



# Effect of people engagement on performance of ISO 9001:2015 certified organisations in Zimbabwe

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## Abstract

**Purpose** - The purpose of this study was to establish the effect of people engagement, one of the principle of the ISO 9001 (QMS) on performance of ISO certified organisations in Zimbabwe.

**Design/methodology/approach** - The study was grounded on the positivist philosophy informed by the quantitative paradigm. The target population comprised of all ISO 9001 certified organisations in Zimbabwe and a sample size of 121 respondents. The study adopted census sampling technique and primary data was collected using self-administered questionnaires. Data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics was used to summarize data while inferential statistics, specifically Multiple Linear Regression, was used to test hypothesis.

**Findings** - Based on the findings of the study, the researcher inferred some important conclusions that people engagement was found to be positive and significant, and thus all variables had a positive effect on performance. The study recommends that management should be committed to people engagement with respect to the dynamics of quality management practices, which should be aligned to the organisations' objectives. Policy makers should create a quality framework that is geared towards improving performance and ensure it is adhered to by all stakeholders in all ISO certified organisations in Zimbabwe.

**Originality/Value** - In the literature, studies that relate ISO 9001:2015 quality management practices focussing on people engagement, particularly in Zimbabwe is scarce. Therefore, the originality of this research is to relate the effect of people engagement on performance of ISO certified organisations in Zimbabwe.

**Keywords:** Quality, Quality management system, International Standardization organisation (ISO), Performance, Zimbabwe

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The dynamics of quality management systems are putting companies across the globe under pressure to provide quality products and services to their customers (Amankwah, 2018). Today, market demands require companies to operate under a dynamic and flexible system, which is responsive to changes and uncertainties (Phan et al., 2019). To respond to the increase on global competition, a considerable number of organizations have implemented ISO 9001 Quality Management Systems (QMS), aiming to respond to external stakeholder pressures or to internal motivations and achieve increased performance (Fonseca, 2015). Delivering quality services and products to customers is thus a rocky road for firms that do not employ quality management systems. The process of change embedded in QMS should help firms progress continuously and gradually leading to shared responsibilities among empowered work forces under a harmonious, balanced and team working environment towards quality (Yam et al., 2018). Quality management system is a powerful tool that is dynamic, and a series of quality management systems have been put in place since time immemorial. Companies have survived decadence by making use of the changing quality management systems.

According to World Bank in the Newsday of 3 July 2016, reported that only 9,7% of firms in Zimbabwe have an international recognised quality certificate, a situation that puts local firms on the negative with regards to global competitiveness. A majority of Zimbabwean firms' products and systems are not certified to national or global quality standards, with only 140 out of a possible 5 000 having taken certification standards, according to the report on the 13 August 2017 by Standards Association of Zimbabwe. Failure by local firms to certify to minimum national and international quality standards might partly be the reason they have struggled to match competition on global markets due to inferiority of products or processes.

Many African countries, including Zimbabwe, have adopted ISO standards and have noted that the ISO certification is applicable to any type of organization, including the manufacturing sector, and it drives performance improvement. The big question is whether ISO certification brings about quality or whether quality has to be inbuilt.

Putting studies from various countries into the Zimbabwean context, ISO 9001 is a tool that organisations can use to gain the benefits it brings to aid in the revival of the economy. According to the Sunday Mail Newspaper of 5 July 2015, direct foreign competition had increased from 58% in 2013 to above 90% in 2014. This could be witnessed by an influx of foreign produced products to the local market, (CZI Report, 2014). All this led to loss of both local and foreign market share by the Zimbabwean manufacturing sector. Local customers told The Daily Newspaper of 19 May 2014, that they preferred imported products because they were of better quality than locally produced products. This confirmed that local firms' performance was affected by perceived low quality products. The CZI report for the year 2014, also found out that some Zimbabwean manufacturing companies were not exporting their products because they did not meet international quality standards. It seemed these firms were not confident to export their products because they were of inferior quality to those of other international players.

## **2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Organisations in Zimbabwe are against a backdrop of an ever-changing environment. In order to survive, they need to adopt philosophies that are applied to other countries and are known to succeed. One such philosophy is ISO 9001 practice, and it has been implemented successfully in other countries. Local products and services are being forced to compete with imported goods and they have been found worrying in terms of quality and prices. Related literature showed that the food and beverage industry seemed to be losing market share because of quality related challenges. For example, Delta, the major player in this industry lost 12% and 10% sales in lager beer and soft drinks respectively because of the proliferation of imported beverages into the country, (Delta Corporation Full Year Report 31 March 2015). Similarly, Dairiboard seemed to be facing quality problems in raw milk and this resulted in related imports gaining ground (Dairiboard Annual Report, 2014).

