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EVALUATING TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF WATER PACKAGING COMPANIES IN KADUNA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This research critically evaluated the effects of total quality management (TQM) on the organizational performance of water packaging companies in Kaduna State, Nigeria. Three research questions and three hypotheses were developed and tested at a 0.05 (5%) significance level, guiding the survey research design. The target population comprised 500 registered water packaging companies listed with the Kaduna State Ministry of Trade and Commerce. A sample of 50 companies with valid NAFDAC registration numbers was selected using purposive sampling, representing 10% of the overall population. Of the 60 questionnaires administered, 56 were retrieved, representing 93.3%. Data were collected using the Perceived Total Quality Management Practices and Organizational Performance Questionnaire (PTQMPOPQ), validated by two experts. Items deemed inappropriate were removed before testing reliability, resulting in a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.85. Researchers and three research assistants distributed and collected the questionnaires. Regression analysis was used to examine the relationship between the predictor variable (TQM) and the outcome variable (organizational performance in water packaging). Results indicated that employee involvement and management participation significantly impact the performance of water packaging companies in Kaduna State, while customer focus has no impact. One of the key recommendations is that businesses in the water packaging industry and beyond should make it a regular practice to support sustainable employee engagement measures.

Keywords: Total Quality Management, Employee Involvement, Top Management, and Organizational Performance.

Introduction

In today's fast-paced, globalized world, an organization's ability to be flexible, responsive, and adaptable in consistently delivering high-quality, reliable, durable, and reasonably priced goods and services on time, regardless of location, quantity needed, or safety concerns, is essential. The widespread availability of advanced information and communication technologies, such as computers, smartphones, and artificial intelligence (AI), is transforming the global economy and environment into a more complex network of interconnected, borderless economic activities. Globalization is fueled by media, multinational corporations, trade, tourism, investment, technology transfer, communication, and transportation systems, along with shorter travel times, price fluctuations, increased competition, and multilateral organizations like the World Trade Organization and the United Nations. This is giving global corporate citizens and consumers more supremacy over organizations, boosting market rivalry, and expanding consumer preferences. All of this creates new markets, intensifies competition, and disrupts existing business models for both private and public organizations. Organizations need not be static but adopt transformational intelligence to turn insights into lasting change by embracing an integrated and coordinated approach to establish and sustain their competitive advantage in global markets.

Competitive advantage in this context involves implementing strategies that other firms cannot directly copy, leading to cost reduction, increased market opportunities, reduced competition levels, and improved overall company performance (Kuo, Lin & Lu, 2017). Organizations must possess dynamic capabilities, which are the capacity to adjust to demand and shifts in the external environment. Swinehart and Green (1995) confirmed that increased competition has raised customer expectations and heightened awareness of higher standards in product and service quality. This is crucial because consumers are now the primary decision-makers for any business viability, as they are more concerned than ever with the quality of the goods and services provided to them. Therefore, maintaining a business's viability means meeting the needs of both internal and external customers with high-quality goods and services as they expect the best value for their money, because their patronage and satisfaction levels determine the organization's performance. It is similar to how schools cannot exist or function without students, just as teachers cannot work without schools and students.

Customer dissatisfaction can harm any organization's success, especially if its products and services deteriorate (Jung, Wang, and Wu, 2009). To increase their satisfaction and encourage them to continue doing business with the organization, the products and services they receive must be of high quality.

High quality refers to the entire set of features of a product or service that affect its ability to meet stated or implied needs, such as serviceability, durability, and dependability, among others. Quality is strategy organizations implement to achieve

their stated goals and gain a competitive advantage in the business environment (Awu,2022). This explains why quality is no longer just a competitive advantage, but a requirement for survival and needs to be maintained, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises, or SMEs (Anifowose, Ghasemi, Olaleye, 2022; Joy & Victoria, 2019).

Any business organization that is carrying out its managerial functions effectively and efficiently to meets its goals and excels must have effective planning, strategy, and strategic goals, whether for a short-term, mid-term, or long-term duration, in order to survive and sustain its tempo. According to Manning (2019), establishing strategic goals can significantly impact employee involvement vis-à-vis organizational performance. It offers employees clear objectives, which helps keep them engaged and motivated. Gupta, Bhardwai, and Kanda (2010) affirmed that failure to forecast the future may harm organizational goals due to unidentified constraints. As a result, achieving strategic goals and objectives is an important aspect of organizational performance that depends on the effective and efficient management of these 11Ms (men, money, marketing, machines, methods, minutes - time management, motivation, measurement, maintenance, and management), given limited resources. Efficiency and effectiveness are two sides of the same coin that should not be pursued separately, as they are complementary and work together towards achieving the organization's goals and objectives. Thus, effectiveness can be defined as the suitability of the organization's goals in terms of specificity, measurability, attainability, relevance, and timeliness. In contrast, efficiency is the allocation of minimal resources to maximize outputs in the performance of organizational tasks, thereby achieving the organization's goals and objectives.

