

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PRACTICES AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF LARGE MANUFACTURING COMPANIES IN KENYA: A CASE STUDY OF NAIROBI BOTTLERS LIMITED

Nganga George Njoroge.

Masters Student, School of Management and Leadership, Management University of Africa, Kenya.

Juster Nyaga.

Lecturer, School of Management and Leadership, Management University of Africa, Kenya.

©2022

International Academic Journal of Innovation, Leadership and Entrepreneurship

(IAJILE) | ISSN 2518-2382

Received: 8th November 2022

Published: 17th November 2022

Full Length Research

Available Online at: https://iajournals.org/articles/iajile_v2_i3_411_469.pdf

Citation: Nganga, G. N., Nyaga, J. (2022). Continuous improvement practices and organizational performance of large manufacturing companies in Kenya: A case study of Nairobi Bottlers Limited. *International Academic Journal of Innovation, Leadership and Entrepreneurship*, 2(3), 411-169.

ABSTRACT

This research aimed to investigate the relationship between continuous improvement practices and the performance of Nairobi Bottlers Limited. The research was motivated by the following objectives: to determine the impact of evidence-based decision-making, customer focus, process approach, and employee engagement on Nairobi Bottlers Limited's results. The research took place from April to October 2022. Nairobi Bottlers Limited management may benefit from the study because it provides insight into how improvement strategies can boost the firm's results. A secondary benefit of the study is that it may aid Nairobi Bottlers Limited in identifying ways to execute continuous improvement processes more successfully to increase the company's profitability, efficiency, and image. The study findings will also bridge the knowledge gap within the large manufacturing companies in Kenya. The research was carried out following a descriptive research design. The study was conducted on 190 Nairobi Bottlers Limited personnel from various departments. The sample size for this study was generated using a stratified random sampling procedure, resulting in 57 respondents. The primary information for the analysis was gathered using a questionnaire. Various formats, including qualitative and quantitative data, were collected, with quantitative data recorded in SPSS (Version 22). The information was presented in the form of frequency tables and figures. An inferential statistical approach was utilized to demonstrate the association between quality improvement efforts and

organizational effectiveness. The researcher discovered a good association between evidence-based decision making, customer focus, process approach, employee engagement, and organizational success. The study indicates that each of the four independent variables analyzed impacted the performance of manufacturing companies. 66.4% of the organizational performance of Nairobi Bottlers Limited can be accounted for by the four independent variables that were investigated, as indicated by the adjusted $R^2=0.664$. The researcher suggests further research be carried out to examine the other 33.6%. Continuous improvement practices have been shown to have an impact on the organizational performance of manufacturing organizations. According to the study's findings, the goal of manufacturing companies should be to efficiently give value to their customers while enabling their employees to contribute and lead to their fullest potential. The researcher recommended that manufacturing companies understand the significance of continuous improvement methods, particularly their responsibilities in influencing results from incorporating continuous improvement into maintenance procedures.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a brief overview of the manufacturing companies with which this study is concerned. It provides a basis for the study on the analysis of the relationship between employee continuous improvement practices and the performance of manufacturing companies. Further, the study's objectives comprising both general and specific are outlined, followed by the research questions. Finally, the study's significance and scope are also outlined.

Background of the Study

The ever-increasing customer expectations and demands, increasing competition, and globalization are prompting organizations worldwide to continuously improve their business (Khan et al., 2019). Thus, the participation of managers and workers in continuous improvement programs can serve as a strategic tool for improving and maintaining competitiveness- using their involvement and knowledge to foster the performance level of an entire organization. The concept of continuous improvement practices occurs at the very distinct position within the firm; which takes place at the top leadership level, departmental level, and as well as at personal level, the main challenges facing continuous improvement practices are related to the strategic position of the organization (Nkonzo, 2019). Further, Goetsch and Davis (2018) maintained that at the group level, the concepts of continuous improvement practices are not limited to dealing with and addressing problems at a wider scope. Wickramasinghe and Chathurani (2020) defined continuous improvement as the strategic effort utilized by the organization to innovate and adequately innovate new approaches and methods of carrying out production or work by constantly initiating process improvements. According to Whalen (2020), the concept of continuous improvement practices relates to a culture that involves a mix of improvement initiatives that leads to success and reduces the chances of failure rates. Furthermore, Whalen also points out that continuous improvement practices must address not only the improvement results but, most fundamentally, improving capabilities to achieve and realize better outcomes in the future.

In today's world, the accomplishment of manufacturing firms is premised on performance. Further, the companies' aspirations have become quite dynamic; hence there is a need to constantly evaluate them for continuous improvements (Franco, 2017). There is great heterogeneity in the approaches used to view organizational performance. However, the dimensions are broadly categorized as monetary and non- monetary. Firms opt to use any of the approaches based on the management board and the firm's size (Salim et al., 2017).

Furthermore, the legal environment of the firm rarely touches on non-monetary performance. Adequately, the measurability of the non-monetary performance is a challenge, and most critical activity of the firm is never based on them; therefore, firms frequently use monetary performance indicators. Some of the manufacturing firms' performance dimensions include customer satisfaction, growth, profitability, employee satisfaction, social performance,

market value, and environmental performance (Al-Tit, 2017). Traditionally, the financial performance of manufacturing firms is regarded as a gauge of the goodness of the primary activities of a firm used to generate revenue. It has been based on revenues or profit, prepared at the end of a particular period factoring in financial ratios (Awan, 2017). There are three financial performance dimensions that are not limited to the profit levels and total assets yield coupled with the equity multiplier.

Imai and Shingo emphasize that continuous improvement as a quality management approach and philosophy has been the most important factor in Japan's manufacturing achievement. Imai argues that continuous improvement is the unifying thread running through the systems, the philosophy, and the problem-solving tools developed in Japan. He argues out that continuous improvement has been the most important contrast between Japanese and Western management styles. Therefore, it is fascinating to learn that while continuous improvement may have been developed in Japan, it originated in the United States. Schroeder and Robinson, (1993) argue that continuous improvement was brought to Japan from United States of America after the second World War to assist in the reconstruction of Japanese industries. According to Suzaki, continuous improvement is the Japanese managers' interpretation of Edward Deming's manufacturing philosophy. Therefore, it seems reasonable for Imai to argue that continuous improvement is not a practice peculiar to the Japanese and has implications for all working companies of the world. Schroeder and Robinson agree that although some degree of Japanese success can be attributed to cultural factors, "that is not true as far as continuous improvement programs are concerned" The success of continuous improvement in Japan has not gone unnoticed by U.S. manufacturing managers. It is rare to find a company that has not adopted, or attempted to implement, some kind of continuous improvement strategies. However, the outcome is often a few isolated improvements followed by a lack of enthusiasm, and in the long run, continuous improvement is relegated to the shelf of programs that were tried and failed. Choi and Wasti (2008) observed attempts to implement the Japanese quality methods in six U.S. automotive spare parts suppliers and discovered that only one had a significant, long-term effect.

Organizations in Africa have largely adopted most of the continuous improvement strategies from Japan and the western countries. These systems include Kaizen, Total Quality Management, Leans Systems, Quality management systems and 5 S. this has largely been applied in the oil exploration sector, and other mining companies. Manufacturing production is increasing across Africa (Sub-Saharan Africa, including South Africa), but with varying experiences across countries. While the share of manufacturing in gross domestic product declined from 18% in 1975 to 11% in 2015, manufacturing production has nearly doubled since 2000, from \$85 billion in 2000 to more than \$160 billion in 2015 (in constant 2010 prices).

African manufacturing has grown at 3.5% annually in real terms over the past decade, more than in developed countries. However, not all African countries have done well in recent years. For Example Nigeria and South Africa have recently faced declining growth. Annual

average growth in manufacturing exports between 2005 and 2014 was highest in Asia (8.3%), followed by Africa (7.4%), and quite lower in Europe (4.3%), America (3.9%) and Oceania (2.7%). Africa's manufacturing share increased slightly, from 0.8% to 0.9%. Manufacturing foreign direct investment (FDI) rose in nine African countries between 2003–2006 and 2010–2014, apart from Nigeria. This could be attributed to fact that the countries supported the adoption of continuous improvement strategies. Greenfield FDI in African textiles, leather and clothing increased from \$1bn in 2016 to \$4bn in 2017. Food and beverages was the dominant manufacturing sector, followed by textiles and clothing. Successful examples of manufacturing production include automobile assembly and production in South Africa, garments in Mauritius and East Africa and consumer goods across the continent. Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has been supporting quality and productivity improvement in eight countries consisting of Cameroon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, Tunisia and Zambia. All of the JICA projects in the African continent started after 2005 under the environment in which many African countries were achieving high economic growth. These continuous improvements improvement strategies in

The lack of continuous improvement practices among Kenyan manufacturing firms has caused the Kenyan manufacturing output to stagnate at an average of 10 percent of GDP from 1963 to date (Kenya Association of Manufacturers /Kenya Business Guidelines, 2018). Furthermore, the market share of Kenyan manufactured goods in the East Africa Community (EAC) market has reduced from 9 (nine) to an average of about 7 percent. Subsequently, with the completion of the transformative project of Standard Gauge Railway (SGR), transport cost has been reduced by 60 percent. Moving goods to the hinterland is now cheaper, resulting in cheaper goods from Asian countries flooding the local market and worsening the situation (Barasa et al., 2019). Manufacturing firms are therefore adopting innovations to create, accept, and adopt fresh ideas, processes, products, and services that would improve the performance of the firms. There are several aspects of innovations, like the product, process, marketing, and technological innovation, which capture more aspects of innovation by firms (Fellnhofer, 2019). Furthermore, organizations also need to focus on customer focus, process approach, engagement of people, evidence-based decision-making, and leadership initiatives.

Nairobi bottlers limited, a manufacturing firm in Kenya, plays a crucial role in sustainable economic development, creating employment, and earning foreign exchange to Kenya (Kenya National Bureau Statistics, 2018). However, Kenya's manufacturing sector's general contribution towards the global manufacturing output has drastically declined by 900 percent in the last three decades, and this has been due to high tariffs and production costs (World Bank 2019). Therefore, manufacturing firms must implement and adopt continuous improvement approaches to gain the competitive edge in global markets. Nonetheless, this sector still provides; employment to the vast majority of Kenyans and provides a market for agricultural and other industrial products. The manufacturing firms in Kenya fall under the following sectors; textile, food processing, and material industries. The current government has prioritized the sector for revitalization under the big four. This has been manifested by the

increase in credit value from Kenya shilling in billions, 275.8 (2016); 315.8 (2017); 335.8 (2018), and 366.9 (2019). However, this has not translated to industrialization as much as expected and does not compare adequately to the other economies (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2019). In Asian countries such as Vietnam, Cambodia, and Bangladesh, several other production processes are highly subsidized, making it hard for Kenyan manufactured goods to compete against them internationally since they are much cheaper.

Continuous Improvement

Continuous improvement is a principle of consistency that guarantees continuous progress and ensures a workable mechanism that can be continuously reviewed for further changes (Fellnhofner, 2019). According to Awan et al. (2017), as it helps to simplify the flow of operations, all organizations require constant improvement at times, known as rapid progress. Organizations of optimized workflows conserve time and resources, in exchange for less lost time and effort, in addition to continuously improving overhead processes. Indeed, quality development is a motivational driving force for the most effective and successful companies. Jurburg et al. (2019) pointed out that business ventures, companies, and enterprises must aim to accomplish difficult goals; thus, they should have a conviction that the efficiency of their systems should be continually monitored and assessed to ensure that consumers are pleased and that these processes add to the company's performance and as such represent quality growth. To aim to deliver quality goods, services, or procedures, continuous improvement may be considered (Frank et al., 2018). There is always a tendency to indulge an incremental enhancement and breakthrough enhancement at once. In this situation, the drawback suggests a well-organized reform mechanism because quality progress should not be initiated in the manner of the top going down. Still, instead, it can be an all-around occurrence with all workers proposing strategies of opinion that can eventually be applied to the organization's overall changes. As much as organizations seek to be competitive, employee engagement attracts cost elements such as workforce preparation, skill recruiting, innovation costs, and other intangible costs that the enterprise cannot readily accomplish.

For this reason, continuous improvements strive to retain the internal processes and approach once implemented within the organization. This can always be realized and achieved successfully through regular monitoring that assists the firms in remaining competitive among the rivals within the same industry (Frank et al., 2018). The basic concept of quality improvement is establishing a community continually searching for and finding new ways and approaches to doing business. Culture is key since it affects the perception of individuals, especially regarding how seriously they take up the responsibilities given to them. According to Medne (2019), continuous improvement, therefore, revolves around the company's values and includes the norms, the recognitions, the reward systems, and the overall communication between the management and the employees.

Continuous Improvement Practices

Taylor and Wright (2003) defined continuous improvement practices as the combination of variable factors that will determine whether the firm succeeds or fails to succeed, especially the quality systems within an organization. Four phases are affiliated with the continuous improvement process, including plan, do, study, and act. Planning entails identifying improvement opportunities and getting ready for change. Product managers will analyze data, research the market, and form an idea for improvement. Planning also entails ensuring time, budget, and resources to execute (Taylor & Wright, 2003). 'Do' entails implementing the identified changes. Studying involves establishing whether the change has brought a desirable outcome. Finally, acting entails implementing a desirable outcome across an organization. The concept of continuous improvement bears many returns and benefits with it.

The application of continuous improvement comes with huge and significant benefits as its application does not require high capital, and as such, employees' skills can be easily utilized. Through continuous improvement practices, employees reap advantages associated with performance improvement. Costa et al. (2019) suggested that organizations that do not implement continuous improvements are more likely to encounter variable structures in terms of re-arranging the organization, the layout, streamlining, and managerial practices and strategies that would help the delegate feel on the right track. Some of the key continuous improvement practices include the top leadership initiative and evidence-based decision-making (Schreiber & Meloncon, 2019). Others are the engagement of people, customer focus, process approach, and employee engagement.

Evidence-Based Decision-Making

Evidence-based decision-making (EBM) entails making judgments about a program, practice, or policy based on the best available research data and informed by experiential evidence from the field and relevant contextual evidence (Baba & HakemZadeh, 2017). However, decisions based on facts coupled with evidence and data analysis, in most cases, culminate into heightened objectivity and are considered part of the continuous improvement practices since it affects the firm performance (Briner, Denyer & Rousseau, 2019). There are three steps of action in an evidence-based decision-making process, which are as follows: obtaining evidence, interpreting evidence, and applying what you have learned. A human resource department can bridge the knowledge-research gap and make decisions that will propel the firm forward by implementing evidence-based decision-making in the department.

