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Influence of Management Support on Sustainable Performance of Kenyan Public Universities

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Abstract:

The implementation of International Standards for Organizations (ISO) is likely to benefit educational institutions through enhancing sustainable performance and improving performance. Most of the public universities in Kenya are ISO certified but their performance has been a question of concern. The objective of the study was to establish the influence of management support on sustainable performance of Kenyan public universities. This study used institutional theory to provide a basis of understanding of sustainable performance. Explanatory research design was used. The target population was 30000. Yamane's sample size formula was used to get a sample of 394 employees who included both teaching and non-teaching staff. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample size. Structured questionnaire was used to collect data. Data was analyzed by use of descriptive and inferential statistics mainly Pearson correlation and linear regressions. From the model, ($R^2 = .548$) shows that management support account for 54.8% variation in sustainable performance. The management support coefficient ($\beta = 0.680, p < 0.05$) indicated a significant effect on sustainable performance of public universities. An increase in management support improved the sustainable performance of public universities. The management support on ISO 9001 standards certification had significant influence on sustainable performance in public universities. The management support influenced the implementation of ISO 9001:2008, thus managers should be willing to come up with ways to enhance effective communication with employees in order for them to know how their work will be affected as a result of the implementation of ISO 9001:2008. It is important for the management to take special interest in encouraging the task performers to accept ISO 9001. It is also crucial for the management to have a comprehensive goal-setting process for quality in all major departments in the institution.

Keywords: Management, support, sustainable, performance, universities

1. Introduction

Sustainable output is one of the terms with a very broad meaning, because everyone has the right interpretation and lets the context look after the term. Over a certain period of time, sustainable output may usually be considered by activities (Illmer, 2011). In the field of transparency and strategic planning, reliable performance metrics are important. Quality assessment is the quantification and quality evaluation method as a tool used to assess efficiency and effectiveness of action (Wong, 2013).

The concept of sustainable development is significant, but it poses some challenges. Between them, at the beginning of a business initiative like ISO 9001 certification, it is relatively easy to encourage and enjoy, but Curry and Kadasah (2) have observed that maintaining dedication and motivation is more than often a problem in terms of time. Bateman (2005) defined sustainability as not a binary term, but rather a number of states that has only two states, which are both sustainable and non-sustainable. Bateman and David's (2002) sustainability model represents the multiplicity of the countries that categorize sustainability.

Despite high standards of sustainability in some industries, other businesses have difficulties with maintaining their long-term process improvement strategies, leading to lower standards of sustainability (Bateman, 2005). The discrepancies experienced by companies in supporting a common ISO 9001 system do not appear to be definitively solved. It remains largely unanswered in the words of Taylor and Wright (2003). The calculation of ISO standard quality for public universities results cannot be separated from growth rates. The accredited organizations of ISO 9001 are growing faster and the organizational output is not accountable to production, according to Terlaak & Kings (2006). This study was conducted in private sector manufacturing facilities in North America and explored whether certification according to ISO 9001 standards could have a competitive advantage and effect on institutional development.

Management engagement is very necessary if quality management strategies are successfully implemented in an organization. Pheny & Teo (2003) also observed that ISO 9001 must be communicated to the organization as a whole in

order to raise awareness, interest, desire and action. The development of leadership, loyalty and cohesion of intent empowers the organisation, in order to achieve the objectives of its policies, strategies, processes and properties. Top management takes responsibility for the implementation of the ISO 9001 quality standards; ensures that ISO quality system requirements are incorporated into business processes, involve, manage and assist employees in achieving quality objectives. The management creates a climate in which employees participate fully in the achievement of organizational goals (Oluoch, 2010).