According to Abrokwah-Larbi and Awuku-Larbi (2024), performance can be viewed as the process by which an organization emphasizes its objectives while emphasizing the importance of implementation and outcomes. Weiss and Hartle (2023) argued that in order to manage performance, organizations must first understand the performance indicators and their impact on overall organizational performance. Therefore, meeting the organization's performance goals and objectives helps to keep the business running and reduces the risk of failure

Palin (2016) viewed Total Quality Management as the organization, culture, and mindset of a business that strives to provide customers with goods and services that satisfy their needs. Undoubtedly, TQM practices have an embodiment that helps organisations maintain a high level of quality in their operations in order to thrive in a world that is becoming increasingly interconnected. Sweis et al. (2019) argued that the concept of total quality management has gained widespread recognition as a solution for many organizational issues. As TQM is a comprehensive management framework strategy that focuses on quality, relies on the involvement of all team

members, increases customer satisfaction, and seeks long-term organisational performance, brand reputation. Othman, Khatab, Esmaeel, Mustafa, and Sadiq (2020) affirmed that TQM provides a framework for improving an organization's performance, competitiveness, and adaptability. Okeoma (2019) considered TQM as an improvement on the conventional business model and also a tried-and-true method for ensuring survival in international competitiveness, while Adeoti (2013) averred that total quality management is a way of managing to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, and flexibility of a business as a whole. Since the 1980s, Total Quality Management (TQM) practices have been adopted to maintain or regain competitiveness and achieve customer satisfaction vis-à-vis organizational performance. Dipasupil and Dipasupil (2018) conducted a study in order to identify the predominance of Total Quality Management (TQM) practices in small and medium-sized manufacturing companies in the Philippines and their relationship to financial performance. The results reveal that the TQM practices in terms of management leadership and commitment, customer satisfaction, and continuous improvement are highly predominant, while employee involvement, training and education, and rewards and recognition are only moderately predominant. Given this background, TQM practices such as employee involvement, customer focus, and top management vis-à-vis organizational performance were examined in this context.

Employee involvement or participation in process and product improvements is vital because they are a key part of the business. According to Unal (2017), a company with a competent workforce can achieve high-quality work and maximum productivity. It is said that 85% of quality-related problems in businesses can be attributed to employees (Faisal & Zeejin, 2019). Alghamdi (2018), submitted that employee empowerment has a significant impact on human resources because it can help in problem-solving and fostering dedication to organizational issues. Pambreni et.al. (2019) discovered that TQM practices, namely customer focus, continuous improvement, strategy-based approach, and total employee involvement, have a positive and significant impact on organizational performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the service sector in Selangor, Malaysia. Furthermore, Murenga (2020) found that TQM practices significantly influenced the quality-of-service delivery at Horizon Offices Limited, Kenya. Additionally, the firm effectively involved employees through motivation, consultation, incorporating their input and ideas, providing competitive compensation, engaging them regularly, and prioritizing their contributions. Employee engagement in various activities boosts their motivation to meet business goals. The success of an organization may be significantly improved by employee involvement, especially if they can concentrate more on the needs of their customers.

Customers' focus is, without a doubt, the center of attention for any business aspiring to thrive.

The primary characteristic of Total Quality Management (TQM) is that businesses prioritize their customers, and they aim to exceed their expectations. This explains why TQM places a strong emphasis on staying in touch with customers, listening to their needs, and making adjustments as necessary (Akhtar, Abubakar, & Al-Qassim, 2024). Buttressing this fact, businesses must comprehend their present and future needs, meet them, and strive to surpass them. This is accomplished by conducting research, comprehending all the customer's needs and expectations regarding goods, services, delivery dates, costs, and dependability, and connecting the goals set with the needs and expectations of the client (Al-Damen, 2017). Additionally, all levels of the facility are informed of these needs and expectations, and customer satisfaction is measured, and actions are taken based on the results (Al-Damen, 2017).