To date, and despite the fact that many Zimbabwean companies began to adopt ISO 9001 certification in the last two decades, the literature on ISO 9001 practices and its impact is still limited. Therefore, this motivates the researcher to investigate the impact of ISO 9001 quality management practices on all ISO 9001 certified companies in Zimbabwe focusing on one of the principle which is leadership commitment. The problem can be stated thus: What is the effect of people engagement on performance of ISO certified companies.

## **3. PURPOSE/AIM OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of the study was to establish the effect of of people engagement on performance of ISO certified organisations in Zimbabwe.

## **4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This study was aimed at discovering the effect of people engagement on performance of ISO certified companies in Zimbabwe.

## **5. THE RESEARCH QUESTION**

How does people engagement affect performance of ISO certified organisations in Zimbabwe?.

## **6. RESEARCH HYPOTHESEIS**

On the basis of review of literature, following hypothes are formulated:

**H<sub>01</sub>**: People engagement has no effect on performance of ISO certified organisations in Zimbabwe.

## **7. SIGNIFICANCE/JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY**

The findings of this study can assist the government and industry regulators when they are crafting quality management policies so that quality managers and management representatives operate from an informed position with regard to quality matters and when drawing quality improvement plans.

The findings of the study will benefit the management in developing written policies and standard procedures based on the requirements of the ISO standard. These procedures describe how operations in the firm should be conducted and maintained for consistency. They are meant to ensure that the output (products or services) of organisations are of a quality high enough to meet the specifications set by the customers.

### 8. ASSUMPTIONS

In undertaking this research study, the researcher made the following underlying assumptions;

- a. ISO 9001 certification refers to certification to ISO 9001:2015 version.
- b. The organisations selected have the same experiences in terms of the parameters being assessed by the study.
- c. The information provided for the study by the respondents will be a true representation of the facts.

### 9. DELIMITATION OF STUDY

The study was delimited to:

- 1. The study was done on all ISO certified companies in Zimbabwe.
- 2. Responses were collected from either shop floor manager or quality control manager.
- 3. The sample of organisations chosen covered the manufacturing, service and mining sectors of industry. It covered the period 2015 - 2021.

### 10. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The concept of ‘quality’ has existed for many years, though the meaning has changed and evolved over time. In the early twentieth century, quality management meant inspecting products to ensure that they met specifications. In the 1940s, during World War II, quality became more statistical in nature. Statistical sampling techniques were used to evaluate quality, and quality control charts were used to monitor the production process. In the 1960s, with the help of so-called ‘quality gurus’, the concept took on a broader meaning. Quality began to be viewed as something that encompassed the entire organization, not only the production process. Since all functions are responsible for product quality and all shared the costs of poor quality and finally quality was considered as a concept that affected the entire organization. ISO 9000’s definition of quality is “degree to which a set of inherent characteristics fulfils requirement. Based on the theoretical and literature review, the conceptual framework in Figure 1 overleaf shows the interaction between research variables.

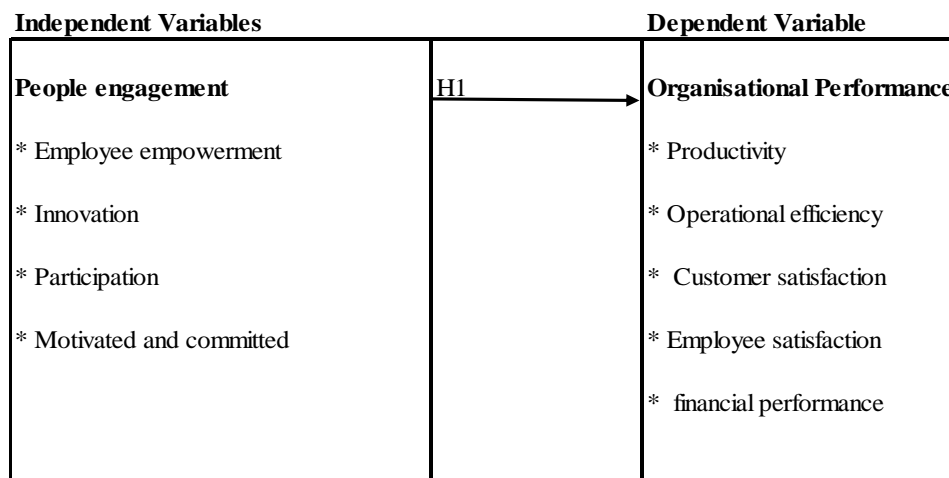


Fig 1.- systetic diagram

Source: Researcher

### 11. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### Theoretical Framework: Deming’s Theory of Profound Knowledge