Customer Focus

Customer focus involves prioritizing the customer's experience above anything else in the organization. In other words, it implies addressing customers' needs throughout the many stages of their journey, from purchase to disposal (Berman & Evans, 2018). Customer-focused businesses devote their resources to identifying and addressing the demands of their consumers, providing exceptional client service, and incorporating customer feedback into

product design and other business choices, among other activities (Cravens & Piercy, 2017). Customer-focused firms make decisions based on how those decisions affect their customers, unlike businesses that place profits above everything else in their decision-making. It is a long-term approach that fosters loyalty and trust among customers.

In the current highly competitive business environment, companies/organizations often become more responsive and sensitive to customers' changing demands and needs. Continually reinforcing 'customer focus' is vital to sustaining and attaining competitive business advantages (Madhani, 2020). A customer-focused business values and relies on positive customer experience and feedback. Every time end-users become satisfied with the services and goods provided, and they are likely to remain loyal. Customer feedback ensures that a business outdoes the competition and improves its bottom line. Recurring customers are loyal and happy customers are loyal, both of which can save business money that may otherwise be used on new-lead generation. Customers can also function as a cost-effective source of new leads, functioning as brand ambassadors if they share positive reviews with others. Hence, gathering and assessing customer feedback to guarantee that end-users are satisfied is paramount to business success disposal (Berman & Evans, 2018). Positive reviews can endorse a company's success. Customer feedback can assist a business in learning and delivering on customers' needs, monitoring employee performance, gain competitive intelligence, and avoiding damaged reputations. A customer-focused business improves consumers' experience, which is even becoming more crucial amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

Process Approach

The process approach has been referred to as the interaction between systematic, identifiable processes and its management employed in the organization. According to Medne (2019), when the activities within the firm are comprehensible, it then becomes easier for the overall management to be consistent with regards to the predictable outcomes which are realized effectively and efficiently and that function as a whole system. Total quality management is therefore deemed to involve interrelated processes. Thus, when the system's outcome is well understood, the firm will be able to boost the system and its performance in general (Schreiber & Meloncon, 2019). The demands and requirements per ISO 9001 follow a step-by-step approach to their actions. There are various examples of how organizations select, shape, and govern the procedures of quality management systems.

Employees Engagement

Employee engagement is essentially considered a key continuous improvement practice; producing products to the customers' specifications not only meets the customers' overall expectations but also improves the organisation's performance. Meeting the end user's specific needs and expectations is key to continuous improvement. Customer satisfaction is premised on product service quality (Medne & Lapina, 2019). The goods produced must be of very high standards for the customers to be satisfied. Market dynamics and what is

demanded by the customer, who is the end user, determine the product's quality. Organizations should also strive towards people's engagement; this can be achieved by ensuring that all the organization employees are competent and empowered.

Performance of Manufacturing Firms

Performance is the indicator of the firm's accomplishment of predetermined aspirations periodically (Gaya et al., 2013). The organization's aspirations are quite dynamic; hence, they need to be evaluated constantly. There is great heterogeneity in the approaches used to view organizational performance. However, the dimensions are broadly categorized as monetary and non-monetary. Firms opt to use any of the approaches based on the management board and the firm's size (Whiting & Woodcock, 2011).

The legal environment of the firm rarely touches on non-monetary performance. The measurability of non-monetary performance is a challenge, and the most critical activity of the firm is never based on them; therefore, firms frequently use monetary performance indicators (Kim, Kim, & Qian, 2018). The most recommended is the balanced scorecard (Namada et al., 2014). The approach of the balanced score card is recommended since it makes the business-recommended strategy to be more measurable and concrete. The fundamental differentiator of the balanced scorecard regarding the performance measurement relates to its ability to combine the lagging indicators with regard to the financial perspective and the other leading indicators, such as the innovation and the customer perspectives. It encompasses most of the activities of the firm. Its dimensions include customer satisfaction, growth, profitability, employee satisfaction, social performance, market value, and environmental performance (Gaya et al., 2013).

Traditionally, monetary performance is regarded as a gauge of the goodness of the primary activities of a firm used to generate revenue. It has been based on revenues or profit, prepared at the end of a particular period factoring in financial ratios. Gaya et al. (2013) indicated three monetary performance dimensions; profit levels, total assets yield, and equity multiplier. However, it is prone to several limitations on accuracy and neutrality due to accounting period dalliance and balkanization of information. Since financial performance indicators are not linked to the organization's functional units, these create information gaps. For this inquiry, return on assets and profit margin shall be used as an indicator of performance as it captures many activities and assets of the firm (KNBS, 2015).

Despite Kenya's manufacturing sector being among the leading in East Africa in terms of growth, other East African states' growth rate is comparatively higher and thus records higher performance rates. Food processing constituting the larger portion of the sector, has a great synergistic effect on other sub-sectors like agriculture, which has a high potential for more job creation (Kenya National Bureau of Standards, KNBS, 2018). Past scholars have used aspects like the number of personnel of the firm (Hui et al., 2013), capital level (Revathy & Santhi, 2016), sales revenue (Eggert, Hogleve, Ullaga, & Boehm, 2014), and a hybrid of all the indicators (Aosa, 2011), to categorize the output of manufacturing firms, on the other

hand, the Kenya Vision 2030 notes that the manufacturing sector can contribute 20% of GDP (KNBS, 2018). Still, it has never achieved this amount and has been steadily decreasing since 2011.

Therefore, realizing this objective requires addressing all the limiting factors; cheaper value-adding processes, faster and safer product delivery to end users (supply chain challenges), environmental conservation, and cutthroat competition from cheap imports (KNBS, 2018). Firm innovation, with proper management, provides a solution to most of the listed challenges. Export-orientation, employment generation, and value addition are the future primary focus for manufacturing firms, reflecting the urgency of reducing the sector's constraints like energy cost, distribution, and management styles. Improved basic amenities, dependable cheaper energy sources, telecommunications, and roads require a customized innovation orientation to build unwavering industrial abilities (Velde et al., 2017). All such challenges that need to be addressed speak to the performance of the manufacturing firms.

Coca-Cola Beverage Africa (CCBA) K Limited owns Nairobi Bottlers Ltd, responsible for the bottling facility. Coca-Cola International Limited is a company that deals in carbonated soft drinks and is headquartered in Atlanta. This industry is made up of companies that produce soft drinks, non-alcoholic beverages, mineral water, carbonated soda concentrates, and syrups primarily. Some canning/drying facilities for canned and dried fruits and vegetables are principally engaged in manufacturing non-carbonated fruit juices. Nairobi Bottlers Ltd is seeking a cooperative diversification approach known as franchising to attain centralized control over the company's operations without requiring a large financial expenditure (Hitt, Hoskisson & Kim, 1997). Franchise franchisors and franchisees have an established contractual connection that encompasses, among other things, trademarks, services and goods, marketing strategy, operational guidelines, corporate standards, quality controls, facilities, and human resources.

In November 1995, in partnership with the local investment partner Industrial Commercial Development Corporation (ICDC), Nairobi Bottlers Limited was acquired from the Coca-Cola Company. Two years later, in December 1997, the flamingo Bottlers in Nakuru, formerly owned by the Shah family, was acquired. Machakos Bottling of East Kenya was added to the territory in 2000. In 2004, the company decided to merge all of its Nairobi activities. Because of this restructuring, the Anspar plant along the Airport North Road in Embakasi West, Nairobi County, was acquired, leading to the closing of both the Machakos and Nakuru plants. This was achieved by dramatically reducing spending on capital operations and transforming Nairobi Bottlers Limited into the lowest-cost producer in the entire sub-Saharan region. Over this buying period, the plants delivered 12.2 million cases per unit and 2.1 million cases per year, respectively (Imbuga & Guyo, 2018).

Coca-Cola Sabco is a renowned multinational emerging market expert with a good record of profitability success and high-quality drinks distribution in difficult conditions. Having been a Coca-Cola bottler for over 60 years, Coca-Cola Sabco is a long-term holder. Coca-Cola

Sabco has a track record in improving the talents of people and processes and is committed to supporting local innovation and engaging in the growth of its expertise. In all markets in which it works and aims to play a very positive part in relevant social services, Coca-Cola Sabco operates as a model corporate citizen. Therefore, the organization claims there is a significant possibility to grow its products further and transfer these companies from Nice to Great (Imbuga & Guyo, 2018).

The Coca-Cola Company founded Nairobi Bottlers in 1948. The Coca-Cola South African Bottling Company, also known as Coca-Cola Sabco, purchased the Nairobi Bottlers from the Coca-Cola Company in November 1995 in partnership with ICDC. Coca-Cola Sabco has a 72.38 NBL stake, while ICDC has a 27.62 percent NBL stake (INBL, 2008). In the Kenyan economy, the Industrial and Commercial Development Corporation (ICDC) is recognized as one of the leading financial institutions. ICDC has co-invested in numerous leading commercial and industrial projects in Kenya in collaboration with other promoters, including Eveready Batteries (K) Ltd., AON Minot Insurance Brokers Limited, and Kenya Wine Agencies Ltd. Industrial Development Bank Ltd, Kenya Development Bank Ltd, Kenya National Trading Company (KNTC) and Bottlers in Kenya General Motors (K) Ltd. (ICCSL, 2008). On July 1 2017, CCBA (K) Limited was incorporated by the shareholders and took over the ownership of Nairobi Bottlers Limited.

Statement of the Problem

In “most of the manufacturing firms, continuous improvement has mainly focused on and sustained the application of the incremental innovation with regards to the products and processes that can significantly and substantially improve “on the productivity, efficiency” and the overall performance in the manufacturing firms (Dung, 2018). Continuous improvement requires a continuous study of existing products and services to identify urgent areas such as bottlenecks, packaging, supply chain, cycle time, cost, and quality. A continuous improvement and learning culture are critical to avoid repeating past mistakes in manufacturing firms (Caldas, 2019).”

Kenya's manufacturing sector's contribution to global manufacturing output has fallen by nearly 900 percent in the last three decades due to high tariffs and production costs (World Bank, 2019). From 2013 to 2022, the government focused on revitalizing the manufacturing sector using the Big Four pillars. This resulted in to increase in credit value to a tune of 275.8 (2016), 315.8 (2017), 335.8 (2018), and 366.9 (2019) billion shillings. This shows the increasing trend, though it has not translated to industrialization as expected (Wanyoike & Kuria, 2016). Several aspects of manufacturing processes in Asia, particularly Vietnam, Cambodia, and Bangladesh, are heavily subsidized, making it difficult for Kenyan goods to compete internationally. From 1963 to 2018, Kenyan manufacturing output averaged 10% of GDP (Kenya Association of Manufacturers/Kenya Business Guidelines). The market share of Kenyan manufactured goods in the East Africa Community (EAC) has fallen from 9% to 7%. Even though Kenya's manufacturing sector is among the fastest growing in East Africa.

The Nairobi Bottlers Limited has restructured, closing the Nakuru and Machakos plants to consolidate operations, lowering overall operating costs and optimizing labour and assets collectively (Dung, 2018). Plants, equipment, staff, and trucks have been moved to Nairobi's Embakasi mega plant. A project team restructured Nairobi Bottlers Limited, considering the financial and technical aspects. The old line was scrapped, and the installation was overseen (Batia, 2019). Nairobi Bottlers Limited has thus introduced many quality improvement techniques, but it is still unclear if these initiatives have succeeded in increasing firm efficiency.

Most studies on Kenyan manufacturing companies discuss continuous improvement in general, a broad concept with many facets. As a result, several critical aspects, such as the influence of evidence-based decision-making, customer focus, process approach, and employee engagement, have been explored in service-centred companies in a limited capacity. For instance, Achieng & Gitonga (2020) explored the influence of total quality management practices on customer satisfaction, focusing on Safaricom Public Limited Company. The study emphasizes the importance of following customer needs and employing quality planning to fill the customer need gap.

On the other hand, Gichuhi (2012) explored the adoption of quality improvement practices in manufacturing firms in Nairobi. The research proposes the need for quality improvement process documentation and more dissemination amongst manufacturing firms in Kenya. Muteti (2014) researched how medium and small-sized manufacturing firms adopt continuous improvement approaches in Kenya. The study also aimed at establishing an association between operational performance and the extent of adopting continuous improvement approaches. The study recommended that manufacturing firms in Kenya should engage in employee-cross-functional training on best practices and the need for managers to evaluate process choice and product design.

Thus, this study seeks to fill the gap by investigating the relationship between continuous improvement practices, specifically evidence-based decision-making, customer focus, the process approach and employee engagement, and the performance of Nairobi Bottlers Limited.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study was to establish a relationship between continuous improvement practices and the performance of Nairobi Bottlers limited.

Specific Objectives

- i. To establish the influence of evidence-based decision-making on performance of Nairobi Bottlers Limited.
- ii. To investigate the influence of customer focus on performance of Nairobi Bottlers Limited.

- iii. To determine the influence of the process approach on performance of Nairobi Bottlers Limited.
- iv. To establish the influence of employee engagement on performance of Nairobi Bottlers Limited.

Research Questions

- i. What is the influence of evidence-based decision-making on the performance of Nairobi Bottlers Limited?
- ii. How does customer focus influence the performance of Nairobi Bottlers Limited?
- iii. To what extent does the process approach influence performance of Nairobi Bottlers Limited?
- iv. What is the influence of employee engagement on the performance of Nairobi Bottlers Limited?

Significance of the Study

The study results would be extremely useful to several parties. First, the findings will be significant to Nairobi Bottlers limited authorities because the management will be able to establish the significance of continuous improvement practices. Equally, they may initiate to improve the firm's performance in delivering effective and efficient products to the vast client base in their sector, thereby improving the firm's overall performance. Most significantly, the results can be used as a guide for management as they set out their best practices for guiding the firm's growth. They would not have to try to gather information about why quality improvement initiatives are relevant.

Further in addition, the findings of this study will be useful to other manufacturing firms in Kenya, particularly those that are experiencing operational difficulties as a result of a variety of inefficiencies related to their daily operations, as they will realize the benefits that come with leveraging the firm's operations for optimum performance, and will be able to improve their overall presence in the market, as well as promote the overall performance of the firm. Most manufacturing enterprises in Kenya today have difficulty meeting current market demands due to a demanding external environment that constantly generates new wants, necessitating the need for manufacturing firms to stay aware of current market trends. This can only be achieved through the application of continuous improvement techniques.

Furthermore, the study results will significantly contribute to the existing literature and knowledge gap in continuous improvement, as well as their overall impact on performance and productivity. They will thus help to close the existing research gap in the area of continuous improvement. The study findings will also be of great use to other researchers interested in conducting additional research on continuous improvement since the findings will serve as a major point of reference for other researchers.

Scope of the Study

The study's objective was to establish a relationship between continuous improvement practices and the performance of Nairobi bottlers limited. The manufacturing plant is located along Embakasi, Nairobi. Study was carried out in the month of April 2022 to October 2022. The target respondents were 190 employees of Nairobi Bottlers Limited from various departments. This study was limited to Airport North Road in Embakasi West, Nairobi County. The study was undertaken based decision-making, customer focus, process approach, and employee engagement.