Again. Khan, Mirza, & Khushnood (2020) focused on client and provider functionalities both internally and externally, as well as staff involvement for continual improvement. A corporation can maximize the potential of every person by putting policies in place that guarantee that every facet of operations is in accordance with meeting customer wants and organizational objectives while minimizing waste of time. Management ensures that managerial functions are performed freely across the entire organization while maximizing the available limited resources to swiftly and successfully meet set goals (Ubabudu, Aminu, Adamu, & Mazeli,2024). According to Abdul, Saffar, and Mishael (2020), the organization's goals and tactics depend on the vision, planning, and backing of top management. They serve as the foundation of a well-designed TQM program, and the organization's management often influences other employees. To ensure excellent activities, senior management must dedicate the most time and effort to developing practical, clearly defined systems. TQM practices, implemented from top management down to the lowest employees, are vital for any organization in any industry to succeed. When management focuses on creating value and providing customers with high-quality, affordable goods and services on time for users or customers' deep satisfaction, profits become a result and byproduct rather than the main goal (Ubabudu, et.al 2024).

Organizational performance consists of an organization's actual output or results compared to its intended outputs (Fakhar & Haji Din, 2021). Richard, Devinney, Yip, and Johnson (2021) defined organizational performance as a broad construct that encompasses the efficiency and effectiveness with which an organization achieves its goals. Effectiveness and efficiency in an organization are signs that a business meets its goals with the least number of resources possible, resulting in maximum production with no waste or duplication of effort, delivered on schedule, and with the quickest possible turnaround.

In the same way, Johnson (2021) identified a two-pronged framework for performance evaluation: financial performance and operational performance. The financial

component includes traditional metrics such as profitability, revenue, and market share, while the operational component concentrates on customer satisfaction, product quality, and internal process efficiency. This dual approach provides managers with a holistic view of organizational health by combining financial results with operational effectiveness. Nevertheless, Kaplan & Norton (2022) concur that a combination of non-financial indicators, such as innovation capacity, employee involvement, and sustainability initiatives, as well as financial metrics like profitability, revenue expansion, and return on investment, is commonly used to evaluate organizational performance, which is inherently complex. Nevertheless, high performance, quality, and customer satisfaction might be the goal of a public company, whereas increasing profits and customers can be the goal of a private corporation (Othman, 2020).

This explains why businesses continued to search for a more effective and sustainable ways to increase output and achieve higher quality, which is closely linked to high quality in many ways (Sweis, Ismaeil, Obeidat, & Kanaan, 2019). Particularly after businesses worldwide recognized the need for efficient total quality management procedures to stay competitive (Al-qahtani, Alshehri & Abd. Aziz, 2015). In light of this, providing high-quality services, involving employees, satisfying customers, efficiently managing resources, and implementing total quality management practices that enhance productivity and organizational performance are the ways to achieve competitive advantage and excel. The sustainability of contemporary business now depends on the quality of its goods and services in today's competitive world. TQM is a corporate management concept that strives to excel in every aspect of the company's operational process, starting from the initial supplier to the end user (Firman & Thabrani, 2018). Total Quality Management (TQM) is a corporate philosophy that helps organisations achieve long-term success through a methodical and strategic approach to quality management, rather than merely a collection of tools

Several TQM practices can be used to enhance customer satisfaction and organizational performance, but how effective were their implementation, and to what sectors of the economy and the country does the research apply? The primary question driving this research is how businesses and other sectors of the economy, especially the service sectors, such as water packaging firms in developing countries like Nigeria, can effectively compete with multinational corporations in a diverse multicultural environment, achieve total quality management in the global market, thrive, and still sustain their competitive edge. Another important aspect of this research is how organizations can successfully implement total quality management practices to improve service delivery to demanding customers. These challenges prompted this research and raised questions on the efficacy of several total quality management (TQM) practices used to boost organizational performance. Scholarly works has mainly focused on other sectors of the economy, such as the

manufacturing industry, health care, and educational institutions, and in foreign countries, not specifically in the service sector or Nigeria, creating a significant research gap and making this study essential to examine the perceived impact of Total Quality Management practices on the organizational performance of selected water packaging companies in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