Thuo (2013) considered adoption of the efficiency and organizational requirements of Kenya's ISO 9001 service providers. The study showed that the implementation of ISO 9001 is positive in order to improve operational performance. The requirement for university education in Kenya exceeds public universities' capacity to accept all eligible KCSE applicants. Education quality in public universities was adversely affected by the large number of students accepted with limited resources (Gudo et al. 2011) in a broader degree than private universities. Most high school and working-class students are looking for opportunities for university education. Quality issues are critical and urgent because more and more students are searching for public university places (Gudo et al 2011). Education and training quality in public universities is widely recognized as having declined due to increased student enrollment, inadequate equipment and facilities and frequent academic disruptions. It is widely perceived that education and training quality in public universities has deteriorated as a result of increased registration of students, insufficient equipment and facilities, regular university disturbances, and low morality in workers (Kinyanjui, 2007).

Okibo and Kimani (2013) show that process simplification following certification by ISO most affects the sustainability of public universities and is accompanied by curricular growth, improvement in teaching facilities and adaptability to changing market requirements. In its analysis of the effect on the competitive advantage of universities of Nairobi of the certification ISO 9001 quality management systems, Khalonyere (2013) has shown that it is to the competitive benefit of universities in Kenya that quality management.

In Kenya Muturi et al. (2015) have established that ROA performance has therefore affected ISO certification, but that the profit and turnover of ISO are not significantly affected. Cobert et al. (2002), Gudo et al. (2011) and Okwiri (2013) held that ISO certification had no effect on sustainability and no difference existed between certified and unestablished organisation. With that in mind, this study is aimed at evaluating the effect on the sustainable performance of public universities in Kenya of management support.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

In terms of quality control, ISO certification is a test of sustainable efficiency. Nonetheless, the importance of ISO certification as a primary quality assurance measure should be rethought by public universities according to Waswa and Swaleh (2012). While ISO certification is essential to quality management processes and procedures, Waswa and Swaleh (2012) argued that public universities are expected to invest more in a corporate culture that boosts the direct development of research, publication and community service, which remain the main international instruments in academic classifications. The idea that ISO 9000 certifications impact environmental performance is divided up in many current literatures. For instance; studies by Kawthar and Vinesh (2011); Iwaro and Mwashia (2012) and Nematollahi *et al.*, (2014) established that ISO certification influence performance of organizations.

According to studies in Kenya, the unplanned growth in university education without a reasonable increase in funding is therefore a threat to quality learning at the university publics of Kenya (Gudo et al, 2011). The advantages of sustainable ISO certification cannot be realized. Most public universities in Kenya have ISO certification, but their performance is a matter of concern. The majority of ISO accredited public universities have experienced year after year strikes, most of which are accused of poor sustainable results and management (Gudo et al 2011). ISO 9000 certification is always considered as a source of competitive advantage.

Nonetheless, there is still a lot of discussion about the effect of the standard on company performance, profitability and operational management. To previous research, a causal relationship has not been identified between certification and sustained performance improvement to universities. In light of this, this study aims at establishing the influence of management support on sustainable performance of public universities in Kenya.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Concept of Sustainable Performance

While sustainable development is not a new phenomenon, its concept has not yet been unambiguously defined (Broekhuis & Vos, 2003). This kind of ambiguity is due to the different roots of sustainability, according to Kane (1999). In the context of human sustainability on Planet Earth and on our environment, the term sustainable development has been used in large part. The most common definition of sustainability and sustainable development has emerged from this emphasis.

Therefore, sustainability plays a key role in ensuring consistent application of ISO 9001:2008 requirements to provide quality results to customer expectations. Regardless of the degree to which standard of ISO 9001:2008 is implemented, it is to be continually upheld once it has been accredited, as long as the company wants to maintain the status of ISO9001. When new ways of working and improvements become normal, the National Health Service Modernization Agency (2002) defines sustainability.

Chardine-Baumann and Botta-Genoulaz (2014) proposed the framework for sustainable behavior assessment. This included: the environmental component (environmental management, energy usage, energy emissions, harmful and nature) and the social dimension (reliability, reactivity, efficiency, financial performance, quality). The results were

restricted to conception. Sustainable development performance is described in three ways as the balance between social, environmental and economic performance. Together with customizations, these research projects are approved by Chardine-Baumann and Botta-Genoulaz (2014) and tests sustainability results based on three aspects: economic performance, environmental and social performance.

