

REVIEW ARTICLE

INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS ORGANIZATION 9001:2008 IN RE-ENGINEERING OF SERVICE DELIVERY IN PUBLIC CORPORATIONS, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Service delivery is an important aspect to an organization whose main objective is to work towards achieving its mandate. Adoption of ISO 9001:2008 specifies daily work procedures and requirements that are used to perform various tasks in order to realize change by improving the quality of service delivery. Studies indicate that quality of service delivery is still below the recommended standards in certified organizations in spite the repeated audits indicating compliance with re-certifications given. The objective of the study was to examine the use of International Standards Organization (ISO) 9001:2008 as a tool in Re-Engineering of quality Service Delivery in Public Corporations with a case study of Kenya Pipeline Company in Nakuru, Kenya. The study adopted the Service Quality Delivery model propagated by Parasuraman, et al that identifies gaps that cause unsuccessful service delivery. The target population was 214 employees and clients out of which 100 respondents were selected. Questionnaires and interview schedules were analyzed descriptively and thematically. Secondary data was generated by studying the existing records. Majority of respondents consented that there was general improvement of operations and service delivery, where all categories of respondents mentioned their various dissatisfactions that were thought to cause hindrance to full provision of quality service delivery. New communication methods were introduced in the company to tackle customer interaction, challenges encountered were diverse depending on the categorization of respondents. The main contribution of the study is that as much as ISO 9001:2008 work procedures are carried out in a standardized way, every organization employs diverse strategies in order to meet the standards and all experience diverse challenges depending on their mandate.

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INTRODUCTION

In the past, quality and performance was measured in terms of productivity. It was assumed that the more the company produced more products and the more service they offered it was an improvement whether the products were quality or not. According to Ghalayini and Noble (1996), performance measurement has changed over the years and productivity is no longer appropriate to measure performance in today's competitive market. West et al (2000) informs that ISO 9001:2008 was developed through global consensus to help break down barriers of international trade and develop international standards. ISO 9001:2008 specifies daily work procedures and requirements that are used to perform various tasks in order to realize change by improving the quality of service delivery. In Kenya, organizations have adopted a series of ISO work procedures and achieved certifications that are updated through re-certifications.

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Despite internal and external audits indicating compliance with ISO 9001:2008 requirements, hence subsequent re-certifications, studies show that quality of service delivery has not been achieved to the recommended standards. Aluvi et al (2009) indicates that the implementation of ISO 9001:2008 has not led to the desired impact in relation to service delivery in organizations and challenges are still experienced. Complaints continue to be reported regarding inefficiencies in the already certified organizations and implications for adopting ISO 9001:2008 have not been tackled. According to Wanjugu (2013) on perceived effect of quality management standards on service delivery at Nairobi City County, he found out that although quality management standard is positively influencing service delivery, customer satisfaction is not yet at its optimum. The study therefore, focused on the role of ISO 9001:2008 in influencing service delivery in public corporations with a case study of Kenya Pipeline Company in Nakuru.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research was a case study that utilized a mixed method approach to generate data. The selection of the tools was

guided by the nature of data to be collected, and the objectives of the study. The study utilized a sequential mixed method where quantitative data was first collected to seek employees' and customers' views on how quality service delivery had improved since the implementation of ISO 9001:2008 followed by qualitative data that was obtained by use of an interview schedule to the Management staff of the company. Quantitative data was analyzed descriptively using percentages and frequency tables while qualitative data was analyzed thematically.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Effect of ISO 9001:2008 implementation on service delivery

The objective obtained stakeholders responses on the general position of customer service delivery in the company after ISO 9001:2008 had been fully implemented. Out of the 70 employee respondents, 69 of them commended that the implementation of ISO 9001:2008 in service delivery was a success in the company. However, 1 respondent disagreed to the fact that service had improved in the company despite all the strategies applied by the Management.

Table 1. Respondents' perceptions on whether customer care has improved since ISO 9001:2008 was implemented

	Frequency	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative (%)
Yes	69	98.6	98.6
No	1	1.4	100.0
Total	70	100	

Respondents gave varying explanations to justify their positive responses below.

Time Management Employee respondents had varying responses on how ISO 9001:2008 had improved time management in the company. Majority of the respondents agreed that ISO 9001:2008 enhanced observation of time and a sizeable number of them were neutral on the point and were not sure whether time management had improved or not. Those who strongly disagreed and those who strongly agreed were ranging between 3 and 6 respondents while only 1 respondent disagreed on the point which was very insignificant. Employee respondents also responded by use of open-ended questions on how time was being observed, they responded that: "... Reports on performance are now delivered on time because communication channels are open to both internal employees and external stakeholders and it is also fast because of the installation of intranet telecommunication system. Clients are also able to obtain information faster than before because of their availability to access information and are able to respond on time to clients concerns thus improving customer care. We receive fewer complaints from clients because logistics for fuel storage, clearing and transportation improved tremendously" (Respondent 1, September, 2013).