Deming proffers the theoretical, philosophical, epistemological, and ontological foundations of the QMS (Koskela, Tezel & Patel, 2019). The current study is underpinned by Deming’s theory of Profound Knowledge. The basis of the theory is that knowledge comes from theory and without the theory there is no way to use the information that comes to us (Deshmukh, 2015). Deming identified four aspects of profound knowledge:

- **Structure of systems-** understanding the system in which work is being done (process management).
- **Control of variation-**knowledge of system operation comes from a study of performance variation, improvement requires the control of the sources of variation (statistical thinking).
- **Development of knowledge-**knowledge comes by observing work, defining a theory, testing, and confirming it.
- **Psychological Impact-**human behavior must be understood, motivated, and coordinated to achieve results, that is, collaborative culture (Deming, 1993, p. xi).

## 12. RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW

The ISO 9001 standard is an internationally recognized document that specifies requirements for the quality management system (QMS) of any organisation. The ISO 9001 standard set of requirements are based on a number of quality management principles which include customer focus, leadership, relationship management, process approach and continual improvement (ISO, 2015).

### 12.1 ISO 9001:2015 Standard

ISO 9001:2015 is the latest version of the standard and it takes a much less procedural approach and stresses the application of the Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle at all levels of the organization (Koskele, Tezel & Patel, 2019). According to Heras-Saizarbitoria & Boiral (2015), ISO 9001:2015 provides the guidelines for QMS. This is considered as the single standard in the ISO family that can be used by any organization (regardless of size, action, or business activities). There are more than 1 million companies certified to ISO 9001 in more than 170 different countries (Chen, 2018). A wide range of principles related to QMS are included in this standard (Jasper & Jamison, 2016). According to Chen et al., (2016), the major role of ISO 9001:2015 is to check whether the system is working properly or not.

These seven quality management principles are customer focus, leadership, engagement of people, process approach, continual improvement, evidence-based decision making, and relationship management. Thus, these seven quality management principles represent the observed variables that measure the extent of the implementation of ISO quality management principles.

### 12.2 People engagement

Principle 3 hinges on Engagement with People. The 'Engagement of People' is based on the idea that long-term success depends on employees throughout the organisation being able to create value (ISO, 9001 Standard, 2015). In accordance, QMS must focus on employees' continuous training and development, and thus on the development of competent teams, and on employees' competences, promoting empowered and engaged people in the organisation. Among other issues, the principle involves making employees accountable (valuing and taking advantage of employees' abilities), and promoting learning, knowledge sharing, problems' open discussion, employees' participation in continual improvement.

Engagement is mostly understood as an affective-cognitive-motivational state of fulfilment, not focusing on one object or on an event, individual or behaviour, but rather on employees' mental state, and its conceptualisation includes dimensions like vigour, dedication, and absorption (Ouweneel et al., cited in Castelerio & Mendes, 2020). Vigour refers to high levels of energy and mental action at work, the individual's willingness to put effort into the work and to be persistent even when difficulties occur. Dedication deals with being heavily involved in the work and feeling a sense of enthusiasm, inspiration, challenge, and pride. Absorption is represented by a state of concentration in which time passes quickly and the individual has difficulty in switching off from work (Castelerio & Mendes, 2020, p. 11). All these are attributes that are fundamental for employees to meet the dynamics of quality management at their companies.

People at all levels are the essence of an organization and their full involvement enables their ability to be used for the organization's benefit (International Organization of Standardization, 2011f). People, as human resource, are important in organizational changes. Involving the people in organization efforts create shared values (Hoyle, 2009), make substantial contribution to quality (Evans & Lindsay, 2008), and motivate them to contribute to changing organizational culture (Kim et al., 2011). According to ISO, it entails those workers will competently work if they are also empowered at all the levels all through the organization and this is essential to enhance its capability to produce and deliver value. The idea behind this principle is that it enables the management to manage an organization efficiently and effectively as it is imperative to involve all employees at all levels and to respect them as individuals.

## 13. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology section covers research philosophy, research paradigm, the design and the population of the study, sampling and sampling techniques, data collection and methods of data analysis that will be employed.