Chapter Summary

This chapter highlights the turbulent business environment in which modern manufacturing firms operate. Also, the chapter demonstrates why these firms must continuously review their operation strategies through continuous improvement practices. This also regards how they make decisions, focus on customers, and manage their internal processes through a process approach and employee engagement that subsequently deliver organizational performance. The chapter is on the study background where the concept of continuous improvement, firm performance, and the target organisation's overview is limited by the Nairobi bottlers. The following sections are covered: statement of the issue, general and specific goals of the research, study issues, importance of the study, and scope of the study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter provides a study of the literature on the relationship between quality improvement strategies and firm success. This chapter explicitly addresses the theoretical analysis, empirical review of the study variables, conceptual context, current research discrepancies, and chapter overview.

Theoretical Literature Review

This study was guided by the following theories related to the concept of continuous improvement practices and the performance of manufacturing firms: Schumpeterian theory, Agency Theory, Resource-based view, and Stakeholder theory. This study will be anchored on the Schumpeterian theory.

Schumpeterian Theory

The current study is anchored on the Schumpeterian theory that Schumpeter postulated in 1934. The theory of Schumpeterian postulates that the processes in the economy and market are continuous and, as such, need continuous improvement and modifications. His assertions are anchored on the fact that in an economy at equilibrium, a need arises, creating some forces that culminate in some changes. He reflects an investor as a very instrumental and key

player in the firm changes. Furthermore, he believes that innovation is a product of investment where new forms of combination of factors of production are constantly being tested. This, therefore, results in a radical and discontinuous change that amounts to being the key pillars of economic development (Schumpeter, 1934).

Schumpeter, therefore, asserts that firms obtain profit and investment growth by coming up with new approaches to doing business (Anning-Doson, 2017). Firm changes lead not only to fresh products that have never existed before but also concern new procedures of doing things, combining procedures, or processes that result in unique products or services using the current available resources and utilizing a new technology. Schumpeter regards innovation as a means of firm performance.

The theory, however, has been received with criticism from other thinkers and scholars on the following issues; Schumpeter's theory has overemphasized the role and functions of coming up with new ideas and new approaches and has gone ahead to label it as the core and substantive mover and driver of the economy and firm performance, therefore it's in the thought of other thinkers that Schumpeter's theory has placed over glorifications on the investors. Further, the theory has also received criticism since it has been considered helpful in developing and extending capitalism through its entrepreneurial innovation analysis. It has been considered by many as being pro-neocolonialism in the colonized states (Schumpeter, 1934).

The theory has therefore been applied to the present study since it attempts to explain process improvement strategies. The theory emphasizes the need for transition regarding how the manufacturing firms process their output by recommending a substantial shift in the processes and proposing innovational re-organizations within the manufacturing firms (Schumpeter, 1934). Therefore, the theory recommends implementing new business approaches through systemic re-alignments and application of the concept of innovativeness. The theory emphasizes the performance of the manufacturing firms by providing them with an opportunity to look for new products and develop new process approaches that respond to the changing market demands.

Agency Theory

Occasionally referred to as the principal-agent problem, agency theory is based on an essential principle that owners (principals) establish a relationship with managers (agents) and delegate work to them (Alchian & Demsetz, 1972). Agents and Principals have varying self-interests, which leads to an agency problem. This therefore requires mechanisms to reduce the problem in each case.

Eisenhardt (1989) distinguishes between the two different uses of agency theory – the positivist and the general approach. The positivist approach centres mainly on the principal-agent relationship between managers owners and of large, public corporations. The more

specific approach, outlined in this research work is the ‘Principal-Agent’ relationship that explains agency theory as one that can be applied to buyer-supplier, lawyer-client, employer-employee, and other agency relationships. The general principal-agent nexus can be applied to all levels in the organization, hence, providing this research a wider and more pertinent coverage.

Eisenhardt’s (1989) opinion on agency theory has numerous implications for Continuous Improvement. First, agency theory assumes that the foundation of an organization is ‘efficiency’ which is one of the essential drivers for Continuous Improvement. It is in the interest of managers to ensure efficient and effective performance within their organization. Second, inter-departmental changes, for instance those resulting from Continuous Improvement, may bring both positive and negative impacts on the organizational structures and performance and thus be faced with strong opposition. It is consequently suggested that providing a strong management involvement for the newly introduced changes gives a sense of obligation and creates motivations for the subordinates to accept these newly introduced changes.

The Agency theory postulated by Rose (1973) states that the link between two entities, the principal and the agent, is a relationship where the principal entrusts an agent with the necessary powers for representation and transacts with the third party. The association between the agent and the principal creates a complicated operation issue that, in most cases, results in business inefficiencies. This theory, therefore, attempts to shed more light on what conditions may perpetuate this on the supply chain (Bruce, 2005).

There are two main premises of the agency theory, i.e., freedom to choose involving various courses of action by the agent and the agent’s actions, which therefore contribute towards influencing their growth as well as the growth of the principal. Therefore, it is difficult for the principal to observe the agent’s actions, as information is not always enough (Nielson & Tierney, 2003). In addition, the theory can provide insight into the effect of such an opportunity on firm results, therefore encouraging the principal, the investor, to explore how those challenges within supply chains can be reduced or dealt with completely. One of the pillars under which this theory is premised is the scarcity of information to the principal or the investor on the firm’s operations. In this case, agents are instrumental in collecting the right information from the final consumers to the producer and therefore encourage proper policy formulation through evidence-based decision-making. This will therefore influence the effectiveness of marketing. As a result, when a firm makes the right decisions, it increases its market share (Bruce, 2005). This may result in rapid regional expansion and increase revenue and the firm’s overall performance.

The theory has not been without criticisms. For instance, it is clear that the agency theory only focuses on links whereby two entities connect when they work together. There is a need to employ a mutual relationship where one party is deemed the principal delegate decision-making process and responsibility, known as the agent (Bruce, 2005). Furthermore, there is a

fatal conclusion made by the theory that in a relationship, there are underlying conflicts between the goals of the agents and principals and that each one tends to benefit himself first (Rungtusanatham et al., 2007). Its association, therefore, implies that an agency setback arises with the fluctuation of the agents' objectives from the principals', and it is not easy to prove the rightfulness of the agent on the work done; such an assumption may not apply universally across all organizational establishments.

The theory is applicable in the current study since it supports the overall need for business information and making evidence-based decisions. Equally, the agency theory limits pushing for self-interest in decision-making. The agency theory encourages employee involvement in decision-making, a critical aspect that limits the chances of pushing for one's interests. Furthermore, the theory emphasizes the firms' characteristics, where several indicators point to the fundamental factors attached to how the firm operates, which points to the need for continuous improvement practices. Therefore, the theory backs the mediating factors' role and, consequently, how these factors can ultimately add to the firm's performance. And therefore, for the firm to achieve its key performance objective, it needs mutual relations and people engagement among the various firm stakeholders.

Resource-Based View

The resource-based view was first coined by (Barney, 1991). The theory and its proponents postulate that forms and business organizations with valuable, inimitable, immovable, and rare resources gain unique leverage within the marketplace (Hsuan & Kotzab, 2015). Further, the theory postulates that these resources should be heterogeneous, tangible or intangible (Barney, 1991). Therefore, the resource-based view attempts to elucidate how tactical property provides a firm with advanced competitive super advantages and superior overall performance. Therefore, Barney asserts that firms need to exploit the present opportunities through the available current resources while simultaneously creating unique fresh assets, safeguarding their competition level futuristically, and remaining economically relevant through a process approach (Song, Song, & Benedetto, 2011). The theory, therefore, portends how firms must make internal processes interlink seamlessly for optimum utilization with guaranteed excellent output on the firm's performance.

The theory, therefore, asserts that the mere availability of resources does not automatically propel a firm to the highest level of competitive advantage and performance but rather how internal systems and operations are coordinated and interlinked for maximum output propels the firm to high-performance levels. Therefore, the interaction between tangible and intangible resources does it (Ombaka et al., 2015). Because of this, the current theory is premised on the assumption that the generation, identification, and protection of rare and inimitable resources are essential to firm success (Morgan, 2009). The current unique resources are always a product of innovation which result in superior goods and services and ultimately propels the firm to a superior competitive level with regard to the inability of the competitors to reproduce such resources.

Many researchers and scholars have pointed out the theory with some criticism (Ombaka et al., 2015) hold the view that through innovation, unique resources are therefore generated in areas such as operation, marketing process amongst others which in themselves yield some competitiveness to the firm beyond the reach of competitors and thus promotes the performance of the firm. The critics fail to appreciate the essence of the firm's unique capabilities. Still, they believe that every firm has these sharable resources and that the output depends on how they are utilized. The critics maintain that the resources generated enhance close ties with entities within the firm operations and smooth operational processes, culminating in a meager operational cost (Morgan, 2009). Therefore, this leads to cheaper goods and services, favoring consumers and ultimately contributing to the firm's performance.

The application of the resource-based view is considered viable in this study since the theory emphasizes the need to address the limitations posed by the external environment through the manifestations of factors beyond the organization's control (Morgan, 2009). The theory, therefore, emphasizes the competitive advantages that attempt to link the heterogeneous resources controlled entirely by the manufacturing firms and the need for seamless connectedness within the firm processes and guarantees the mobility of the internal resources within the firm. The internal factors include the management of social capital by increasing its effectiveness through a process approach.

Customer Relationship Management Theory

The customer relationship management theory also guided the study. Laatuylhdisty opined the theory (1995) the proponents of the theory hold the view that the key element with regards to customer management is focusing on generally evaluating how the company manages the customer contacts so sufficiently and efficiently so that customer relations will generally improve and impact the performance of the firm. Further, the theory maintains that it is also very necessary and efficient to evaluate how the information with regards to the customer needs reaches the firm so that firm is in a position to identify and predict the future expectations of its customers and end consumers in general, and therefore able to retain the clients (Debnath, Datta & Mukhopadhyay, 2016).

As a result, the theory's importance in improving overall consumer focus activities has been emphasized. According to Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2014), consumers are not only interested in buying a brand but also believe they should be treated as partners by the business. And as such, it starts with the concept of identifying what the client requires and then being in a position to match those requirements with the appropriate goods and, if necessary, services. Therefore, what the firms can offer should have a level of "evolvability", so that at any time the product can be continuously improved according to future requirements then, based on the lifestyle and usage patterns of the customer and the general public.

However, the theory has not been without flaws. The theory holds the view that organizations should continue to grow in economic stature steadily, see what other countries are doing, and use acceptable methods for implementing this strategy. Some organizations have built customer-oriented, high-tech one-stop shops to provide high-quality public services more effectively and streamline regulatory and licensing procedures for businesses (Paradise & Schwartz, 2011). Many organizational departments have been brought together under one roof to fulfill various roles. The primary goal of these one-stop shops is to give customers easy access to a wide range of public resources and information via various integrated technology channels and provide high-quality services whenever and wherever they need them (Soft Kenya, 2015). However, some business ventures, like manufacturing firms that deal in the line of products, may not fully enjoy the proposal of having a one-stop shop where customers can meet all their goods and service needs. Again most manufacturing firms are good-oriented rather than service oriented. This generation of theory is therefore limiting to other business ventures.

The theory is relevant to the present study since; Firms aim to evolve constantly following the blueprint of continuous improvement of their respective systems of operations, with the primary emphasis being on ensuring that customers remain central to the company. Some companies have further integrated these concepts into their visions (Paradise & Schwartz, 2011). And are driven by three principles: evolving the customer care model by making services more accessible across contact centers and technology platforms, utilizing technology to enhance service quality and promote compliance, and changing the attitude of employees.

Empirical Literature Review

Evidence-Based. Decision Making. and. Organizational Performance

The evidence-based decision-making concept brings in a lot of dynamic and procedural complexity, often including multiple arbitrary categories and avenues. Consequently, the feedback can be viewed differently (Hoang, Igel & Laosirihongthong, 2017). In addition to unintended future effects, cause and effect are essential interactions that need to be considered (Baba & HakemZadeh, 2012). Therefore, more often than not, evidence-based decisions lead to confidence and improved objectivity in decision-making, combined with proof and data interpretation. Therefore, the advantages that accrue are improved decision-making procedures, strengthened performance evaluation in terms of procedures, and capacity to accomplish goals. Other merits include strengthened organizational quality and effectiveness, expanded ability to review, ability to try to influence thoughts and inspire decisions, and upsurge to affirm the effectiveness of evidence-based decisions (Briner, Denyer & Rousseau, 2019).

In Australia, Perez (2017) studied a process model of evidence-based decision-making. Therefore, the study aimed to develop a process model explaining why some managers

engage in evidence-based decision-making more than others. In terms of methodology, the study applied quantitative methods with a sample of 203 senior managers from the built environment sector, which is the inception, design, and development of office buildings. Subsequently, 17 in-depth interviews were conducted to complement the cross-sectional survey to ensure that the relevant facilitating conditions and barriers to evidence-based decision-making were captured appropriately within the model. The study's quantitative findings backed up the proposed evidence-based decision-making process model. According to the report, learning target orientations is a higher-order construct of the theory of expected action in predicting evidence-based decision-making. Furthermore, the study found that learning goal orientation and the theory of expected action explain unique variations in evidence-based decision-making. Learning goal orientation and subjective norms are the best predictors of the intention to follow evidence-based decision-making and its subsequent implementation.

Local school board policymakers in West Virginia were interviewed for a study by Hoylman (2017), which examined how they felt about the value of evidence-based research in the decision-making process. It was decided to do a descriptive study on members of the 55 county boards of education in West Virginia, which resulted in a total population of (N = 275). According to the survey answers provided by the respondents, the data was analyzed using the SPSS platform to obtain relevant and comparable results from the data. According to the study's findings, evidence-based research is critical for decision-making. However, professional journals have also been widely recognized as a tool for disseminating evidence-based research for decision-making processes; however, they were found to be among the least frequently used sources of knowledge by the survey participants. As a result, only 2 percent of study participants stated that they heavily depended on technical publications while making judgments about school boards of education.

Stonebreaker and Howard (2018) conducted a study in South Africa on evidence-based decision-making, comprehension, and practice in management courses, and the findings were published in the journal *Management Education*. The information was gathered as part of the groups' evaluations of how students performed in the community and what improvements they wanted to make to be a stronger team for the final weeks of the semester. The responses were independently coded and classified after the data was coded. After that, an independent reviewer was assigned to use those categories to evaluate the responses. The findings showed that decision practices, decision knowledge, and other process development were not new concepts but applied in a learning environment where students were immersed in information-rich scenarios with extremely difficult problems. According to the findings, the activities provided a classroom environment that had the potential to make a significant difference in the students' outcomes.