One of the primary concerns and issues in business organizations, including the service sectors is developing and sustaining a competitive advantage for organizational performance using Total Quality Management practices. Total Quality Management (TQM) practices place much emphasis on improving the quality of goods, services, and processes in all departments and sections in an organization. Numerous studies have demonstrated that 'Total Quality Management" (TQM) can enhance and significantly improve organizational performance (Akhtar, Abubakar, & Al-Qassim, 2024; Fakhar & Haji Din, 2021; & Pambreni, Khatibi, Azam, & Tham,2019). However, the majority of these previous TQM studies were conducted primarily outside of Nigeria and concentrated either on the plastic manufacturing company, the security sector, or the educational sector. For instance, Akhtar, Abubakar, and Al-Qassim (2024) examined the impact of TQM and Strategic Human Resource Management Practices on the Performance of Plastic Products Manufacturing SMEs in Rawalpindi, Pakistan. Fakhar and Haji Din (2021) investigated how the elements of Total Quality Management affected the Dubai Police's organizational performance and the moderation of organizational support, while Siddique et al. (2021) examined the effect of Total Quality Management on the chemistry performance of Pakistani secondary school pupils. Pambreni, Khatibi, Azam, and Tham's (2019) research study was on the effect of total quality management (TQM) on organizational performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) service sector in Selangor, Malaysia. Notably, none of these studies to the best knowledge of the researchers, except this present study, focused on the service sector water packaging industry in Kaduna, Nigeria. This is critical considering that most organisations have either gone out of business or struggling and crawling to climb the apex ladder in today's competitive business environment to no avail, as they are unable to incorporate total quality practices into their operations and achieve their organizational performance.

Given the knowledge gap in scholarly academic studies due to dearth of literature on the service industries in Nigeria like the water packaging industries and the conflicting literature findings, this study will not only fill the knowledge gap in the literature regarding how the organizational performance of some selected water packaging industries in Kaduna State, Nigeria, is also impacted using TQM practices as a predictor variable. Total quality management practices such as employee involvement, customer focus, and management participation are expected to

influence the criterion variable (dependent variable), which is organizational performance in a causal way. The primary goal of this study is to determine how variations in the predictor variable TQM practices affect changes in the criterion variable, in order to provide accurate facts and their implications for research and practice**.** In view of these research gaps and problems, the study seeks to provide answers to these questions

Research Questions

Three research questions guided the study:

(i) Does employees' involvement affect the performance of some selected water packaging companies in Kaduna?

(ii) What is the effect of customer focus on the performance of selected water packaging companies in Kaduna?

(iii) Is there any effect of management participation on the performance of some selected water packaging companies in Kaduna?

Hypotheses

Three null hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance:

1. Employees' involvement has no significant effect on the performance of some selected water packaging companies in Kaduna.
2. Customer focus has no significant effect on the performance of some selected water packaging companies in Kaduna.
3. Management participation has no significant effect on the performance of some selected water packaging companies in Kaduna.

Methodology

This research employed a descriptive survey research design. The target population was 500 water packaging businesses registered with the Kaduna State Government Ministry of Trade and Commerce. A purposive sample of 50 firms with a valid Nigerian government National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) registration in Abuja was selected from this population to ensure legal operation, representing 10% of the target. A self-developed research instrument titled 'Perceived Total Quality Management Practices and Organizational Performance Questionnaire' (PTQMPOPQ) was used for data collection. It yielded a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.85, which was considered high enough for this study

Results

Table1. Regression Result of the Effect of Employee Involvement

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.325	1	1.325	6.007	.001[b]
	Residual	11.907	54	.221		
	Total	13.232	55			
a. Dependent Variable: OP						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Employee Involvement						

Coefficients[a]						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.653	.814		2.031	.047
	EI	.435	.178	.316	2.451	.018
a. Dependent Variable: Organization performance						

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.316[a]	.100	.083	.46958
a. Predictors: (Constant), Employee Involvement				

Table 1 above reveals that at a t-value of 2.451, the p-value (.018) is less than the level of significance (0.05); thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. This Table shows that employee involvement, as one of the total quality management practices, has a significant effect on the performance of the water packaging companies at Kaduna that were investigated.

Table 2. Regression Result of the Effect of Customer Focus

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	0.04	1	0.04	0.17	.898[b]
	Residual	13.228	54	.245		
	Total	13.232	55			
a. Dependent Variable: OP						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Customer Focus						

Coefficients[a]						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.768	.969	-	3.889	.000
	CF	-.028	.214	-.018	-.129	.898
a. Dependent Variable: Organization performance						

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.018[a]	.000	-.018	.49494
a. Predictors: (Constant), Customer Satisfaction				

For Table 2, the researchers found that t=-.129, and p > 0.05, implying that the null hypothesis is accepted. This reveals that customers' focus has no significant effect on the performance of water packaging companies in Kaduna.