Many practitioners and scholars examined and integrated their fields of interest into sustainability objectives (Isaksson, 2006). One of the realistic solutions to sustainability success is the quality management method. Many research explored how obstacles to sustainability are tackled through the concepts and methods of quality management (Kuei & Lu 2013 & Isaksson, 2006).

Through incorporating Quality Management Concepts into sustainable performance, Kuei and Lu (2001) introduced a conceptual framework for sustainable management systems. The study found more steps in incorporating the activities of cross-companies and functional groups. Governmental mechanisms to provide public services and fulfill its policy objectives are important for the university sector. Mokamba, Gakure, and Keraro (2013) claim that the quality of services offered by a public institution is dependent on its ISO 9001, a standard that is a potent tool which enables each organisation, by continuously improving processes, to increase the quality of its products and/or services. It is possible to meet these needs and advance the economic situation at the same time by continuous quality improvement.

2.2. Management Support and Sustainable Performance

During the ISO process, there are various factors involved. One of the most fundamental aspects of ISO 9001 (Ahire, 1996; Das et al., 2011) is the highest level of management support and participation. Nonetheless, in the philosophy of Deming and Juran as well as in the implementation of the quality programs General Electric and Xerox as well as IBM (Choi and Behling, 1997; Guillen & Gonzalez, 2001; Lakshman, 2006) the responsibilities and contribution of the senior management to the progress or disintegration of ISO 9001 were often stressed.

Leadership in quality ISO 9001 is essential for improving the workforce. ISO 9001 actually improves its employees' skills and know-how by reinforcing their workforces (Duran et al. 2014). Leadership must establish the organizational meaning, priorities and explanation of the desired state of the organization.

Thuo (2010) has examined factors affecting Kenya's non-ISO accredited State Company in implementing ISO 9001 quality system certification. The study found that cost of investment and lack of adaptation of management are the key reasons why ISO 9001 quality system certification is not recognized. The study suggested that senior management in these state-owned companies should be educated on the advantages of an ISO certified organization and the proper allocation of budgets to the ISO certification initiative. The ties between the successful pre-ISO 9001 certification audit and performance of an organization were investigated by Okkrai (2013). The consequence is that the qualification status alone reflects not efficiency. The key consequences for the results managers are the need to tackle, instead of being an identifiable icon, the criteria of the Performance Management Framework for the management of technology.

2.3. Theoretical Framework

Institutional theory explores formal and ethical elements of government organizations. Institutional environments can greatly influence, often deeper than market pressures, the development of formal structures in an organization. This discusses the method of establishing authoritative social guidelines for frameworks, processes, laws, norms and routines (Scott, 2012).

The new theory for centralized organizations is to enable organizations to integrate institutionalized systems, activities and procedures into communities in order to enhance credibility and prospects for survival regardless of their immediate effectiveness (Meyer 2014). DiMaggio and Powell (2011) also agree that the influence of structural forces is that in isomorphism or homogeneity. Although the institutional theory literature is very much in agreement on the necessity and advantages of institutional legitimacy, exceptions exist. Kraatz & Zajac (2013, for example) found little proof to support legitimacy constraints. Some scientists have asked the reasons for moving from classical institutional theory to new institutional theory alone (Selznick, 2013). Old and new methods have their benefits and their drawbacks, as well as their alignment with modern theory of institutions.

Another critique of the theory of the institutions was that the institutions seemed ideal, which is not true. The argument was generally criticized for being too vague and failing to address the whole problem in depth. The institutional theory explains how organizations function and thrive by harmonizing an organization with the societal standards. The institutional stance suggests that companies require their stakeholders' legitimacy. Institutions are perceived as having a legitimate right to exist by the greater environment.