Accessibility of service

Employee respondents gave their perceptions on whether implementation of ISO 9001:2008 had enhanced service accessibility. Most of their responses supported the point in that, out of 70 respondents, 82.9% agreed on enhancement of service accessibility. 5 of them strongly agreed to the idea

while 7 were neutral. None of the respondents disagreed. Therefore, this factor supports the fact that implementation of ISO 9001:2008 as a success because its vision strives to be a globally pre-dominant product handling and related services provider.

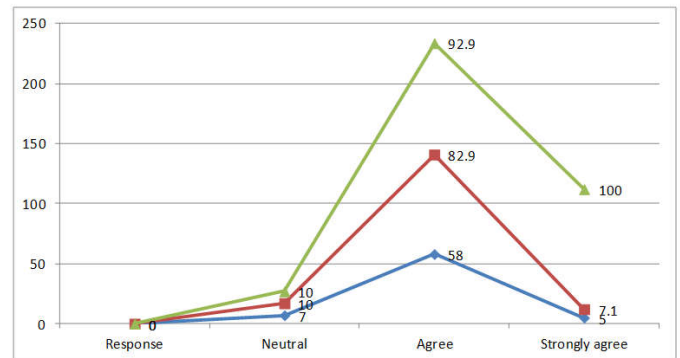


Figure 1. Line Graph showing Employee perceptions on whether implementation of ISO 9001:2008 enhanced accessibility of service delivery

Communication/Language use

Employee respondents also supported that communication and language use had improved service delivery in the company during ISO 9001:2008 years. 70% of them agreed to the fact while 15% were neutral on whether it had improved or not. Insignificant numbers were divided whether they strongly disagreed, disagreed, or strongly agreed. In addition they responded that: "...Communication tools like customer complaint forms were introduced in the company to track client responses on how service delivery was being conducted. Intranet telephone system was introduced by the company management and therefore, clients were able to obtain information faster than before. Improved communication network also enabled us to interact more freely and easily with our clients" (Respondent 2, September, 2013).

Capacity Enhancement

Respondents were delighted to praise the company Management for introducing ISO 9001:2008. They claimed that the company ventured in capacity enhancement project where an additional loading throughput was installed to curb the increasing queue of trucks "...The installation of an additional throughput improved the operations of loading trucks and we received fewer complaints from clients because operations improved tremendously. Through employee delivery of quality workmanship, we were able to meet the set targets" (Respondent 3, September, 2013).

Specification of individual employee job description

Through the implementation of ISO 9001:2008, employee respondents felt that each individual employee was able to obtain a specified job description than before. This enabled each employee to plan on how to meet the individual performance targets in line with the departmental and company set targets.

Staff training

The Management of Kenya Pipeline Company through the recommendation of ISO 9001:2008 internal and external audits

introduced staff training in order to provide refresher and sensitization courses to employees on ISO work procedures and customer care matters. This enabled the employees to provide quality workmanship and improvement of integrity. One of the respondents was quoted saying: "...ISO 9001:2008 enabled our Company Management to provide clear job descriptions and specifications to each and every employee and work was shared among all depending on one's capacity and qualifications" (Respondent 4, September, 2013).

Employee Personality

The study sought to obtain employee responses on how ISO 9001:2008 had enhanced service delivery in KPC through employee personality. 64.3% of respondents concurred that their personalities were greatly improved by ISO 9001:2008 office procedures. A considerable number of them were neutral while less than 10% of each of the other responses either strongly disagreed, or disagreed. Only 3 respondents strongly agreed. This shows that various respondents relied on their integration and relationship between themselves and the extent at which they relate to each other in terms of public relations.