Ohairwe, Basheka, and Zikusooka (2015) researched evidence-based decision-making processes in the pharmaceutical industry in Uganda. This study aimed to see how implementing the information management process would account for successful decision-

making in the Ugandan pharmaceutical sector's regulation, management, and administration. The study's participants included key players in Uganda's pharmaceutical industry, such as the National Drug Authority. The player is in charge of regulatory affairs, the National Medical Stores, which is in charge of national procurement, management, administration, and distribution of pharmaceuticals, as well as local pharmaceutical manufacturers and private pharmaceutical companies. The study found that the quality of knowledge gathered impacts successful decision-making in the Uganda pharmaceutical sector's regulation, management, and administration.

Health professionals at Coast General Hospital in Mombasa County, Kenya, participated in a study by Mboro (2017) on using routine data for evidence-based decision-making to improve their performance. An exploratory cross-sectional study approach was employed in this investigation. The probability-based, simple random sampling methodology was utilized in the analysis since it was found to be effective in reducing the possibility of bias. The data-gathering instruments utilized in the study were an anonymous questionnaire, a guide for focus group discussions, and key informant interviews. As a consequence, a total of 236 healthcare professionals participated in the poll. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20 was used to analyze and assess the quantitative data.

Descriptive statistics and the chi-square test were employed in the study to determine whether or not the link was statistically significant. The findings were presented in tables, graphs, and charts. According to the survey findings, 69.6 percent of respondents used regular health information for decision-making, with 30.0 percent indicating that they had only received minimal training in information management before participating. It was concluded that health facilities should collaborate with the national level to provide training to improve health workers' skills. There was a particular emphasis on the necessary information used, through on-the-job training and mentorship, as well as improving the organizational context by making resources available that aid in using information by target groups.

Using routine health data in evidence-based decision-making in HIV and Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome services, Mugendi (2015) explored the factors that influence public health facilities' use of routine health data in HIV and Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome services. The study's goal was to investigate the factors that influence the use of routine health data in evidence-based decision-making by public health facilities in Nakuru County that provide HIV treatment services. The participants were HIV treatment patients in Nakuru County. According to the study's coefficient correlation analysis, only data quality and the ability to use data had a statistically significant positive impact on evidence-based decision-making. A key finding of this investigation was the necessity to create and develop data quality policies inside health institutions and train healthcare workers on synthesizing and communicating routine health data across appropriate channels. Furthermore, the survey highlighted a need for leadership and advocacy skills training, particularly for female leaders. The study also emphasized the importance of developing highly efficient standard operating procedures and processes that demonstrate the importance and responsibility of data in

organizational operations and that demonstrate the importance and responsibility of data in organizational operations.

Customer Focus and Organizational Performance

In Malaysia, Yaacob (2014) researched customer attention's direct and indirect effects on public firm results. The study's data was gathered from 205 managers working in the public sector. As a result, all the managers were actively involved in the consumer-focus process and were deemed informed about the study's topic. The study's findings showed that the practice of customer attention is strongly linked to the concept of customer satisfaction. Nonetheless, the potential for customer attention to affect other related steps is underexploited.

Furthermore, the study's findings revealed that customer attention is a major predictor of employee satisfaction, creativity, and customer satisfaction. Furthermore, the evolved structural model revealed an indirect relationship between customer attention and customer satisfaction, which was affected by employee satisfaction. In addition, the impact of consumer attention on innovation is mediated by employee satisfaction principles. As a result of the study's model, public companies may significantly improve their efficiency by focusing on their customers.

Dack (2014) researched how to improve a customer-focused strategy in England. As a result, the research study employed various qualitative, quantitative, and quasi-quantitative research methods and techniques to establish a data baseline. The following research methods and techniques were used in the study: action research, case studies, narrative reviews, literature reviews, theme reviews, data collecting instruments, and other tools for statistical analysis, as well as some quasi-statistical techniques. Workshop participants Case C to Case H; team leaders affiliated with the workshop events; and other workshop facilitators, cases 11 instruments were used to collect information from three distinct classes of respondents (C to H). The data was triangulated around the four perspectives to grasp the link better. The study findings revealed those reviewers' analysis and presentation of corroborated observations of the Theoretical Themes. It produced clear evidence of the Theoretical Themes' prominence within the case study organizations. This was associated with a clear link to the achievement of research goals through the accomplishment of the research objective.

There is a strong correlation between customer happiness and service quality in the life insurance market in South Africa, according to Carelse (2017). Participants in the study included 398 consumers who visited Customer Walk-in-Centres and completed a standardized questionnaire regarding their shopping experiences via computer-assisted telephone interviews. According to the study, customer satisfaction principles influence the perceived relationship between service quality and customer loyalty for individual customers from the Metropolitan Customer Walk-in-Centres in South Africa. According to the survey findings, satisfied customers are the backbone of every successful company since they are

more inclined to make repeat purchases. Because of this, experts concluded that providing high-quality service and establishing customer satisfaction and loyalty were critical to the long-term success of insurance firms. To maximize customer satisfaction and loyalty, insurance companies should focus on improving the quality of their services, according to the poll results.

An investigation on the quality of service and customer satisfaction at Bank of Africa (U) Limited in Uganda was undertaken by Ayebare (2013) and published in 2013. According to the findings, a purposeful and simple random sampling procedure and methodology was used to choose a sample of 194 people from a total population of 11,274 people. In addition to an online questionnaire poll, the report featured a key informant guide to obtaining information from those most important to the data-gathering process. 75.3 percent of participants answered questions on the gadgets utilized in the study. The SPSS software was used to perform quantitative descriptive statistics, reliability measures, bi-variate correlations, and linear regression analysis for this investigation. The Bank of Africa (U) Ltd study showed a statistically significant association between customer satisfaction and service quality viewpoints. Aside from that, the study discovered a substantial correlation between service quality and overall customer happiness. The study's findings led to the conclusion that Bank of Africa management should implement new mechanisms to develop actual dimensions and maintain responsiveness and efficiency of services to improve customer satisfaction.

Gathiaka (2013), using customer focus methodologies, evaluated the impact of service delivery at Nairobi's Immigration Department. The key participants in the study were customers who came into the department to seek service. As part of the investigation, the researchers utilized a sampling methodology, which consisted of grouping all clients based on the division they visited. A total of 142 people were selected from the normal job records based on the sic strata, which were drawn from the usual job records. Schedules for interviews and questionnaires were used to obtain information. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and content analysis techniques. How much electronic technology, customer awareness, internal quality, and decentralization have been implemented in the Department of Immigration impacts service delivery in the department. Service delivery was not as good as expected because the study used all four variables at relatively low levels.

Kangethe (2015) researched consumer quality emphasis and operational efficiency in government-owned entities in Kenya. The research looked at all of Kenya's commercial government-owned businesses. Kenya currently has thirty-four commercial government-owned agencies. Both primary and secondary data were used in the analysis. The study's primary data was gathered from respondents in all commercial government-owned agencies. The study also drew on secondary data from the current literature, including journal articles, research paper studies, textbooks, journals, surveys, and other conference proceedings, as well as commercial government-owned entities' publications and websites. According to the report results, all Kenyan government-owned organizations' management purposefully disseminates knowledge about their priorities and plans to their respective employees.

Process Approach and Organizational Performance

The process approach relates to the total interactions between the various processes that are systematic and identifiable and their respective management that is employed within the institution (ISO, 2000:9001; Pokorni, 2004). When the activities being actioned on within the institution are considered comprehensible, it is therefore achievable for the management to be consistent with regards to the predictable outcome that are attained effectively and efficiently that operates as a whole system. Quality management systems are therefore considered to involve different interrelated processes; therefore, when the overall outcome of the system is understood, the organization should be made to promote the system and its subsequent performance (ISO, 2000). The minimum thresholds demand as per ISO 9001 follows a very detailed step-by-step approach with their actions. As such, there are examples of how firms shape and govern the quality management systems' procedures.

In Sweden, Ranganathan (2012) researched the advancement of production processes in the manufacturing industry. The manufacturing industries in Sweden and India were compared in this report. The main method that was chosen to collect data was a literature review. The literature review method was chosen as it was considered a comprehensive way to show the answers that would eventually assist with the conclusions on the information regarding the specific area of the study. The method concerns the collection of the available documents relevant to the specific topics and whether the information was published or unpublished. The reviewed literature included information, data, ideas, and other evidence that could be taken from a definite viewpoint regarding a specific topic. The study also used interview guides to collect the data from the managers. The interview questions were specifically framed regarding the type of person to be interviewed. The study interviewed the managers within the department of the production system of manufacturing firms. The targeted companies included Mahindra and Mahindra Limited. (M&M), Ashok Leyland, ABB, Swedish-Swiss multinational cooperation with headquarter in Switzerland. The study revealed that skill enhancement and job rotation had been considered fundamental factors in the flexibility and innovativeness inherent in Japanese manufacturing processes. Further, the study revealed that process innovation requires new skills and new employees with different backgrounds, the latest knowledge, and skills. As such, they concluded that the firm should hire a flexible employee from the beginning and that they should invest in their ability to increase their skills and make them implement the necessary new business-related processes.

In Malaysia, Hasim (2014) explored the integration of English as A Second Language (ESL) writing instruction and learning into the development of ESL writing instruction and learning. He used a methodical approach and formative assessment to conduct his research. It is necessary to provide students with both formative and summative feedback on their academic writing, particularly when process techniques of writing instruction are encouraged and used in the classroom. This was identified after critically analyzing the relevant literature, which led to this conclusion. Even though academic writing education and learning in Malaysia are heavily focused on product-based learning, evaluation is still widely used to decide grades in the country.

A total of 48 students from a Malaysian university participated in this collaborative action research project, which two Malaysian English language professors led. The experiment's goal was to assess, from a sociocultural standpoint, whether or not components of process writing and formative evaluation might be integrated into their regular classroom settings. Data was largely gathered through various methods, including documentation, interviews, classroom observations, briefings, feedback sessions, and other activities. The findings have prompted debate among Malaysian educators on the most effective ways to bridge the gap between teaching and assessment, particularly through formative assessment and process writing in the context of a product-based approach.

Garoma (2014) researched adopting a just-in-time development method in an automobile manufacturing firm in Ethiopia's bottle and glass plant in Addis Ababa. The research aimed to determine how just-in-time (JIT) may be implemented in various industrial organizations. Therefore, the study aimed to incorporate just-in-time (JIT) concepts, materials, elements, and tools from the start and various collaborative JIT principles, materials, elements, and tools already being used to decrease waste. Following identifying specific problems and constructing a plan, the analysis turned its attention to the current situation of the various industries. According to the study's findings, the American Production and Inventory Control Society (APICS) and other organizations' Just in Time (JIT) implementation guidelines were considered when building the JIT line implementation model for industries. Furthermore, the study discovered that only a hybrid (Push-Pull) JIT system is suitable for both companies. According to the study's findings, using various just-in-time technologies and other tactics may have disadvantages and other potential impediments.

Mazanai (2012) conducted a study in South Africa to examine the impact of a just-in-time inventory system method on the manufacturing industry, as well as small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and other organizations (SMEs). According to the findings, small and medium-sized enterprises from various industries were asked to participate in the survey by completing questionnaires independently and without assistance. According to a survey by the National Small and Medium Business Administration, most small and medium-sized businesses in the manufacturing sector do not use just-in-time inventory management strategies. This research has also revealed challenges in the manufacturing industry that impede the application of just-in-time concepts in small and medium-sized firms, as demonstrated by the findings. Several obstacles were encountered, including a paucity of solid supplier networks and resources and difficulty recognizing the immediate financial benefits of implementing the strategy in the issue. According to the study, there was a statistically significant association between just-in-time inventory management ideas and a product's cost-effectiveness, quality, and adaptability. According to a recent study, small and medium-sized manufacturing organizations can improve product quality while cutting operational costs and boosting flexibility by following the concepts of just-in-time inventory management.

Munywoki (2018) conducted research in Kenya on applying the just-in-time technique approach and the operational efficiency of cement production enterprises. Using a descriptive research design, this article examined several manufacturing organizations' operations managers, quality control managers, and procurement managers. The study paper included both primary and secondary sources of information. The questionnaire served as the primary data-gathering tool for this investigation. In Kenya, it was discovered that the adoption of just-in-time manufacturing had a direct and positive impact on the operational success of cement enterprises. As a result, researchers discovered that Kenyan cement manufacturing businesses benefited tremendously from the Just-in-Time inventory management system. Also discovered in the study was that staff preparedness, ICT use, and top-level management engagement are all essential to ensuring that a just-in-time supply chain is implemented successfully. After all, was said and done, the researchers concluded that cement production companies should continue to use just-in-time inventory management systems and ensure that their staff is trained and developed regularly.

Abuto (2015) researched market re-engineering as a method for strategic transformation while working for the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA). Most of the research was based on both primary and secondary data, with the majority being qualitative. Therefore, this information was required to evaluate the study's objectives. When conducting the interviews, the researchers used an interview guide to ask questions to senior, middle, and operational management levels to acquire primary data for the study. Data from the Authority's existing records were used to compile secondary information. Bulletins, service charters, strategy plans, and the company's website were all used as secondary data sources, as was the company's website. The information in this report was analyzed using the framework of content analysis. According to the research, the Kenya Revenue Authority has gained a great deal by implementing business process reengineering as a strategic development strategy to manage its operations better.

Only a few parts of corporate administration were impacted, including attracting and keeping employees, purchasing and supplies concerns, customer service, project planning and management, and project planning and management. As a result, according to the study's findings, the execution of these methods provided certain obstacles to management, prompting the implementation of several measures to overcome such challenges. As a result of the research, they produced a reliable instrument for evaluating the execution and problems of business re-engineering approaches as a strategic change plan for tax collecting in Kenya.

Employee Engagement and Organizational Performance

Organizations should aim to involve and encourage their workers to be professional at all levels. The company has to spread its capability to produce and deliver products of high value. For proper management, organizations must involve their workers at different levels effectively and productively. Aside from that, individuals in the company should have shared

respect for one another (ISO 2000). The type of involvement should be well structured and prepared for greater decision-making autonomy, which increases company performance (Powell, 1995; Yildirim, 2012). Employee empowerment and participation can impact an organization's success and the outcomes of an industry (Abdullah, Uli & Tari, 2009; Schroeder, 2008; Wehnert, 2009). According to them, the contribution combined with employee engagement has resulted in a faster progression of performance improvement. As a result, this has increased responsibility, self-sufficiency, and innovativeness, eventually leading to organizational invention. Employee participation positively affects creativity and organizational performance (Bon & Mustafa, 2013).

In Colorado, Weston (2016) researched employee engagement: determining the construct's stability. The research was based on three variables: psychological protection, psychological availability, and psychological significance. In addition, the study used experience sampling, in which 49 participants were asked to complete surveys on cellular devices or work computers twice a day at random for five weeks, for 30 data points per participant. Momentary job involvement was positively linked to momentary tension, impact, and the quality of coworker experiences in the study. Following that, the study found that differences in engagement between people were positively linked to working satisfaction, general positive affect, and general job engagement. The study also found that, while employee engagement varies, between-person disparities are still present and provide useful information.