### 13.1 Research Philosophy

This study adopted positivism research philosophy and its literature is characterized by testing of hypothesis from existing theories through measurement of observable social realities, using data originally collected from the field (Saunders et al., 2007; Ericksson & Kovalainen, 2008).

In the study the scientific paradigm as guided by the positivist philosophy will be used to explore the impact of continual improvement on performance of ISO 9001 certified organisations in Zimbabwe.

### 13.2 Research design

There is no single design that exists in isolation (Saunders *et al.*, 2007); therefore, combining different designs in one study enables triangulation and increases validity of the findings. The study employed a combination of both explanatory and descriptive research designs to explain the relationship between ISO 9001 practices and performance of ISO 9001 certified organisations in Zimbabwe. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2006), descriptive research design is preferable, as it tries to answer the 'who', 'what', 'when', 'where' and sometimes 'how' questions. It also enables researchers to summarize and organize the data in an effective and meaningful way. According to Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008), descriptive research involves producing data that is holistic, contextual and one that is rich in details to test hypothesis or answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study. The study used Regression Model because the dependent variable is continuous, as recommended by Muthen and Muthen (2007). Multiple Linear Regression is used to establish the combined effect of all independent variables on the dependent variable. (Field, 2009). The model will be presented using linear equation. Using multiple linear regression analysis, it is possible to calculate the values of the constant coefficient ( $\beta_0$ ) and the slope coefficient ( $\beta$ ) from data already collected.

The overall equation of the effect of independent variables on organisation's performance

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \epsilon \dots \dots \dots$$

Where;

Y= Firms performance

B0= Constant (intercept)

$\beta_1$ -  $\beta_3$ = Coefficients of independent variable

X1- X3= Composite index of independent variable

$\epsilon$  = Error term.

The dependent variable in this study was firm's performance, while quality management practices indicators (quality management principles) will be the independent variables.

### 13.3 Population

The target population for this study is for all ISO 9001 Certified Organizations in Zimbabwe and which are at the time of study actively involved in business related to the Zimbabwean market.

### 13.4 Sample

The sample list is drawn from the collection of firms that are ISO 9001:2015 certified as of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015 according to Zimbabwe's authoritative standards organization, namely Zimbabwe Standard Association (SAZ) of Zimbabwe. It is also decided that at least three responses to be collected from each and every company to have data accuracy.

### 13.5 Sampling Procedure

Random sampling technique will be used to draw the sample in which member of the population to be studied has an equal and independent chance of being chosen to participate in the sample.

If random selection is carried out, there will be no chance of the systematic bias which can arise from subjective judgement in sample selection.

### 13.6 Research Instruments

Primary data will be collected using closed-ended questionnaires. The questionnaires will be used to explore the departmental manager's, quality manager's and internal auditor's views and observations on the study variables identified in the conceptual framework.

### 13.7 Data Collection

Questionnaires are sent to various ISO certified company in Zimbabwe via email to Quality Managers, Senior managers and Junior managers. A covering letter will accompany each questionnaire, explaining the nature of the study, requesting the participants to fill in and return the questionnaire via email.

## 14. DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

### 14.1 Response Rate

Data were coded and then cleaned to ensure consistency. As indicated in Table 1 below, out of 162 questionnaires distributed, 121 were correctly filled and returned. This constitutes a response rate of 74.6%, which was satisfactory to make conclusions for the study. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), Rogelberg and Stanton (2007) and Saunders *et al.* (2007), a response rate of 50% is adequate, a rate of 60% is good, and a response rate of 70% and over is very good. Based on this awareness, the response rate in this study was considered to be very good for the study.

	Questionnaires Administered	Questionnaires filled and returned	Percentage(%)
Respondents	162	121	74.6

Table 1 Response rate

(Source; Survey data, 2021)

## 14.2 People engagement

### 14.2.1 Descriptive Statistics

This sub-section presents the descriptive statistics for the engagement of people variables.

The range of the responses were 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (neutral), 4 (agree) and 5 (strongly agree).