The draft (2007) adds that organizations consider the mechanisms by which social behavior standards are defined by systems, including schemes, laws, norms and routines. Jaffee (2001) argues that various institutional theory components describe how these components are developed, disseminated, implemented and adapted to improve performance over time and space.

The theory discusses laws, standards, and routines, which are defined as guidelines for social conduct but which do not provide guidance on how these are decided, created, preserved to enhance performance and remain relevant in a vibrant world. The theory explains that elements will, later in decline and disuse become formed, diffused, adopted and adapted over time and space. It does not investigate how to continue to be used in the dynamic world to improve its performance.

3. Methodology

This study was carried out by means of an explanatory research project. The design focuses on the evaluation of the relation between variables. The explanatory nature of the study was quantitative and hypothesis was tested by means of statistical techniques to quantify the relationships between variables and results. The explanatory nature of the analysis was reasonable since the study primarily focuses on the quantification of a correlation or on the identification of a link cause-effect. The study requested qualitative and quantitative data analyzed by descriptive and inferential analyses.

The study included all ISO 9001 certified public universities in 2008. The UNESCO policy report (2010), which outlines UNESCO's strategies for resolving education issues, including in Kenya's public universities, annually lists public universities in Kenya. Of the 31 public universities in Kenya, 16 are accredited in compliance with ISO 9001:2008, while the other 15 have not been certified in accordance with ISO 9001:2008. Challenges and opportunities in Kenya have arisen in the 21st century.

A research target population is a group of people who have similar characteristics from the general population. There were 30,000 teaching staff and non-scholarly teachers in the target population. In this study the participants of public universities for Kenya were selected by stratified simple random methods. Teaching and teaching staff were divided into two groups, each forming a stratum. A simple random sampling of the interviewees was used for each stratum. Yamane's (1967), sample size for proportions used to compute sample size. The researcher used proportionate sampling to select 394 respondents from the public universities.

Primary data were collected using the standardized questionnaire to capture the different study variables. Questionnaires are questions that have been addressed in a number of ways by the study participants. For data collection, a questionnaire was preferred because the questions, wordings and sequence were identical to sustainable performance. It was able to get standard answers to items, so that data sets could be compared. The survey was designed for specific purposes. There were open and closed questions for academic and non-academic personnel that would participate. These were presented to the students. The closed-end items presented accurate information that minimizes the bias in information and allows data analysis simpler. The Likert scale was anchored by a five-point rating ranging from a strong disagreement to strong agreement.

Across four Public Universities, a pilot study was carried out which was not participated because the characteristics of the sample were identical. To assess the validity of the data collection tools, the researcher used expert opinions from lecturers at the School for Management. The instrument was administered in a consistent fashion to enhance reliability of the measurement instrument. Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha was computed for each item to determine the reliability of the research instrument. A reliability coefficient of 0.7 or over was assumed to reflect the internal reliability of the instruments (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000). The questionnaires deemed reliable after many typographical errors and omissions detected were corrected in the instrument and sufficient to use in the main study.

The researchers have cleaned up all data, finding incorrect or imprecise answers and correcting to improve the quality of answers. The results of these efforts are not complete or reliable. For analysis using the Statistical Science Paket (SPSS V. 22), the data has been code and entered into the computer. Qualitative and quantitative data were provided by the study. To explain relationships between different variables, quantitative approaches such as descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were used. Inferential statistics are used in the study of the relationship between variables by means of Pearson coefficient of correlation and multiple regression analyses. The moment of correlation in Pearson was used because the variables of the interval were scaled. Linear regression analysis demonstrated to what degree management support for sustainable performance (independent variable) predicts. Hypotheses were tested with the linear regression model.

4. Results

4.1. Correlation Analysis

Pearson's correlation was carried out to establish the relationship between management support and sustainable performance. The findings of the correlation analysis indicated in Table 1 shows that there is a positive correlation between management support and sustainable performance of public universities ($r=0.740$, $p<0.05$).