In Minneapolis, Giles-Merrick (2018) conducted a report on employee engagement from the perspective of academic workers. The research used a targeted sample size of 15 females and five males who were full-time workers with direct line reporting to a manager. As a result, these were chosen from a single university in Georgia. The questionnaire was used in the study, and it contained approximately 14 open-ended questions that were used to collect rich data on the respondents' lived experiences. To extract data, open hand and axial coding were used to define emergent themes such as rewards, increased morale, increased management trust and reverence, reward-based success, and organizational productivity. As a result of the study's results, managers must learn to meet the needs of their employees to solve employee engagement issues effectively. The study contributed to a positive social change by adding several insights for managers seeking to increase their productivity.

In Uganda, Makerere University academic personnel were studied by Nachonga (2019) to understand their job satisfaction and productivity level better. The study was based on the following objectives: employee engagement, job performance, job performance, and employee engagement. As a result of the study's estimated population, 485 faculty members from 10 different social sciences schools at Makerere University were included. The study sample was comprised solely of members from the College of Veterinary Medicine, Animal Resources and Bio-security, and the College of Agricultural Sciences (COVAB). A total of 214 people took part in the research. As a result, the study found that compensation and other

incentives considerably impacted performance. Their absence greatly contributed to bad performance, while their presence significantly improved it.

According to Cawe (2016), employee engagement is influenced by various factors in South Africa. There was both qualitative and quantitative research involved. More than 100 people from all over South Africa participated in the survey. Analyses and correlations between the results, propositions, and literature were conducted. Following the study findings, one of the most important variables affecting South African companies is the company's employee engagement strategy, the culture of engagement, leadership and management, talent mentality, communication and information sharing, reputation, and branding, among other things. Furthermore, the study found that an employee engagement model for enterprises in South Africa is offered and aims to include crucial lessons.

Employee involvement and entrepreneurial orientation in a public benefit organization in Kisumu County in Kenya were done by Ontichiro (2017). Employees in PBOs working on software development were randomly selected for the study using a cross-sectional survey approach. The study, therefore, sampled 87 employees, 25% of the targeted population of 348 employees. Data were collected from 62 employees, constituting 72.8% of the targeted employees. Descriptive analysis was employed to establish employee engagement and entrepreneurial orientation levels within the development of PBOs. The study's findings revealed that employee engagement influences their entrepreneurial orientations. Further, the study revealed that the PBOs' development has resulted in a considerable opportunity to maximize employee engagement towards the entrepreneurial orientation of employees as an avenue for income generation for the sustainability of the non-profit organizations. The study's findings were limited to the context of the study due to possible differences with the other types of organizations and institutions.

Jepkorir (2014) looked into the perceived relationship between employee engagement and East African Portland Cement Company Limited employees. The study's target audience consisted of East African Portland Cement Company Limited employees, with a sample size of around 260 participants. The information gathered was sorted, coded, and then analyzed using SPSS software. As a result of the study's results, employees' colleagues were considered to be committed to producing high-quality jobs. Furthermore, the research showed that the workers were proud of the job they did and that they worked for long periods. Furthermore, the research showed that the workers knew what was expected of them and had the necessary materials and equipment to complete their tasks.

Summary of Research Gaps

Table 1: Summary of Research Gaps

Study	Focus of the Study	Methodology	Main Findings	Knowledge Gap	Focus of the Proposed Study
Mboro (2017)	The use of routine information for evidence-based decision-making among the health workers at coast general hospital, Mombasa County.	The study made use of the self-administered questionnaire, focus group discussion guide, and key informant interview guide	69.6% of the respondents utilized routine health information for decision making	The study did not interrogate the use of sources other than the routine information available within.	The current study focused on the other sources the management can utilize to make evidence-based decisions.
Mugendi (2015)	Factors influencing utilization of routine health Data in evidence-based decision-making in HIV and Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome Services by public health facilities	Data was collected from The secondary data that was obtained from the routine health records	The study's findings revealed that only data quality and capacity on data use revealed a significant positive relationship with evidence-based decision-making.	This study investigated the use of hard data available to make evidence-based decisions.	The current study concentrated more on constructs of data for making evidence-based decisions.

Study	Focus of the Study	Methodology	Main Findings	Knowledge Gap	Focus of the Proposed Study
Abuto, (2015)	The business re-engineering as an approach to the strategic change at the Kenya revenue authority.	The study used primary and secondary data, which were mainly qualitative.	The study revealed that implementing the business re-engineering approaches posed some challenges the firm must address.	The study investigates business re-engineering approaches without clearly indicating the construct that can be affected by the approach.	The current study clearly showed the construct to be used to measure the process approach and especially how those constructs work seamlessly to yield Organizational performance.

Study	Focus of the Study	Methodology	Main Findings	Knowledge Gap	Focus of the Proposed Study
Androwis et al., (2017)	Total quality management practices and organizational performance in the construction chemicals companies in Jordan	A total of 160 questionnaires were distributed to 28 companies. One hundred thirty-one questionnaires were completed and used for the analysis, representing a response rate of 81.9 percent.	The study findings, therefore, revealed TQM practices positively affect organizational performance, with a significant value for top management commitment, customer focus, supplier management, process control, and continuous improvement.	The study mainly focused on TQM practices and how they affect organizational performance. The study was also undertaken in Jordan	The current study focused on staff at the Nairobi bottlers to establish the influence of customer focus on organizational performance. The study was done in Kenya.
Nachonga (2019)	employees' engagement and job performance among the public university academic staff at Makerere University in Kampala	The study targeted all the commercial government-owned entities in Kenya. Presently there are thirty-four commercial government-owned	The findings of the study, therefore, revealed that pay, motivation, and remunerations significantly influenced the performance	The study was conducted in government-owned institutions, which are sometimes occasion by systemic negligence to customer approach	The study focused on a private entity that owes its survival to its competitiveness in the manufacturing sectors; therefore, customer focus is key.

Study	Focus of the Study	Methodology	Main Findings	Knowledge Gap	Focus of the Proposed Study
		entities in Kenya.			
Ontichiro (2017)	Employee engagement and entrepreneurial orientation of employees in the development of public benefit organizations in Kisumu County	The study sample size was 87 respondents from a targeted population of 348 employees	Employee engagement does influence their entrepreneurial orientations	THE STUDY was targeted in PBOs where the results of the study may not represent the other sectors	This study was carried out in NBL, a manufacturing firm.

Study	Focus of the Study	Methodology	Main Findings	Knowledge Gap	Focus of the Proposed Study
Abuto (2015)	customer focus techniques on service delivery at Nairobi's Immigration Department	Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics	Service delivery at the Department of Immigration was affected by the degree to which electronic technology, consumer sensitization, internal quality, and decentralization were implemented	The study was conducted at a government agency. The result of the study may not apply to any other sector due to procedures used in the government agencies and private sector	The current study was conducted in the private sector and specifically on NBL, which is one of the players in a manufacturing firm

Source: Researcher (2022)

Conceptual Framework

The International Organization for Standardization describes a conceptual framework as a written or interactive product that outlines the primary characteristics to be explored, either in narrative or graphic form. The key elements are variables, definitions, and the assumed relationships between them. Unification of general theories and ideas that can assist researchers in appropriately describing a topic, phrasing their research questions, and accessing relevant literature is what a conceptual framework is built of. Thus, evidence-based decision making, customer focus, a process approach, and employee engagement are considered independent variables in this system. In contrast, firm results are considered the dependent variable in this system.

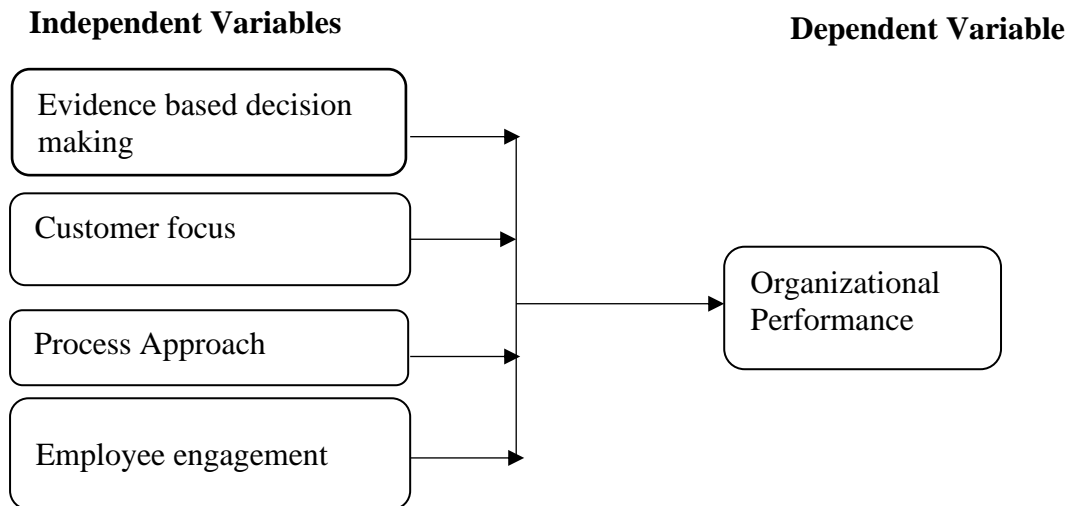


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework
 Source: Researcher (2022)

Operationalization of Variables

Table 2: Operationalization of Variables

Variable	Indicators	Measurement Scale	Method of Data Collection	Data Analysis
Evidence-based Decision Making	Alignment with strategic plans Logical and related to goals Quantified and measurable Based on benchmarks Define performance targets	Likert / ordinal	Administering Questionnaires	Multiple regression Analysis Frequencies and percentages Correlation analysis
Customer Focus	Grievance resolutions Setting service level standards Customer's expectations Service delivers Customer retention	Likert / ordinal	Administering Questionnaires	Multiple regression Analysis Frequencies and percentages Correlation analysis

Variable	Indicators	Measurement Scale	Method of Data Collection	Data Analysis
Process Approach	Interrelated processes Consistency and predictable outcome Management of processes Use of resources efficiently Constant monitoring	Likert / ordinal	Administering Questionnaires	Multiple regression Analysis Frequencies and percentages Correlation analysis
Employees Engagement	Self-sufficiency Innovativeness Employees participation Employees competency Empowerment programs	Likert / ordinal	Administering Questionnaires	Multiple regression Analysis Frequencies and percentages Correlation analysis
Organizational Performance	Customer Satisfaction index Sales volume Firm expansions Profit Margins New Product Development	Likert / ordinal	Administering Questionnaires	Multiple regression Analysis Frequencies and percentages Correlation analysis

Source: Researcher (2022)

Chapter Summary

This chapter reviews related literature on the relationship between continuous improvement strategies and the performance of manufacturing enterprises in Kenya. The chapter is organized into five key sections. These parts contain a theoretical literature study in which four pertinent theories were evaluated, including the goal Schumpeterian theory, the agency theory, the resource-based theory, and the customer relationship management theory. Part two includes an empirical evaluation of the study's independent variables: evidence-based decision-making, customer focus, process approach, and employee engagement. Finally, the conceptual framework, the operationalization of variables, and the chapter summary are discussed in this chapter.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter describes the descriptive study design approach that the research used to conduct the survey. The data sources, sort, population targeted, and sampling methods, as well as sample size and technique selection, are all identified. Data collection and analysis, data collection instruments, a pilot project, data presentation, and ethical issues are covered in detail.

Research Design

According to Orodho (2003), a research design is an outline or strategy used to produce answers to research problems. According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), research architecture can be considered the framework of research. A descriptive research design was used to investigate this research issue. According to Aborisade (2013), descriptive research defines a phenomenon's what, where, and how.

Target Population

The term "target population" refers to a study of all members of a real or hypothetical group of individuals, events, or objects to which an investigator seeks to generalize the findings, according to Asiamah et al. (2017). The researcher targeted the top management, middle level management and lower level management from manufacturing, Sales, logistics, Admin and other support functions. The target population for this study was 190 employees. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), the target group should possess measurable traits that the researcher can use to extrapolate the study's findings to a broader population. The idea that the population is heterogeneous is the basis for this classification.

Table 3: Target Population

	Frequency	% Sample size
Manufacturing	27	47
Sales	14	25
Logistics	9	15
Admin And Support Functions	7	13
Total	57	100

Source: Human Resource Department, Nairobi Bottlers Limited's (2022)

Sample and sampling technique

The sampling plan provides information on the survey sample size, sampling process, and sampling frame, among other things. This section specifies a target population from which the researcher wishes to collect a sample for research purposes (Khalid, Abdullah & Kumar 2012). In this case, the researcher selected fifty-seven (57) people from a pool of potential volunteers. This accounted for 30% of the total population. This sample size was sufficient since it was under Mugenda and Mugenda (2003). They claimed that any sample comprising

10 to 30 percent of the overall population is good for research and drawing inferences from the results

Table 4: Sample Size

	Frequency	Sample size
Manufacturing	47	27
Sales	25	14
Logistics	15	9
Admin and Support Functions	13	7
Total	100	57

Source: Researcher (2022)

Instruments

The primary data for the analysis was gathered using a questionnaire because the questionnaire captures information that is not readily observable, such as emotions, intentions, and behaviors; achievements and personal experiences; and achievements and personal experiences (Mellenbergh, 2008). Some questions were closed-ended in the poll. An objective data set can be obtained through a questionnaire, according to Franker (2006), because the researcher does not influence participants in any way throughout the survey. According to Franker (2006), questionnaires provide the additional virtue of being less expensive and taking a reduced amount of time to collect data than other methods. The questionnaire was divided into two sections, each discussing one of the study's four objectives. General information on the respondents was collected in the first section of the questionnaire.

In contrast, the second and third sections focused on the four objectives: evidence-based decision-making, a consumer-centric strategy, a process-oriented approach, and employee engagement. They were also made available for self-administration via email and WhatsApp on Microsoft forms (Ms. Forms). The instrument used a Likert-style scale to evaluate the sample population's variables. The responses to statement-like questions were scored on a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5. This style was chosen because it generates data with equal intervals, allowing more powerful statistics to test hypotheses compared to other formats (Zohrabi, 2013).

Pilot Testing

The purpose of pilot testing is to establish the validity and reliability of research instruments and, as a result, to improve their face validity (Kim, 2011). The pilot testing was done at Nairobi Bottlers Limited. To eliminate errors and develop questions relevant to the investigation, a subset of the study population was used to assess the questionnaire designed specifically for this study. To conduct the pilot testing, six (6) management personnel were selected from a sister plant, Equator Bottlers Limited, based in Kisumu County, Kenya, representing ten percent (10%) of the total number of employees took part in the final analysis. The respondents were issued with the questionnaires to fill their responses. The

clarifications sought were noted as well as the challenges were noted by the researcher during this exercise. As a result the researcher then improved on the challenges to ensure the same doesn't replicate to the target respondents. A pre-test of research instruments should be undertaken on 10% of the target population, according to Whitehead et al. (2016).