No.	Statements	N	Mean	STD	Remarks
1	Recognize and acknowledge people's contribution, learning and improvement	121	4.19	0.552	Agree
2	Employees work as a team to realize the company goals	121	4.17	0.760	Agree
3	Empower people to determine constraints to performance.	121	4.31	0.885	Agree
4	Employees are involved in decision making in all quality matters within the company	121	4.23	0.804	Agree
5	Facilitate open discussion and sharing of knowledge and experience	121	4.10	0.746	Agree
6	Promote collaboration throughout the organisation	121	4.13	0.706	Agree
7	People actively seeking opportunities to enhance their competence, knowledge and experience.	121	4.06	0.778	Agree
8	People being accountable for their own performance.	121	4.17	0.663	Agree
9	People evaluating their performance against their personal goals and objectives.	121	4.09	0.856	Agree
10	People freely sharing knowledge and experience	121	3.96	0.907	Agree
	<b>Aggregate scores</b>		<b>4.14</b>	<b>0.766</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Table:2 Engagement of people responses results

(Source: Survey data, 2021)

As presented in Table 2, the overall mean score and standard deviation stands at 4.14 and 0.766 respectively. The mean score indicates that organisations have the capacity to support quality management practices, leading to performance enhancement. Competent, empowered and engaged people at all levels throughout the organization are essential to enhance its capability to create and deliver value. To manage an organization effectively and efficiently, it is important to involve all people at all levels and to respect them as individuals. Recognition, empowerment, and enhancement of competence facilitate the engagement of people in achieving the organization's quality objectives. It is essential for the organization that all people are competent, empowered and engaged in delivering value. Competent, empowered and engaged people throughout the organization enhance its capability to create value." Engaging people means employees are committed to their organization's goals and values, motivated to contribute to organizational success, and are able at the same time to enhance their own sense of well-being. An engaged employee experiences a blend of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job involvement, and feelings of empowerment. When we talk of the engagement of people it means that all the employees are competent, empowered and they are delivering value. An engaged employee will have a better perception of job importance. An engaged employee will have better clarity of job expectations. There will be more improvement opportunities. There will be regular feedback and dialog with supervisors. The Quality of working relationships of an engaged employee with peers, superiors, and subordinates is much improved. There is effective employee communication. The findings are also similar to the study done by Prize Ahumuza (2016) which indicated that engagement of people had a positively influences service delivery.

The study respondents in the first statement agreed that the leadership recognized and acknowledged people's contribution, learning and improvement as indicated by a mean of 4.19. People at all levels are the essence of an organization and their full involvement enables their ability to be used for the organization's benefit (International Organization of Standardization, 2011f). People, as human resource, are important in organizational changes. Involving the people in organization efforts create shared values (Hoyle, 2009), make substantial contribution to quality (Evans & Lindsay, 2008), and motivate them to contribute to changing organizational culture (Kim et al., 2011). According to ISO, it entails that worker will competently work if they are also empowered at all the levels all through the organization and this is essential to enhance its capability to produce and deliver value

The study respondents agreed that employees work as a team to realize the company goals as indicated by a mean 4.17. Muruganatham et al., (2016) said that many times workforce show unwillingness to embrace QMS. There could be many reasons of such resistance by the workforce. The absence of long term objectives, productive and cooperative relationship between management and non-management employees, employees' trust and



understanding of objective are few of the reasons which results in resistance by the workforce. This resistance by the workforce is another major barrier for implementation of QMS. Gupta H (2015) concluded in his study on employee satisfaction that one of the biggest impacts on a company's productivity was the satisfaction of the employees. If the high performing employees leave the company, it was even more difficult to attract new talent if your company was not satisfying the employees. The survey provided valuable input which are directly given by employees, it provides an understanding that how the employees perceive the organization. It is a guide to help those who conduct an employee opinion survey. Job provides an opportunity for the employees to exercise their skills at workplace. From analysis it was observed that there is a scope for the improvement of working conditions.

A mean score of 4.31 indicated that the respondents agreed that empower people to determine constraints to performance. Internal quality is connected both to the people and to the group and one must take responsibility in order to succeed (Andriansyaha, Taufiqurokhmana, & Suardi Wekkeb, 2019). When a company deals with humans and not only robot procedures, an understanding of structures and basic morals are vital and contribute to the process of learning how to implement the quality into the work process (Andriansyaha, Taufiqurokhmana, & Suardi Wekkeb, 2019).

With a mean of 4.23, the respondents agree that employees are involved in decision making in all quality matters within the company. Employee opportunities and contributions bundles are planned to designate the decision-making powers and responsibilities down the hierarchy by using self-managing/autonomous groups and assisting participation of employees through a feedback process (Wood SJ 2007). Employee's empowerment practices positively affect job-related performance of individuals through improvement in their self-efficacy standards [44] and organizational performance by enhancing employee's collective potency levels and sovereignty (Ubeda-Garcia M 2018).