Table 2. Perceptions whether implementation of ISO 9001:2008 enhanced employee personality

	Frequency	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Strongly disagree	2	2.9	2.9
Disagree	3	4.3	7.1
Neutral	11	15.7	22.9
Agree	49	70.0	92.9
Strongly agree	5	7.1	100.0
Total	70	100	

Table 3. Employee perceptions whether implementation of ISO 9001:2008 has enhanced document storage and retrieval

Response	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Neutral	6	8.6	8.6
Agree	49	70.0	78.6
Strongly agree	15	21.4	100.0
Total	70	100	

Document storage and retrieval

Seaver (2001) states that there are three documentation requirements in the Quality Management System; the quality manual which stipulates procedures of handling, control of documents, and control of records so that they can be retrieved any time when need arises, by any authorized officer without difficulty. ISO 9001:2008 is about an organization maintaining proper document storage and retrieval whenever it is needed for reference. The study obtained respondents view on how ISO 9001:2008 has enhanced document storage and retrieval in Kenya Pipeline for the purpose of improving service delivery. 70% of the respondents agreed that document storage and retrieval improved employee service delivery in the organization when ISO 9001:2008 was implemented. 15 respondents out of 70 strongly agreed and 8.6% were neutral. An interview was conducted with the registry staff whom one of them was an internal ISO 9001:2008 Auditor and they were delighted to comment that: "...Before ISO 9001:2008 was implemented, the company used filing index in locating files

and sometimes it would be hard to operate because the filing index was not enough to track a file. After the implementation of ISO 9001:2008, a file movement register was introduced where all company subject files are registered indicating the location at which a file is situated at any particular time. At this juncture, files are acted upon by officers with a maximum of 4 days. Mail circulation register was also introduced and its purpose was to register loose mail from KPCs offices to shippers (PS 25-Nakuru). File movement register labeled (confidential) was also introduced to register confidential matters only (PS-25). In addition, mail circulation register was also introduced for circulating mail to shippers' offices. All these registers made file movement, location and retrieval easy to handle" (Respondent 5, September, 2013).

Procurement of goods and services

ISO 9001:2008 plays a very important role in relation to procurement of goods and services in an organization. It sets standards that enable the procurement officers to instill strict measures in sourcing for quality raw materials, and quality supplies like equipment and stationeries, depending on the official deals of the company. Study analysis indicate that a good percentage of employees in KPC (57.1%) agree to the fact that ISO 9001:2008 enhanced the steps of procuring goods and services 15.7% also strongly agreed to the idea while 27.1% were neutral.

Table 4. Employee perceptions whether implementation of ISO 9001:2008 enhanced procurement of goods and services

Response	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Neutral	19	27.1	27.1
Agree	40	57.1	84.3
Strongly agree	11	15.7	100.0
Total	70	100	

Conclusion

There was an indication that there was general improvement of service delivery in KPC after ISO 9001:2008 had been implemented. Various work standards and procedures had been laid down as evident in the responses. Out of the 70 employee respondents who participated in the study, 69 (98.6%) concurred that there was general improvement in several areas of operation. These include time management, accessibility of service, record management, communication/language use, capacity enhancement, staff training and others as discussed in the chapter. The Management was positive about ISO 9001:2008 implementation in the company and was optimistic that the Government of Kenya would give support in consultation with higher institutions of learning in reviewing their curriculums to suit the current market demands. Employees also registered positive responses towards the implementation despite their individual challenges. Customers also gave their credit to the company for its ability to handle operations of storing and transporting fuel to various destinations of the country and even beyond its borders.

Recommendations

Re-sensitization of ISO procedures and requirements: Kenya Pipeline Company should engage their clients and employees on refresher courses that can sensitize them on new

ISO developments in terms of rules, regulations, and procedures which arise during both internal and external audits so that they are sensitized of any changes. This will make them feel appreciated and as part of the change process.

Holding of Regular meetings

As a way of getting access to the clients who are the most valued subjects of the company, the Management should hold regular meetings with section heads and clients representatives either weekly or monthly in order to brainstorm on re-current challenges and look for ways of improving on matters arising from previous meetings.

Capacity Enhancement

KPC was advised to enhance loading capacity by improving on the loading facilities in the depot through maintenance of the existing loading throughputs and installation of additional loading arms to fast track the sale of the product and avoid truck congestion. This would tackle the challenge of demand and supply of fuel and would enable the management to review fuel loading hours to be customer friendly.

Customer Care Department

Customer Care Department was advised to frequently analyze their customer feedback so that they are able to do a SWOT analysis of their departmental performance and in addition, deal with customer complains upfront without keeping the complainants waiting and explore more on customer care areas of interacting with the clients.

Employee motivation

Whereas one of the Management objective was to win the market share, this could be realized through improvement of

employment packages in terms of adherence to procedures of promoting staff, salary adjustment for those who were not able to produce more credentials, and review of retirement compensation plan. This would tame employees who may have had an intention of looking for greener pastures thus decrease staff turnover.

Availability of operation a vehicles

The management was advised to source for more terrain resistant vehicles that would be attached to Engineering Department for allocation of duties and movement of engineers during emergencies. The numbers of vehicles according to respondents' views were inadequate.

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