Validity

The validity of research instruments refers to the overall quality of the research tools (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2008). Furthermore, the degree to which the study's findings truly represent the problem under discussion is known as its validity. To confirm that the instrument was correct, the researcher conferred with the project supervisor for expert input on the questionnaire design. Insight from the project supervisor ensured the content validity of the research instruments. The supervisor provided a subject matter expert review concerning the field of study. Researchers can build dependable instruments from this consultation, which is particularly useful regarding face, material, and construct validity. The research tests' viability in terms of their aim is the construction's validity. In contrast, the attractiveness of the research instrument in terms of the respondents' eyes is referred to as the validity of the face.

Reliability

According to Mohajan (2017), reliability is defined as the ability of a research instrument to deliver reliable results even after multiple retrials of the experiment. The test-retest method was employed in this investigation. To do this, the same scale/medium was to be administered twice to the same subjects at two different times. The results were statistically significant when the instruments were administered to the same respondents after a two-week period. People that participated in the pilot study were not included in the final study. After the instruments were re-evaluated for the second time, Cronbach alpha was calculated. Specifically, it was done to measure the degree to which the instrument's internal consistency, or how closely the responses are connected as a whole, was maintained throughout testing. Based on the data, a Cronbach alpha of greater than 0.7 was regarded as appropriate because it aligned with what Osuagwu (2020) findings.

Data Collection Procedures

Before beginning data collection, the researcher got a letter from MUA University, which served as an authorization letter and approval from NACOSTI which regulates and assures quality in the research, science, technology and innovation sector to advise the Government in matters related thereto. Through the management, the researcher assembled the respondents together and distributed the consent forms for them to understand the activity they would later undertake. Clarifications sought were provided in advance. The Data was acquired from respondents using self-administered questionnaires through the online data collection tool Microsoft forms (Ms Forms). Considering the COVID-19 (Corona virus

disease of 2019) epidemic, the researchers used Microsoft forms (Ms Forms) for online data collection to reduce physical encounters between the researcher and responders.

Data Analysis

Data collected using the Ms forms was coded into SPSS Data analysis software. This was then analyzed for descriptive and inferential statistics. The data was analyzed for mean, mode and standard deviation. To determine if there was any association between the dependent and independent study variables, the researcher then performed multiple regression analyses to make their findings known. Additional inferential statistics were generated to determine whether or not the continuous improvement strategies of Nairobi Bottlers Limited affect its performance.

The regression equation is:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 EBD + \beta_2 CF + \beta_3 PA + \beta_4 EE + \alpha$$

Where:

Y stands for the dependent variable of organizational performance,

β_0 - the coefficient of the regression model,

β_1 , β_2 , β_3 , and β_4 - for the gradient of the model equation,

EBD - evidence-based decision making

CF - Customer focus,

PA - process approach,

EE - employee engagement

α - the model error term usually distributed at a mean score of zero, and for this study, it was considered to be zero.

Ethical Considerations

Informed Consent

Respondents participated based on informed consent. The researcher provided an informed consent form to the respondents to ensure that they had information on the type, scope and purpose of the study.

Voluntary Participation

Sufficient information and assurances about participating to allow individuals to understand the implications of participation and to reach a fully informed, considered, and freely given decision about whether or not to do so without the exercise of any pressure or coercion.

The researcher ensured that study ethics standards were followed when doing the report. Everyone who took part in the study did it on their initiative. The voluntary participation of respondents was ensured, and the participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any stage if they wished to do so. The participants were informed of the study's objectives.

Confidentiality

They were guaranteed that the information they provided would be used solely for academic purposes. The use of offensive, discriminatory, or other unacceptable language was avoided in the formulation of the Questionnaire.

Privacy

The privacy of the organizations sensitive information was also assured. The researcher was given a guideline on the organization code of ethics when conducting research pertaining its processes and operations. The findings of the study were not to be disclosed to any other third party without written authorization from the management.

Anonymity

Anonymity of the responses from the sampled respondents was assured. The identity of the respondents was not disclosed. The works of other authors used in any part of the study were acknowledged. Maintenance Highest level of objectivity in discussions and analyses was maintained throughout the study.

Chapter summary

This chapter contains a thorough discussion of how the study was carried out. A detailed description of the research methodology used to discover the answers to the research questions is provided in this section. The first section introduces the research design that was used in the study. The second section describes the target population, and the third section explains the data instruments, tools used for data collection, validity and reliability tests, and data analysis plan. Finally, the final section outlines an explanation of ethical considerations that were taken into consideration.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter discusses the results of a study on the relationship between continuous improvement strategies and the performance of Nairobi Bottlers Limited, including data analysis, presentation, and interpretation of the findings. As a result, the chapter is divided into three sections: data analysis, presentation of the findings, and interpretation.

Presentation of the Findings

Study Response Rate

A total of 57 respondents were recruited for the study, representing top, medium, and lower-level management from the operations, customer service, human resources, and administration departments. Although just 52 respondents responded to the researcher's

survey, this indicated an overall response rate of 92 percent out of the 57 respondents who were sought for participation. Mugenda and Mugenda (2009) state that for generalization, a response rate of 50 percent is sufficient for data collection and analysis, 60 percent is good, and a response rate of 70 percent or higher is excellent. The response rate was deemed reliable for data analysis because it conforms to their findings that for generalization, a response rate of 50 percent is adequate for data collection and analysis. A response rate of 60 percent is good and a response rate of 70 percent or higher is excellent. The excellent response rate was attributed to the data collection technique, which consisted of administering questionnaires in person by the researcher after informing the respondents of the study's actual aim and purpose statement.

Table 5: Study Response Rate

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Fully Response	52	92
No Response	5	8
Total	57	100

Source: Researcher (2022)

Respondents' General Information

The study sought to establish the general information of the respondents who participated in the study in terms of the department in which they worked in a position within their department. Also, the duration of time working at the company, the highest education level attained, and their opinion on whether they embraced continuous improvement practices mattered.

Departments

Respondents were asked to indicate their department at Nairobi Bottlers Limited. As per the study results, 48% of respondents at Nairobi Bottlers Limited worked in Manufacturing, 23% in Sales, 15% in Logistics, and 15% in Admin and support.

Table 6: Department Working in

Departments	Frequency	Percentage
Manufacturing	25	48
Sales	12	23
Logistics	8	15
Admin And Support	7	14
Total	52	100

Source: Researcher (2022)

Position Held in the Department

The researcher also asked respondents to indicate their positions within their departments. According to the study findings, 51% of respondents were Frontline Staff, 30% were Team

Leaders, and 19% were Departmental and Unit managers. The study results imply that those who participated in the study were informed people within Nairobi Bottlers Limited; hence, they had sufficient knowledge on matters to do with continuous improvement practices.

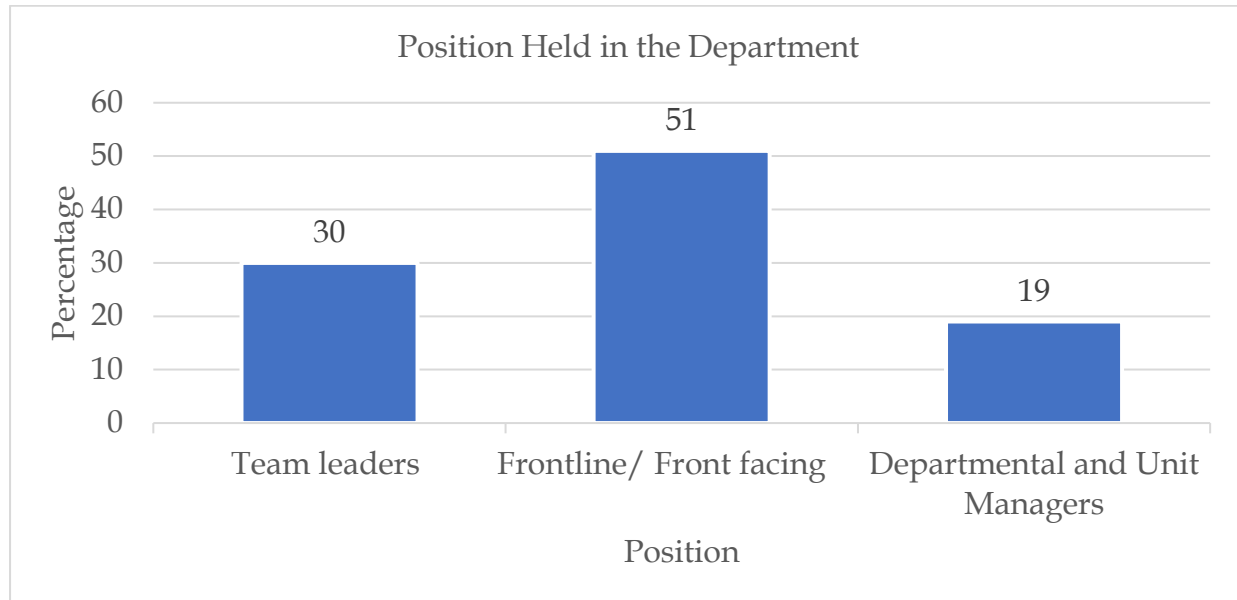


Figure 2: Position Held in the Department
Source: Researcher (2022)

Highest Level of Education

To further assess whether respondents held the necessary information for the study issues, respondents were asked to indicate the highest educational level they had attained. A survey result revealed that 38 percent of respondents had an undergraduate degree as their highest education level, 32 percent had a post-graduate degree as their highest education level. Seventeen percent had a diploma as their highest education level, and 13 percent of respondents had a certificate as their highest education level, according to the findings of the study. Given the study results obtained, it is reasonable to conclude that the respondent possessed a suitable educational background and, as such, was capable of providing accurate replies in response to the study questions.

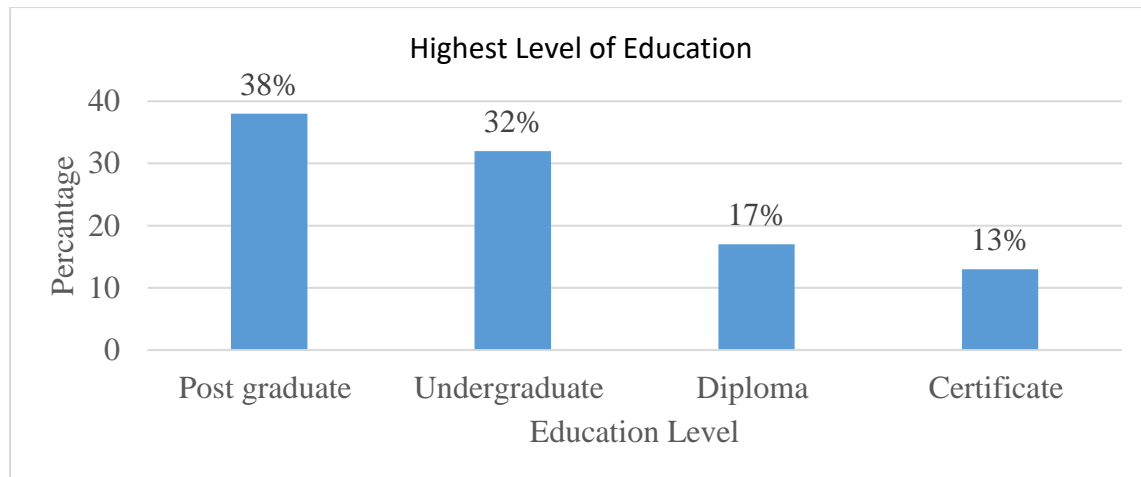


Figure 3: Highest Level of Education
 Source: Researcher (2022)

Number of Years Worked

Respondents were also asked how long they had been employed by Nairobi Bottlers Limited, which was part of the survey's additional questions. Following the study's findings, 44% of respondents had worked at Nairobi Bottlers Limited for more than five years but less than 10 years. Twenty one percent had worked there for less than five years, 19% had worked there for more than ten years but less than 15 years, and 15 % had worked there for more than 15 years. The study's finding indicates that respondents who participated in the survey had worked at the institution for a significant amount of time, and as a result, they had sufficient awareness.

Table 7: Number of Years Worked at the Company

Years	Frequency	Percentage
Less than five years	11	21
more than five years but less than 10 years	23	44
more than ten years but less than 15years	10	19
above 15 years	8	15
Total	52	100

Source: Researcher (2022)

Embracing Continuous Improvement Practices

Respondents were also requested to indicate whether Nairobi Bottlers Limited embraced continuous improvement practices to enhance their organizational performance. As per the study results, it was revealed that 96% of respondents indicated that Nairobi Bottlers Limited had always embraced continuous improvement practices as a way of enhancing their organizational performance, whereas 4% of respondents were of contrary opinion.

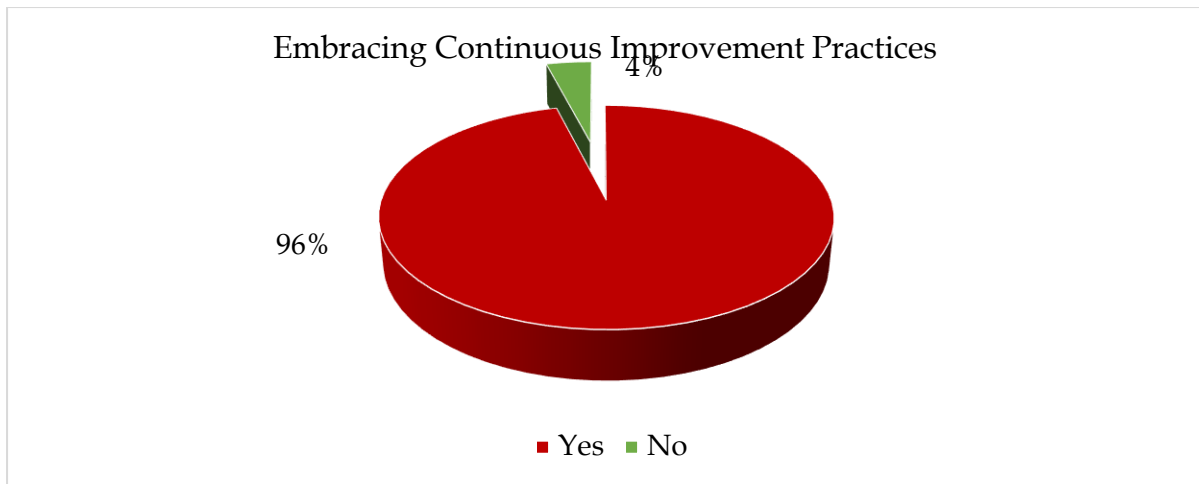


Figure 4: Embracing Continuous Improvement Practices
Source: Researcher (2022)

Evidence-Based Decision-Making and Organization Performance

Respondents were asked to rate the extent to which the following indicators of evidence-based decision-making have been integrated into the organization's operations to improve organizational performance on a scale from 1 to 5, with one being the most integrated and 5 being the least integrated (1- Not at all, 2-small extent, 3-moderate extent, 4-large extent and 5- very large extent). Nairobi Bottlers Limited's organizational performance has improved as a result of the study's findings, as indicated by a mean score of 4.321. According to the study's findings, the respondents agreed to a very large extent that alignment with strategic goals was a crucial evidence-based decision-making indicator that had been integrated into the organization's operations for the company to improve its organizational performance. As indicated by mean scores of 4.152 and 4.122, respondents strongly agreed that quantified and measurable evidence, as well as logical and related to goals, were also important evidence-based decision-making indicators integrated into the organization operations of Nairobi Bottlers Limited to improve their organizational performance.