There was also agreement by respondents on facilitating open discussion and sharing of knowledge and experience as indicated by mean 4.10. The finding has the similar nature with the study conducted by Fatma Mohammad Nassor (2015) and Gulet al (2012) who suggested that organizations should provide capacity development programs for employees to increase new and improved business knowledge and for enhancement of employee performance and productivity. Also the study of Al-Roubaie (2016), have suggested that impact of capacity building boost up human capital, and as value addition to local economy.

The study respondents agreed that leadership promote collaboration throughout the organization as shown by mean of 4.13. Collaborative leadership is a management practice that aims to bring managers, executives and staff out of silos to work together. In collaborative workplaces, information is shared organically and everyone takes responsibility for the whole. Collaboration has the benefit of opening up employees' eyes to the larger role that they play within the organization. When employees understand the role they play in helping the organization meet its goals—and the role that collaboration plays to advance this purpose—they are more likely to make a meaningful contribution. Schneider et al. (2003) report analyses of employee attitude survey data aggregated to the organizational level of analysis. These authors explored the relationships between several facets of employee satisfaction and organizational financial (return on assets; ROA) and market performance (earnings per share; EPS) using data from 35 organizations over a period of eight years. Thus, in contrast to previous studies, Schneider and his colleagues' study was able to make some inferences about directional causality (i.e., are employee attitudes a stronger cause of organizational performance than the reverse). Their results showed consistent and statistically significant positive relationships (over varied time lags) between attitudes concerning satisfaction with security, satisfaction with pay, and overall job satisfaction with financial (ROA) and market performance (EPS). Although these findings are consistent with applied researchers' and managers' implicit beliefs, their study was not without some surprises. One of the more surprising findings was related to overall job satisfaction and the performance criteria.

The results presented in the table show an agree that people actively seeking opportunities to enhance their competence, knowledge and experience as indicated by a mean of 4.06. According to Rashid, Bin Taib and Hj Ahmad (2016), management should provide training to employees with regard to QMS by getting them involved in teams and addressing and resolving their issues. This type of training can bring about a significant improvement in employees' attitudes, enhancing their motivation and creativity.

Respondents agreed that people are being accountable for their own performance as shown by a mean of 4.17. In a similar study, Bass (1990) noted that research on participative decision-making is more likely to be accepted by those affected by it, adding that everyone in the organization, from top to bottom, should be involved in quality matters. People are the source of ideas and innovation, and their expertise, experience, knowledge and cooperation should be harnessed and ideas associated with higher satisfaction adopted for higher quality decisions. Inayat W and Khan M.J (2021) carried a study of Job Satisfaction and Its Effect on the Performance of Employees Working in Private Sector Organizations, in Peshawar. The study was conducted to find out the link between job satisfaction and performance of employees working in private organizations of Peshawar, Pakistan. While studying the relationship of job satisfaction with different variables such as qualification, gender, occupation, family system, and marital status, it is concluded that job satisfaction has no significant association with gender, qualification, and family system, as well as marital status. It is determined from the study that job satisfaction is significantly correlated

with the occupation of employees. Hence, medical doctors are more satisfied in their jobs as compared to teachers and bankers. Furthermore, it is also concluded from the above results that the performance of satisfied employees is superior as compared to dissatisfied employees. Hence, the above results suggested that in order to improve the performance of employees such as quality of work, productivity, and leadership qualities, organizations should consider obvious factors of job satisfaction.

The study respondents agreed that people evaluating their performance against their personal goals and objectives as shown by mean of 4.09. Employee motivation and commitment (EMC) bundles help in directing efforts of employees toward the achievement of organizational objectives and provide them with the stimuli, required to engage in high levels of performance. These bundles comprise motivational practices like effective performance appraisal system to evaluate individual and team performance, associating these assessments with a fair incentive and compensation systems and job security of employees (Sung SY, Choi JN 2016). Employees while working toward the accomplishment of specific goals are expected to exercise high standards of performance once they receive continuous feedback on their tasks/behaviour and are sufficiently rewarded for performance (Sung SY, Choi JN 2016).