Table 3. Regression Result of Management Participation

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	7.465	1	7.465	69.900	.000[b]
	Residual	5.767	54	.107		
	Total	13.232	55			
a. Dependent Variable: Organizational performance						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Management Participation						

Co-efficient						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.431	.268		5.337	.000
	MI	.645	.077	.751	8.361	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Performance						
Model Summary						

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.751[a]	.564	.556	.32680
a. Predictors: (Constant), Management Participation				

From the analysis of Table 3, t=8.361, with p < 0.05, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This also reveals that management participation significantly affects the performance of the studied water packaging firms in Kaduna, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The study assessed the impacts of employee involvement, customer focus and management participation on the performance of selected water packaging companies in Kaduna State, Nigeria. The result of this analysis shows that employee involvement has a positive and significant effect on some selected water packaging businesses in Kaduna, Nigeria. This indicates that when employees are empowered, engaged, and allowed to participate reasonably in organizational processes, they tend to show higher levels of commitment and productivity. Such involvement encourages a sense of ownership and belonging, which ultimately translates into improved performance. The results are consistent with those of Faisal and Zeejin (2019), who found that participation in a range of organizational activities boosts employees' motivation to achieve organizational objectives. Involving workers in all facets of the business increases their dedication, morale, and inventiveness, which helps them make more meaningful contributions to the organization's success and general efficiency.

However, the analysis found that customer focus has no significant effect on organizational performance in the context under consideration. This demonstrates that, despite the fact that customer-oriented practices are theoretically central to TQM, they may not have been adequately developed or effectively implemented in the organization. Internal processes and operational dynamics may have a greater direct impact on performance at this stage than external customer-related factors. Alternatively, the organization may lack strong customer feedback systems or consistent, quality-driven customer service practices. This contrasts with Okeoma's (2019) research findings, which discovered a significant positive relationship between customer focus and organizational effectiveness. According to Ogbaje and Victor (2018), meeting customers' expectations reveals how loyal a customer is to a brand or provider, which can result in increased sales, lower price sensitivity, and positive remarks about the brand and provider.

Among all the predictors, management participation emerges as the strongest contributor to organizational performance. The highly significant and positive effect of management participation underscores the crucial role that leadership plays in driving performance outcomes. When management shows active commitment and provides strategic guidance, employees are better positioned to effectively perform. Strong managerial involvement ensures that quality initiatives are not only implemented but sustained, thereby reinforcing performance improvement across the organization. This result is in accordance with the TQM theory that identifies leadership as a critical pillar of organizational success. Additionally, the result also demonstrates that management involvement significantly affects the success of the Kaduna water packaging companies under study. In a similar vein, Imran, Salman, and Jian (2018) argued that in order to consistently increase an organization's

productivity, top managers should remind everyone of their responsibility and promote cooperation and dedication. Imran, Salman, and Jian also emphasized that top managers should be in charge of coaching and guiding employees, respectively, in order to enhance the achievement of organizational goals.

Conclusion

The results revealed that total quality management practices (TQMPs) such as employee involvement and management participation influence the organizational performance of water packaging companies in Kaduna, Nigeria, whereas customer focus has no significant effect. The findings of the study provided insights into the dynamic nature of organizational performance in the context of some selected water packaging industries in Kaduna State, Nigeria. It reveals how Total Quality Management (TQM) practices influence selected water packaging businesses in Kaduna, Nigeria. The explanatory value indicates that TQM is an important driver of some selected water packaging businesses in Kaduna State. The three TQMPs need to be used effectively and efficiently consistently to improve and sustain organizational performance. The more these practices are implemented, the better the performance of the organizations.

Recommendations

Based on the research study's findings, the researchers put forward the following recommendations:

1. Businesses in the water packaging industry and beyond should make it a regular practice to support sustainable employee engagement measures. Giving workers a sense of trust, empowering them, and freedom to participate in offering solutions to managerial issues will make them feel belonged, motivated, desired, and loved, thereby contributing and putting in their best for the success of the organizational performance.
2. Strategic initiatives should constantly be in place to monitor customers' preferences, requests, and desires. It is imperative to emphasize that a company only needs a solid customer base to stay competitive. As a result, consumer desires, feedback, and grievances' opinion channels should be genuinely provided and acknowledged, as well as successfully addressed on time without delays.
3. Those in charge of the organization at the top of the administrative ladder should set an example, demonstrate empathy, and their commitment to creating and preserving the organizational structure and environment in order not to be toxic. The organization's managerial echelons should possess managerial acumen, emotional and cultural intelligence, problem-solving skills, empathy, and humane character to consistently provide the necessary resources, accord respect and treat their employees or subordinates as human beings for the system's continuous growth and development, regardless of their positions and duties. This will foster a friendly,

balanced work and life environment as well as promote the achievement of the organization's goals and objectives.

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