Furthermore, as demonstrated by the mean score of 3.904, respondents agreed to a great extent that the benchmark was an evidence-based decision-making indicator that had been integrated into the organization operations of Nairobi Bottlers Limited to improve their organizational performance. Lastly, respondents were only moderately in agreement that defining performance targets was an evidence-based decision-making indicator integrated into the operations of Nairobi Bottlers Limited to improve their organizational performance, as indicated by the mean score of 3.754. The overall mean score (4.051) shows that respondents agreed with the aspects used to measure the influence of evidence-based decision-making on organization performance.

Table 8: Evidence-Based Decision-Making and Organization Performance

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev
Alignment with strategic plans	4.321	0.532
Logical and related to goals	4.122	0.211
Quantified and measurable evidence	4.152	0.515
Based on benchmarks	3.904	0.602
Define performance targets	3.754	0.649
Overall	4.051	0.502

Source: Researcher (2022)

Customer Focus and Organization Performance

Respondents were asked to rate the extent to which the following indicators of customer focus have been incorporated into the organization's operations to improve organizational performance on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being the most integrated and 5 being the least integrated (1- Not at all, 2-small extent, 3-moderate extent, 4-large extent and 5- very large extent). Following the survey findings, it was discovered that respondents agreed to a very wide extent that responding to customers' interests and expectations was a highly important customer-focus measure to improve organizational performance, as evidenced by the mean score of 3.941.

Respondents also agreed to a great extent that defining service level standards was an important customer focus measure to improve the company's performance, as demonstrated by the mean score of 3.856. Furthermore, as seen by the mean scores of 3.723 and 3.615, most respondents believed that customer retention tactics and grievance resolution were critical customer focus measures to be implemented to improve organizational performance. Finally, respondents moderately agreed that concern for service delivery is also a customer focus measure employed to improve the company's performance, as evidenced by the mean score of 3.549. The overall mean score (3.737) shows that respondents agreed that customer focus influences organizational performance.

Table 9: Customer Focus and Organization Performance

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev
Grievance resolutions	3.615	0.815
Setting service level standards	3.856	0.245
Responding to customer's interests and expectations	3.941	0.347
Concern about service deliver	3.549	0.183
Customer retention strategies	3.723	0.223
Overall	3.737	0.363

Source: Researcher (2022)

Process Approach and Organization Performance

Respondents were requested to indicate the extent to which the following indicators of process approaches have been integrated into the organization's operations to enhance organizational performance using a scale of 1-5, were (1- Not at all, 2-small extent, 3-moderate extent, 4-large extent and 5- very large extent). The study results were obtained, and it was revealed that respondents agreed to a very large extent that consistency and predictable outcome is a crucial process approach indicators adopted to enhance organizational performance, as shown by the mean score of 3.667.

Respondents further agreed to a very large extent that efficient use of resources was also a crucial process approach indicator adopted to enhance organizational performance, as shown by the mean score of 3.588. Further, respondents agreed to a large extent that management of processes and interrelated processes were also important to process approach indicators adopted to enhance the organizational performance, as shown by the mean scores of 3.465 and 3.420, respectively. Lastly, respondents moderately agreed that constant monitoring is also a process approach indicator adopted to enhance organizational performance, as shown by the mean score of 3.392. The overall mean score (3.506) shows that respondents agreed that process approach influences organizational performance.

Table 10: Process Approach and Organization Performance

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev
Interrelated processes	3.420	0.214
Consistency and predictable outcome	3.667	0.143
Management of processes	3.465	0.152
Use of resources efficiently	3.588	0.219
Constant monitoring	3.392	1.102
Overall	3.506	0.366

Source: Researcher (2022)

Employee Engagement and Organization Performance

Respondents were requested to indicate the extent to which the following indicators of process approaches have been integrated into the organization's operations to enhance Organizational performance using a scale of 1-5, where (1- Not at all, 2-small extent, 3-moderate extent, 4-large extent and 5- very large extent). The study findings indicated that respondents agreed to a very large extent that employee participation was a crucial employee engagement measure adopted to enhance organizational performance, as shown by the mean score of 3.863. Respondents further agreed to a very large extent that empowerment programs were a crucial employee engagement measure adopted to enhance organizational performance, as shown by the mean score of 3.647.

Further, respondents agreed to a large extent that self-sufficiency and innovativeness were crucial employee engagement measures adopted to enhance organizational performance, as shown by the mean scores of 3.608 and 3.569, respectively. Lastly, respondents moderately agreed that employee competency was an important employee engagement measure adopted to enhance organizational performance, as shown by the mean score of 3.452. The overall mean score (3.628) shows that respondents agreed that process approach influences organizational performance.

Table 11: Employee Engagement and Organization Performance

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev
Self-sufficiency	3.608	0.833
Innovativeness	3.569	0.721
Employee’s participation	3.863	0.980
Employee’s competency	3.452	0.832
Empowerment programs	3.647	0.955
Overall	3.628	0.864

Source: Researcher (2022)

Continuous Improvement Practices and Organizational Performance

Respondents were requested to indicate the extent to which they agree to the following indicators of organizational performance using a scale of 1-5, where (1- Not at all, 2-small extent, 3-moderate extent, 4-large extent, and 5- very large extent). The study findings indicated that respondents agreed to a very large extent that adopting continuous improvement practices had enhanced their organizational performance, as shown by the Customer Satisfaction Index, which indicated a mean score of 3.842.

In addition, respondents agreed to a very large extent that the impact of continuous improvement practices in their organization's performance was that their sales volume had increased, as indicated by the mean score of 3.721. Respondents further agreed to a large extent that the impact of continuous improvement practices on their organization's performance was that their firm had expanded and their profit margin had increased, as indicated by the mean scores of 3.615 and 3.549, respectively. Lastly, respondents moderately agreed that the impact of continuous improvement practices in their organization's performance was that it had allowed new product development, as indicated by the mean score of 3.212. The overall mean score (3.588) shows that respondents agreed that performance indicators aspects studied in this research indicate organization performance.

Table 12: Performance of the Organization

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev
Customer Satisfaction Index	3.842	0.513
Sales volume	3.721	0.425
Firm expansions	3.615	0.612
Profit Margins	3.549	0.483
New products development	3.212	0.125
Overall	3.588	0.432

Source: Researcher (2022)

Inferential Analysis

The researcher conducted Cronbach Alpha analysis, regression analysis, correlation analysis, and analysis of variance to establish any relationship between the independent and dependent variables under consideration in this study.

Cronbach Alpha

Reliability is a measure of the internal consistency of the constructs in the study. The construct reliability was assessed using Cronbach alpha. The results showed that the evidence-based decision-making scale with 5 items had an alpha value of 0.818. The customer focus scale with 5 items had an alpha value of 0.920. Process Approach Scale with five items had an alpha of 0.862. The employee Engagement scale with five items had an alpha value of 0.814, while the continuous improvement practices with a scale of 5 items had an alpha value of 0.778.

Table 13: Cronbach Alpha Values

Construct	No. of items	Corrected Total Correlation	Cronbach alpha if an item is deleted
Evidence-Based Decision Making	5	0.623	0.819
Customer Focus	5	0.719	0.92
Process Approach	5	0.519	0.862
Employee engagement	5	0.494	0.814
Performance indicators	5	0.64	0.778

Source: Researcher (2022)

Pearson’s Coefficient of Correlation

The correlation coefficient between the study variables, calculated by Karl Pearson, was used to demonstrate the relationship between the variables (r). According to the findings, there was a positive association between evidence-based decision-making and organizational performance, as demonstrated by a correlation coefficient of 0.523 between the two variables. According to the correlation coefficient of 0.61, a positive relationship existed between

customer focus and organizational performance. Furthermore, it was discovered that there was a positive association between process approach and organizational performance, as evidenced by the correlation value of 0.740, between process approach and organizational performance.

Finally, it was discovered that there was a positive association between employee engagement and organizational success, as evidenced by the correlation coefficient of 0.520 between the two variables. It is obvious from the correlation data presented above that there was a positive connection between all of the independent and dependent variables studied in this study. In Jurburg et al. (2019) opinion, firms, corporations, and enterprises must try to achieve tough objectives. They must be convinced that their systems are efficient to ensure that their customers are satisfied and that these procedures contribute to the company's performance and reflect tremendous growth.

Table 14: Coefficient of Correlation

		Organizational Performance	Evidence-Based Decision Making	Customer Focus	Process Approach	Employee Engagement
Organizational Performance	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	1				
Evidence-Based Decision Making	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	0.523 0.002	1			
Customer Focus	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	0.614 0.001	0.341 0.004	1		
Process Approach	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	0.740 0.003	0.120 0.010	0.0621 0.0043	1	
Employee Engagement	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	0.520 0.012	0.340 0.001	0.0000 1.000	0.160 0.001	1

Source: Researcher (2022)

Regression Analysis

In addition, the researcher did a multiple regression analysis to determine the association between continuous improvement strategies and the performance of Nairobi Bottlers Ltd. The primary goal of multiple regressions is to demonstrate the relationship between several independent and dependent variables. When coding, entering and computing the measures of

the multiple regressions for the study, the researcher used SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences).

Model Summary

The coefficient of determination (R²) measures the extent to which changes in the dependent variable can be explained by changes in the independent variables or the percentage of variation in the dependent variable (organizational performance of Nairobi Bottlers limited). The dependent variable can be explained by all four independent variables (evidence-based decision-making, customer focus, process approach, and employee engagement). Only 66.4 percent of the organizational performance of Nairobi Bottlers Limited can be accounted for by the four independent variables that were investigated, as indicated by the adjusted R²=0.664. This implies that more factors, which were not investigated in this research, contribute to the performance of Nairobi Bottlers limited to the tune of 33.6 percent of its overall performance. To better understand the other 33.6 percent of continuous improvement practices that have the potential to influence organizational performance in manufacturing businesses, additional research should be carried out in this area.

Table 15: Model Summary

Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.815	0.664	0.314	0.4211

Source: Researcher (2022)

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

The significance of the regression model was tested using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). F=4.279 and p=0.005, which is less than 0.05, signifies that the model is statistically significant in predicting how continuous improvement practices influence the organizational performance of large manufacturing companies in Kenya. Given that p<0.05, the model is significant at a 95% confidence level, and the variables in the equation are important.

Table 16: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	17.023	4	4.256	4.279	.005
	Residual	46.746	47	0.995		
	Total	63.769	51			

Source: Researcher (2022)

Regression Coefficients

The researcher sought to determine the extent to which continuous improvement practices influence the organizational performance of large manufacturing companies in Kenya. The results are displayed in table 16.

Table 17: Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.308	0.342		1.623	0.0357
Evidence-based decision making	0.558	0.310	0.172	4.342	0.0276
Customer focus	0.731	0.156	0.210	3.532	0.0285
Process approach	0.785	0.322	0.067	3.542	0.0202
Employee engagement	0.620	0.245	0.148	3.458	0.0249

Source: Researcher (2022)

As per the SPSS results in the table above, the following multiple regression equation was generated:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \varepsilon$$

$$Y = 1.308 + 0.558X_1 + 0.785X_2 + 0.620X_3 + 0.731X_4$$

Following the regression equation above, the organizational performance of pharmaceutical enterprises in Nairobi Bottlers Limited was 1.308 when all parameters (evidence-based decision-making, customer focus, process approach, and staff engagement) were constant at zero. According to the findings, Nairobi Bottlers Limited's organizational performance increased by 0.558 percent when evidence-based decision making was increased by one unit. This is true even when all other independent factors are held constant.

Additionally, the findings reveal that when all other factors are held constant, a unit increase in customer attention results in a 0.731 rise in the organizational performance of Nairobi Bottlers Limited. Additionally, the findings reveal that, when all other factors are held constant, a unit improvement in the process approach resulted in a 0.785 rise in organizational performance at Nairobi Bottlers Limited. The findings also reveal that when all other independent variables are considered, an increase in employee engagement results in a 0.620 improvement in organizational performance at Nairobi Bottlers Limited. Based on this, it can be concluded that the process approach contributes the most to organizational performance at Nairobi Bottlers Limited, followed by customer focus and employee engagement. In contrast, evidence-based decision-making contributed the least to organizational performance at Nairobi Bottlers Limited. Despite this, all factors were statistically significant because their P-values were less than 0.05.

The standardized coefficients indicate the corresponding change in the dependent variable when a change of one unit is affected in the independent variable. Thus, a 1% improvement in evidence-based decision-making will lead to a 17.2% change in organizational performance, customer focus will result in a 21% change in organizational performance, and

process approach will result in a 6.7% increase in organizational performance. In comparison, employee engagement will lead to a 14.8% increase in organizational performance.

Limitation of the study

The researcher encountered a challenge in getting all the respondents respond to the questionnaires in a timely basis. This was due to the busy schedule in the organizations as the production processes were continuing. To overcome this the researcher used online Ms Forms where the respondents could fill at their free time and respond any time. Further the challenge of conducted the study during the Covid 19 era where some of the respondents were working from home. This also led to delay in responses to the questionnaires. To cater for this the researcher made frequent follow ups through phone and also designed Microsoft forms to minimize movement and make it cost friendly for both the researcher and the respondents. The study was undertaken in the only one branch of the company which could differ from others in the world. Therefore the study cannot be used to generalize the findings to other companies. Finally, time and resources were a limiting factor. The researcher had limited time given that this was to be examined and forwarded to the University for Examination Purposes. Finances limited the researcher from correcting data in other company branches for comparative analysis.

Chapter Summary

The chapter presented results from the collected data, including descriptive statistics, regression analysis, and correlation. The means and standard deviation results of every variable are also included. The chapter has explained the study's results and findings, which are displayed on tables with detailed explanations under each table.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Introduction

This chapter depicts the summary, conclusion, and recommendations of research findings. The study aimed to examine the relationship between continuous improvement practices and the organizational performance of Nairobi Bottlers Limited. The chapter is structured into a summary of findings, conclusions, recommendations, and areas for further research.