The study respondents agreed that people are freely sharing knowledge and experience as indicated by mean of 3.96. The findings are in line with studies done by Ahmeda T, Phumdarah T (2020) who investigated the impact of employee engagement and knowledge sharing on organizational performance: Study of HR challenges in COVID-19 pandemic. The research examined and evaluated employee engagement strategies related to the success of the organization. Researchers used quantitative analysis by collecting employee opinions using descriptive and speculative statistics and drawing important conclusions. The organization must give its employees the freedom to create an environment conducive to a dedicated professional life that inspires their work. Employees are an important asset for any organization. If they do not have enough space and time to combine work and pleasure at work, then dis-engagement may be found between employees. Organizations and employees trust each other to achieve their goals and objectives. Therefore, employee engagement must be embedded in the corporate culture. Employee involvement must be an ongoing process of learning, action and improvement. Thus, today’s organizations must actively look forward to meeting the expectations of employees, create an impact on the employees’ performance, which directly affects the performance of the organization. Similarly, knowledge sharing is also a significant predictor of organization performance, this study found a positive association between knowledge sharing and organization performance.

In a similar study, Marcus (2005:40) argues that the transition is changed from operate to cooperate. The involvement of people principle is reflected in ISO 9001 through the requirements addressing: participation in design reviews; defining objectives, responsibilities and authority; creating an environment in which people are motivated; internal communication; and identifying competence needs. People at all levels are the essence of an organization and their full involvement enables their abilities to be used for the organizations benefit (Gavil eta l,2008:28)

### 14.2.2 Regression Analysis

#### 14.2.2.1 Test of Hypotheses

##### **H03: Engagement of people has no effect on performance of ISO certified organisations in Zimbabwe**

The objective was to establish the effect of engagement of people on performance of ISO certified organisations in Zimbabwe. A null hypothesis (H03) was formulated with the assumption that engagement of people has no effect on performance of ISO certified organisations in Zimbabwe. The study used linear regression analysis to examine the relationship between engagement of people and organisation’s performance.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard error
1	0.257	0.066	0.058	0.472
a) a; Predictor constant:	Customer	focus		

Table:3 Model of fit of Engagement of people and firms Performance

Source- Survey data, 2021

Table 3 results shows that under Model One, the value of adjusted R2 was 0.058. This meant that engagement of people explained 5.8 % of the variations in organisation’s performance, while 94.2% is explained by other variables not fitted in the model.

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1.872	1	1.872	8.392	0.001
Residual	26.542	119	0.223		
Total	28.413	120			
performance					

Table 4: Analysis of variance statistics on engagement of people

(Source; Survey data, 2021)



The ANOVA Test in Table 4 shows the results for the Regression Model. The null hypothesis was rejected because the linear regression F-test result,  $(1,119) = 8.392$ , was significant at 5% level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and concluded that there was a significant relationship between engagement of people and organisation's performance.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.330	0.308		10.802	0.000
Engagement of people (EP)	0.222	0.077	0.257	2.897	0.004

Table:5 Coefficient of engagement of people and organisation's Performance  
(Source; Survey data, 2021)

Results in Table 5 indicate the model relating to engagement of people and organisation's performance. The model had an  $R^2 = 0.257$ , which meant the model provided a moderate fit. Following the linear regression analysis of engagement of people and organisation's performance, the fitted model was determined as:

$$CP = 3.330 + 0.257EP + e$$

Where:

CP = Firms Performance.

EP= Engagement of people.

The equation shows that engagement of people had a coefficient ( $\beta_0$ ) of 0.257. This meant that a unit change in engagement of people would result in a 25.7% change in organisation's performance. The t-statistic and corresponding p-value were t-value, = 2.897 and p value= 0.004 respectively. Therefore, at 5 percent level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected, implying that engagement of people had a positive significance relationship on performance of ISO certified organisations in Zimbabwe. High employee engagement equals less absenteeism, less turnover, less theft and defects. More safety, more profitability and better quality. And happier customers! Companies with better levels of employee engagement vastly outperform competitors in every area. Employees who are engaged with their job and employer are more productive because they are motivated beyond personal factors. They are more focused and more motivated than their disengaged counterparts. This means they work more efficiently and with the success of the organisation in mind.

The results are in line with the findings by The Workplace Research Foundation (December 2019) who found that employees who are engaged are 38% more likely to have above average productivity. Companies with a high level of engagement report 22% higher productivity according to Gallup data. Employers are quickly seeing this trend and investing more in employee engagement.

A relevant contribution to the literature concerns the proposal made by Stankeviciute and Savaneviciene (2018) identifying 11 characteristics of sustainable HRM—long-term orientation, care of employees, care of the environment, profitability, employee participation and social dialogue, employee development, external partnership, flexibility, compliance beyond labor regulations, employee cooperation, fairness, and equality. From all these characteristics, employee development and flexibility affect overall level of job satisfaction, which is the subject matter of our research.

