle sector in Kenya.

Findings after evaluating the effects or results after implementation of QMS. To measure the impact of implementation of QMS with most of the respondents agreeing that implementation of QMS has led to improved customer fucus and satisfaction with 59.5% and 36.5% of the respondents being strongly in agreement. Majority of the respondnets 62.3% and 36.7% agreed strongly agrred that QMS implementation has led to improved product and service quality respectively. Additionally, most of the respondents 60.6% agreed and 38.8% strongly agreed that QMS implementation has improved employee morale. 64.3% agreed and strongly agreed 34.6% that implementation of QMS has led to elimination of defects and waste. Lastly the view that QMS implementation has led to waste reduction was supported by 63.1% and 33.1% of the respondents who agreed and strongly agreed respectively. The results of the current study agree with those of Ogada (2012), who observed that the general objective of QMS implementation and TQM is to ensure continuous improvement in the organization's people, systems, processes and environment so as to achieve improved customer service and increased profits through efficiency and effectiveness in the entire organization. The findings are summarised under Table 3.

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Table 3: Findings on Implementation of QMS

	Statement	SD	D	I	A	SA	Mean	STD.D
1.	**Implementation of QMS has led to:**							
A.	Customer focus & satisfaction			4.0 %	59.5%	36.5%	4.30	.763
B.	Improved product and service quality			1.0%	62.3%	36.7%	3.87	1.061
C.	Improved employee morale			0.6%	60.6%	38.8%	3.77	1.165
D.	Elimination of defects and waste			1.1%	64.3%	34.6%	3.86	1.140
E.	Cost reduction		0.4%	3.4%	63.1%	33.1%	4.00	1.218

Correlations Matrix

Table 4 shows that there is a positive association between Implementation of QMS and top management commitment as shown by a correlation coefficient of 0.665 and a p-value of less .001. The p-value is less than 0.05 and hence the association was significant. There is a positive relationship between Implementation of QMS and employee training with a correlation coefficient of 0.341 and a p-value of .001 which is less than 5%.

Table 4: Correlations Matrix

		Top Management Commitment	Employee Training	Implementation of QMS
Top Management Commitment	**Pearson Corelation**	1	.656	.665
	Sig. (2 tailed)		.000	.000
	N	88	88	88
Employee Training	**Pearson Corelation**	.656	1	.341
	Sig. (2 tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	N	88	88	88
Implementation of QMS	**Pearson Corelation**	.665	.341	1
	Sig. (2 tailed)	.655	.001	
	N	.000	88	88

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Regression coefficients are estimates of the unknown population parameters and describe the relationship between a predictor variable and the response (Freedman, 2009). In linear regression, coefficients are the values that multiply the predictor values.

Table 5. Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	8.11	0.574		8.012	0.000
Top Management Commitment	0.621	0.022	0.811	14.15	0.000
Employee training	0.660	0.031	0.384	4.42	0.000

The resultant regression equation becomes;

$$\mathbf{Y = 8.11 + 0.621X_1 + 0.660X_2}$$

Where: Y is implementation of quality systems at Isuzu East Africa Limited; β_0, β_1, and β_2 are the regression coefficients and X_1, and X_2, represent top management commitment and employee training. This implies that when all the variables of the study are held constant, implementation of quality systems at Isuzu East Africa Limited will be at the intercept which is 8.11. A unit improvement in top management commitment while all other factors held constant results in 0.621 increase in the implementation process while a unit increase in employee training with other factors held constant leads to a 0.660 improvement in implementation of quality systems at Isuzu East Africa Limited. These findings support those of a study conducted by Kasongo and Moono (2010), which revealed that one crucial reason why organizations are unable to effectively implement QMS is because of a lack of commitment of top leadership to sharing organizational knowledge or there are too few role models who exhibit the desired behavior. The study also support that of Kenneth (2015), who conducted an empirical study on the critical factors of TQM in Palestinian organizations and found that top management commitment and involvement demonstrated by: development of clear organization mission, development of quality policy and values, setting of realistic quality goals, proper planning on quality management and creating quality management structure created quality awareness and improved implementation of quality management systems.

5.1 Conclusion

The paper concludes that top management commitment is an important aspect in implementation of quality management systems. Top management commitment has a positive impact on implementation of QMS. Top management commitment is a very important factor to the operations of the organization thus it has a direct effect to the implementation of quality systems at Isuzu East Africa Limited and all other organizations.

Moreover the paper concludes that employee training is important requirement in a successful QMS implementation. The study findings pointed out that employee's knowledge and understanding of the quality management process and an understanding on quality management tools must be considered before training employees on quality. Employee training is an important factor in implementation of quality management systems.

6.1 Recommendations

This paper recommends that Isuzu East Africa Limited and other organizations who are implementing QMS to take strategic measures in ensuring top management participation and commitment to quality initiatives. Management should be committed to quality policy and must play a leading role by making available the critical resources, establishing a wide quality policy that is well communicated to all stakeholders as management role is said to be a very important role in success of quality management systems.

The organization should look at their selection and recruitment process to make it more ethical in order to get highly competent and highly qualified personnel. The paper recommends that training at Isuzu East Africa Limited should be included in the QMS implementation plan, complete with a calendar or training events to keep employees informed and a budget for training resources and these trainings should be conducted frequently at all levels of organization.

This paper suggests the following: further studies may be done to explore other factors other than top management commitment and employee training, and their influence on QMS, further studies may be done to relate these factors to other variables like organizational culture, technology, and financial resources, further studies may also be done on other quality management initiatives such as ISO standards and statistical quality control. In addition, similar studies may be done in other sectors, especially in the public sector.

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