		Performance	Support
Performance	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
Support	Pearson Correlation	.740**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

Table 1: Correlation Analysis on Study Variables
 **. Correlation Is Significant at the 0.01 Level (2-Tailed).
 B. Listwise N=332

This imply that an increase in management support improved the sustainable performance of public universities. The findings agreed with Douglas *et al.*, (2003) that the involvement and commitment of top management provided a life line to any strategy and action in the organization.

4.2. Linear Regression Model

A linear regression model R^2 represented the measure of variability in sustainable performance that management support accounted for. From the model, ($R^2 = .548$) shows that management support account for 54.8% variation in sustainable performance. Therefore, the management support predictor used in the model captured the variation in the sustainable performance as shown in Table 2.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.740 ^a	.548	.546	.42995

Table 2: Model Summary
a. Predictors: (Constant), Support

4.3. Analysis of Variance

The regression model with management support as a predictor was significant ($F=399.540$, $p=0.000$) as shown in (Table 3). The management support had significant influence on sustainable performance. Thus, reject the null hypothesis that there is no effect of management support on sustainable performance.

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	73.858	1	73.858	399.540	.000 ^b
	Residual	61.003	330	.185		
	Total	134.862	331			

Table 3: Analysis of Variance
a. Dependent Variable: Performance
b. Predictors: (Constant), Support

4.4. Management Support and Sustainable Performance Coefficients

The study hypothesized that there is no significant influence of management support on sustainable performance as shown in table 4 shows the estimates of β -value and gives contribution of the predictor to the model.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.322	.095		13.913	.000
	Support1	.680	.034	.740	19.989	.000

Table 4: Management Support and Sustainable Performance Coefficients
a. Dependent Variable: Performance

The β -value for management support had a positive coefficient, depicting positive relationship with sustainable performance as summarized in the model as:

$$Y = 1.322 + 0.680x + \varepsilon \dots\dots\dots \text{Equation 1}$$

Where: Y = Sustainable performance, X = Management support, ε = error term

The study findings depicted that Management support had significant influence on sustainable performance ($\beta_1=0.680$ and $p<0.05$). Therefore, a unit increase in management support led to an increase in sustainable performance.

The findings indicated that there was a positive significant effect of management support on sustainable performance of public universities ($\beta_1=0.680$ and $p < 0.05$). An increase in timely management support led to a rise in sustainable performance of public universities by 0.680. The findings established that an increase in management support on ISO 9001 standard certifications improved sustainable performance in public universities. Since the $p < 0.05$ the null hypothesis (H_{01}) was rejected.

The most important reason for the failure to adopt ISO standards was the lack of top management support in Al-Khadra et al. (2012) in Jordanian companies. This puts them slightly higher in the control chain that they are responsible for all stakeholders' groups. Top management commitment and participation to maintain quality standards of ISO 9001 are both essential and mandatory in this connection (Marson & Blodget, 2008).

5. Conclusion

Regarding management support, there is doubt if the top management took special interest in encouraging the task performers to accept ISO 9001. Moreover, there is lack of awareness as to whether ISO 9001 standard certifications process is continuously reviewed by the management committee and taskforce, starting with development to ensure effectiveness. The top management are instrumental in encouraging the task performers to accept ISO 9001. They offer comprehensive goal-setting process for the major departmental heads within the institution. The management support on ISO 9001 standards certification had significant influence on sustainable performance in public universities.

6. Recommendation

The management support influenced the implementation of ISO 9001:2008, thus managers should be willing to come up with ways to enhance effective communication with employees in order for them to know how their work will be affected as a result of the implementation of ISO 9001:2008. It is important for the management to take special interest in encouraging the task performers to accept ISO 9001. It is also crucial for the management to have a comprehensive goal-setting process for quality in all major departments in the institution. They should also acquaint the workers on their role in implementing and maintain the ISO 9001.

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