In order to increase business efficiency, competitiveness, success, and to ensure sustainability, it is commonly agreed that the focus needs to also be on satisfying the needs of employees by providing them with good working conditions (R Raziq, 2015). Additionally, Al Mamun et al. (2017), Cantele and Zardini (2018), Delmas and Pekovic (2013), Pintão et al. (2018), and Dongho (2006) reinforced the core importance of employee satisfaction and the fact that their productivity crucially impacts the company's success or failure. An increase in the overall level of employee satisfaction also increases the level of retention. Work environment and working conditions are very important in this context. The ideal situation is for employees to be satisfied with their conditions and work environment (Chatzopoulou, 2015). The importance of Sustainability work environment in terms of enhancing satisfaction and motivation of employees, while increasing corporate sustainability performance, has been highlighted by Chang et al. (2018),

The results of this study are in agreement with research done by Patro C. H (2013) on the Impact of Employee Engagement on Organization's Productivity. After reviewing various researches and survey findings of employee engagement, it can be certainly concluded that high levels of employee engagement will lead to improved employee commitment & involvement towards job and thus creating a motivated workforce, that will work together to achieve the common goals of the organization. Acquiring skilled workforce is just not enough in today's changing economy like ours; instead a lot needs to be done to retain, involve and make them committed to the organization and its goals. Thus, engagement is a state where an individual is not only intellectually committed but has great emotional attachment with his/her job that goes above and beyond the call of duty so as to further the interest of the company. The organizations should not only provide their employees with great infrastructure and other facilities

but also freedom to make their work exciting and also are providing them an environment wherein they can say good-bye to a monotonous work. They should focus on retention as an outcome of three HR focus areas such as employee motivation, career growth & remuneration and compensation. Working in a safe and cooperative environment adds to the engagement level of an employee.

## 15 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 15.1 Summary

The objective of the study sought to determine the extent to which engagement of people affects performance of quality management practices on ISO certified organizations in Zimbabwe. Descriptive statistical analysis observed that responses from all respondents indicated that the overall mean score for the items used to measure engagement of people was 4.14 and the standard deviation was 0.766. That showed that most respondents agreed that engagement of people to QMS practices are important to the organization for effective management of quality management practices to enhance the organization's performance. The ANOVA results, generated from the regression model showed statistically significant relationship between engagement of people and quality management practices. The null hypothesis was rejected because the linear regression F-test result,  $(1,119) = 8.392$ , was significant at 5% level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and concluded that there was a significant relationship between engagement of people and organisation's performance. This implies that engagement of people triggers organizational performance. The findings imply that if the ISO certified organizations understand that people at all levels are the essence of an organization and their full involvement enables their abilities to be used for the organization's benefit.

### 15.2 Conclusions

Performance is a key focus of the company's management. This study investigated the relationship between people engagement and organization performance. Based on findings of this study, it is reasonable to conclude that people engagement contributed to performance of ISO certified organizations in Zimbabwe. The findings also revealed that engagement of people and performance show a positive and statistically significant relationship. This implies that engagement of people plays a role in influencing performance. Therefore, the study concludes that employee empowerment, systems integration and quality culture need to be non-substitutable and inimitable for improved performance.

### 15.3 Contributions to knowledge

Contribution of the study is as follows:

1. A few studies were taken to find out the impact of continual improvement on performance of ISO certified organizations in Zimbabwe. The study may be considered an attempt to unearth some information regarding implementation of ISO 9001 practices in all ISO certified organization in Zimbabwe.
2. The study reveals various motivating factors that encourage implementation of ISO practices in various organizations in Zimbabwe. This will certainly give impetus, industries to adopt quality management tools & techniques.

### 15.4 Recommendations

The research encourages all business to be ISO 9001 certified and to implement effectively since it enhances the organizational performance both in short and long run. Furthermore, it also helps organizations to be competitive in both local and international market at the same time helping newcomers to penetrate the market.

The study also recommends that the government uses ISO 9001 as a tool for economic revival by encouraging organizations whether public or private to be ISO 9001 certified so they can be regionally and internationally competitive.

### 15.5 Recommendations for further research

Future course of the work is as follows:

1. Future study may take consideration influence of the external environment in order to explore how the external environment affects quality management implementation.
2. The research used entirely quantitative data hence the use of more qualitative data will enable more information in terms of perception to be discovered. This creates an opportunity for future researchers to unearth some information that cannot be reviewed by a more quantitative approach.

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