Summary of Findings

Evidence-Based Decision-Making and Organization Performance

Alignment with strategic goals was a crucial evidence-based decision-making indicator integrated into Nairobi Bottlers Limited to enhance its organizational performance. The results agree with Perez (2017), who conducted a study in Australia to develop a process model to elucidate why some managers engage in evidence-based decision-making more than

others. Perez found that learning goal orientation and the theory of expected action explain unique variations in evidence-based decision-making. Learning goal orientation and subjective norms are the best predictors of the intention to follow evidence-based decision-making and its subsequent implementation.

The study noted that quantified and measurable evidence, as well as logical and related to goals, were also crucial evidence-based decision-making indicators that have been integrated into the organization operations of Nairobi Bottlers Limited to enhance their organizational performance. Benchmarking was an evidence-based decision-making indicator integrated into Nairobi Bottlers Limited to enhance its organizational performance.

The performance target was an evidence-based decision-making indicator integrated into Nairobi Bottlers Limited's organizational operations to enhance their performance. The study findings conform to Ohairwe, Basheka & Zikusooka (2015), who studied evidence-based decision-making processes in Uganda in the pharmaceutical industry. The study established that the quality of knowledge gathered impacts successful decision-making in the Uganda pharmaceutical sector's regulation, management, and administration.

Customer Focus and Organization Performance

Customer interests and expectations were essential customer-focus measures to enhance organizational performance. It was established that setting service level standards were also an important customer-focus measure to enhance organizational performance. Customer retention strategies and grievance resolution were crucial customer-focus measures adopted to enhance organizational performance.

Lastly, the study established that concern about service delivery is also a customer focus measure adopted to enhance organizational performance. The study results agree with Gathiaka (2013), who investigated the impact of customer focus techniques on service delivery at Nairobi's Immigration Department and found out that all four variables were used at very low levels, resulting in service delivery that was not as successful as intended.

Process Approach and Organizational Performance

Consistency and predictable outcomes are crucial process approach indicators adopted to enhance organizational performance. Efficient use of resources was also a crucial process approach indicator adopted to enhance organizational performance. The findings agree with the Ranganathan (2012) study on the advancement of production processes in the manufacturing industry in Sweden. The study established that skill enhancement and job rotation has been considered fundamental factor in the flexibility and innovativeness inherent in Japanese manufacturing processes. Management of processes and interrelated processes were also important to process approach indicators adopted to enhance organizational performance.

Lastly, the study noted that constant monitoring is also a process approach indicator adopted to enhance organizational performance. The findings conform to Munywoki's (2018) research on implementing the just-in-time method approach and the operating efficiency of cement manufacturing companies. The research established that employee preparation, ICT use, and top management engagement are critical to effectively implementing the just-in-time inventory management technique.

Employee Engagement and Organizational Performance

Employee participation was a crucial employee engagement measure adopted to enhance organizational performance. Empowerment programs were a crucial employee engagement measure adopted to enhance organizational performance. The study finding agrees with Weston (2016). He researched employee engagement: determining the construct's stability in Colorado and established that differences in engagement between people were positively linked to working satisfaction, general positive affect, and general job engagement. Self-sufficiency and innovativeness were crucial employee engagement measures adopted to enhance organizational performance.

Lastly, the study established that employee competency was an important employee engagement measure adopted to enhance organizational performance. However, the study findings disagree with Nachonga (2019), who examined employees' engagement and job performance among the public university academic staff at Makerere University in Kampala and established that pay, motivation, and remunerations significantly influenced the performance since their absence also significantly contributed to the poor performance. Therefore their presence significantly increased the performance.

Recommendations

The study recommended that large manufacturing firms adopt a transformational leadership approach. This is because top management is the pillar of continuous improvement; without their full support and commitment, its initiative is bound to fail. It is recommended that this should be done in line with their corporate talent management strategy. In this case, each leadership assessment should be conducted for all managers to assess their current leadership style, skills, and behaviors.

Manufacturing companies' ultimate purpose should be to effectively provide value to their customers while enabling their employees to contribute and lead to their fullest potential. Therefore, manufacturing companies should explore more effective ways of working and tying strategy, goals, and a sense of meaningful purpose to their operations. Collectively, these elements make up the continuous improvement system. This integrated method transforms the entire company from the front lines to the executive level, allowing it to renew itself continuously for long-term value generation.

Manufacturing companies must acknowledge the value of continuous improvement methods, particularly their roles in affecting the results of continuous improvement implementations in the manufacturing process. In this situation, it is critical for managers to realize the importance of continuous improvement processes in the field of manufacturing and to understand how they may be used to improve the business's overall performance. The primary goal of this study was to investigate the association between continuous improvement strategies and the overall performance of Nairobi Bottlers Limited (NBL). The conclusions of this study cannot be applied to the other significant manufacturing companies in Kenya due to this limitation. Further research on the impact of continuous improvement strategies on the organizational performance of all large manufacturing enterprises in Kenya, as assessed by profitability and related ratios, is recommended to allow for further generalization of the findings. Further research on the other factors that contribute to Organizational Performance other than continuous improvement initiatives. The researcher recommends further studies on

Conclusion

The researcher concluded from the study that aligning with strategic goals is a crucial evidence-based decision-making indicator that has been integrated into the organization operations of Nairobi Bottlers Limited to enhance their organizational performance. In addition, the study concluded that quantified and measurable evidence, as well as logical and related goals, are crucial evidence-based decision-making indicators that have been integrated into the organization operations of Nairobi Bottlers Limited to enhance their organizational performance.

The researcher concluded from the study that keeping in touch with customers' interests and expectations is an essential customer-focus measure to enhance organizational performance. Setting service level standards is an important customer focus measure to enhance organizational performance. Customer retention strategies and grievance resolution are crucial customer-focus measures adopted to enhance organizational performance.

The researcher concluded from the study that consistency and predictable outcomes are crucial process indicators adopted to enhance organizational performance. It was also concluded that efficient use of resources was also a crucial process approach indicator adopted to enhance organizational performance. Further, it was concluded that management of processes and interrelated processes were also important to process approach indicators adopted to enhance organizational performance.

The researcher concluded from the study that employee participation was a crucial employee engagement measure adopted to enhance organizational performance. Empowerment programs were a crucial employee engagement measure adopted to enhance organizational performance. Further, the study concluded that self-sufficiency and innovativeness were crucial employee engagement measures adopted to enhance organizational performance.

REFERENCES

- Aborisade, O. (2013). Data collection and new technology. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning (iJET)*, 8(2), 48-52.
- Abuto, J. (2015). Business process re-engineering as an approach to strategic change at Kenya Revenue Authority. *Unpublished MBA Project*, . University of Nairobi.
- Achieng, J. O. (2020). Total Quality Management Practices on Customer Satisfaction at Safaricom Public limited company, Kenya. *international Journal of Business Management, Entrepreneurship and Innovation*, 2(4), 63-75.
- Ahire, S. &. (1998). The role of Top management commitment in quality management : An empirical analysis of auto parts industry.
- Al-Tit, A. A. (2017). factors affecting orgaizational Performance of Manufacturing Firms. *International Journal of Engineering Business Management*, 2(4), 18-47.
- Amanda, A. (2004). *Total Quality Management*. New Delhi: Pretence Hall of India.
- Andrewis, N. S. (n.d.). Total Quality Management Practices and Organizational performanxe in the construction chemicals company in Jordan. *Benchmarkin:g An international Journal*, 2018.
- Augustyn, M. &. (2000). ISO 9000 and performance of small tourism enterprises: a focus of Weston Cider Company. *Managing Service Quality*, 374-388.
- B., G. D. (n.d.). *Quality Management for Organizational Excellence*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- Baba, V. V. (2017). Toward a theory of evidence based decision making. *Management decision*. .
- Bahri S., H. D. (2012). Implementation of Total Quality Management and its effect on Organization performance of manufacturing industries through Organization Culture In South Sulawesi, Indonesia. *Journal of Business and Management*, 10-24.
- Barasa, L. V. (2019). Innovation inputs andefficiency: Manufacturing frims in Subsaharan Africa. *European Journal of innovation management*, 22(1), 59-83.
- Barney, J. (1991). Firm resources and sustained competitive advantge. *Journal of Management*, 17(1).
- Batia, B. H. (2019). Act Your Age? Age interpreneurial behaviour, Social capital and performance. *Employee Relations*, 42(2), 349 - 365.
- Berman, B. &. (2018). *Retail Management : Astrategic Approach, 12th Eddition*. Pearson Education.
- Biolos, J. (2002). Six Sigma meets the Service Economy.

- Briner, R. B. (2019). Evidence Based management: concept cleanup time. *Academy of management perspectives*, 23(4), 19-32.
- Bruce, A. &. (2005). Top Executive Renumeration. *Journal of Management*, 42(7), 2260-2380.
- Buch, K. a. (2002). Sustaining a quality initiative. *Strategic Direction*, 18(4), 15-17.
- Caldas, L. F. (2019). Industry innovation spending and openness to collaboration as levers form firm performance. *European Journal of Innovation*, 22(4), 1460 - 1470.
- Carelse, B. M. (2017). *Investigating the impact of service quality and customer satisfaction on customer loyalty in life insurance in South Africa*.
- Cawe. M. (2016). *Factors contributing to Employee Engagement in South Africa*. Johannesburg: University of Witwatersland.
- Cebeci, U. a. (2002). An approach to the evaluation of quality performance of the companies in Turkey. *Managerial Auditing Journal*, 17(1/2), 92-100.
- Chattopadhyay, S. p. (36-39). Improving ISO implementation : a framework for increasing productivity. *Managerial Auditing Journal*, 2001.
- Chi, C. &. (2009). Employee satisfaction, Customer satisfaction and financial performance. *International Journal of Financial performance*, 245-253.
- Cravens, D. &. (2017). *Strategic Marketing* (10 ed.). Mc Graw - Hill.
- Dayton, N. (2001). Total quality management critical success factors, a comparison : UK versus the USA. *Total Quality Management*, 12(3), 293-298.
- Debanth R, D. B. (2016). Customer relationship management theory and research in the new millenium: drections for future research. *Journal of Relationship Marketing*, 4, 299-325.
- Dimara, E. e. (2004). Strategic orientation and financial performance of the firms implementing ISO 9000. *International Journal of Quality & Reliability Management*, 21(1).
- Dung N., H. N. (2018). Ownership feature and firm performance via corporate innovation performance. dES IT REALLY MATTER FOR VIETNAMEESE SMEs? *Journal of sian Busines and Economic Studies*, 25(2), 239-250.
- E, Y. M. (1999). *Critical factors for Total Quality Management implementation in small and medium enterprises*. Birmingham: School of Birmingham.
- E., G. H. (2013). Creating a sustainable competitive advantage at a high performing firm in Kenya. *African Journal of Business Management*, 7(21), 2049 - 2058.

- E.M., B. A. (2013). Impact of Total quality management on innovation in service organizations: Literature review and new conceptual framework. *Procedia Engineering*, 53, 516-529.
- Eggert A., H. J. (2014). Revenue and profit implication of industrial service strategies. *Journal of Service Research*, 17(1), 23-29.
- Fellnhofner, K. (2019). The complementary effect of firms' and team leaders' entrepreneurial orientation on innovation success and performance. *International Journal of Management*, 23(5), 19-43.
- Franco, M. A. (2017). Circular economy at micro level: A dynamic view of incumbents' struggles and challenges in the textile industry. *A journal of cleaner production*, 168, 833-845.
- Frank B., Simper N., Cai B. Salem D., Kaupp J. & INDELY-Peart,. (2018). Enhancing Development of competencies by means of continuous improvement processes. *Canadian Public Policy*, 44(1), 56-57.
- Franker, O. M. (2006). *Research Methods: Quantitative and qualitative approaches*.
- Gathiaka. (2013). *Influence of customer focus strategies on service delivery at the department of Immigration in Nairobi, Kenya*. Nairobi: Kenyatta University.
- Gichuhi, C. T. (2012). *Quality Improvement practices: patterns of Adoption by manufacturing firms in Nairobi Kenya*. Doctoral Dissertation, University of Nairobi.
- Giles-Merrick, S. (2018). *Employee engagement from viewpoint of employees in academia*.
- Gotzamani, K. D. (2002). True motives behind ISO 9000 Certification. *International Journal of Quality & Reliability Management*, 151-169.
- H., N. J. (2005). Leadership styles supporting ISO 9000:2000. *Quality Management Journal*, 12(1), 21-29.
- Jarar, Y. a. (2000). Best practice transfer for future competitiveness: a study of best practices. *Total Quality Management*, 11(4/5/6), 734-740.
- K., M. M. (2010). Factors that lead to a successful TQM Implementation: A case study on the Zambian Tourism Industry. 275-283.
- Kothari. (2004). *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques*. New age international (p) Ltd.
- Kuo, T. C. (2009). Employees' perspective on the effectiveness of ISO 9000 certification: a total quality management framework. *Total Quality Management*.
- Levett, J. M. (2005). Implementing an ISO 9001 Quality Management System in multispecialty clinic. *Physician Executive*, 31(6), 46-51.

- Lundamark, E. &. (2006). Effects of quality management according to ISO 9000: a Swedish of the transit to ISO 9000:2000 quality standards in small software firms. *Total Quality Management and Business Excellence*, 17(8), 1021-1042.
- Mc Adam, R. &. (2002). The impact of ISO 9000:2000 Quality standards in small software firms. *Managing Service Quality*, 12(5), 336-345.
- Mugenda, O. &. (2003). *Research Methods*. Nairobi: Laba Graphics Service.
- Nanda, V. (2005). *Quality Management System Handbook for product development Companies*. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.
- O., A. M. (2012). *Critical success factors for Total Quality Management Implementation within the Liban Iron and Steel Company*. Tun Abdul Razak University .
- P., W. S. (2000). *Critical success factorss affecting the implementation decisions and processes of ISO quality management systems in Taiwanese Public sectors*. (Y.-S. U. National Sun, Ed.) Institute of Public Affairs Management.
- Pavlic, I. &. (2008). Implementation of Integrated Management Systems in hotel industry of the dubrvnic riviera. *An Enterprise Odyssey: Tourism- Governance and EntrepreneurshipCatvat* (pp. 1874-1882). Faculty of Economics and Business .
- Q., O. (2012). Determinants of Quality Management Practices.
- R., A. (2011). Impact of organization culture on TQM.
- R., D. P. (2014). Developing a customer focused approach (DaCFA). *DOCTORAL dSSERTATION*.
- Standardization, I. O. (2005). *Quality Management Systems*.
- T., G. (2004). *Implementation of the just in time production system in automotive manufacturing company of Ethiopia and Addis Ababa Bottle & Glass Factory*. Addis Ababa University.
- V., W. S. (2011). Cultural influences on TQM implementation and financial performance in Tunisian firms.
- Wahid Ab, R. &. (2009). Critical success factors and problems in ISO 9000 Maintenance. *International Journal of Quality Management*, 26(9), 881-893.