**QUALITY CONTROL AND PERFORMANCE OF COFFEE EXPORTING COMPANIES IN UGANDA;**

**A CASE OF GRAIN PULSE UGANDA LIMITED, KAMPALA**

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# DECLARATION

I declare that this is my original work and to the best of my knowledge has never been submitted to any university or institution of higher learning for any academic purpose.

Signature: ……………………………………… Date: …………………………

**KATUSIIME IVAN**

# APPROVAL

I certify that the work reported in this dissertation was carried out under my supervision and it is now ready for submission.

Signature: …………………………………… Date: …………………………

**PROF. E. B. MUGERWA**

**(SUPERVISOR)**

# DEDICATION

This research report is dedicated to my entire family, Dad Twesigye Kennedy and siblings, Shibah for the patience they accorded me when I was preoccupied with this work. This is an encouragement to them that they will also make it in life. And my friends for their emotional and spiritual support without which swift completion of this report would have been rather hard.

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# LIST OF ACRONYMS

CVI Content Validity Index

ISO International Standard Organization

IT Information Technology

NGOs Non-Government Organizations

OHSS Occupational Health and’ Safety System

OMS Quality Management System

SPSS Package for Social Science

TQM Total Quality Management

# ABSTRACT

The study examined the role quality control in the performance of exporting companies in Uganda basing on Grain Pulse Uganda Limited. The study was guided by the following objectives; to examine how Grain Pulse Uganda Limited ensure top management support for the effective operations to achieve its goals and objectives; to examine how Grain Pulse Uganda Limited undertake continuous improvement to improve customer satisfaction; and to examine how Grain Pulse Uganda Limited ensure employee relations to improve market share.

The study applied case study which involved empirical investigation to study contemporary phenomenon using multiple sources of evidence. A sample of 162 respondents from Grain Pulse Uganda Limited was used. The methodology used in this study was both qualitative and quantitative. The questionnaire was the main instruments for collecting data.

According to the study, there is a strong positive relationship between top management support and overall performance and that top management support accounts for about 79.8% of the variation in overall performance. This therefore, requires that of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited focuses on top management support to improve their overall performance. There is a strong positive relationship between continuous improvement and customer satisfaction and that continuous improvement accounts for about 63.2% of the variation in customer satisfaction. This therefore, requires that of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited focuses on continuous improvement to improve the level of customer satisfaction. There is a significant positive relationship between employee relations and market share and that employee relations explains about 74.2% of the variation in market share. This therefore, requires that of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited emphasize employee relations to increase the market share.

The study recommended that the top management should spell out standards of their products, so as to ensure that any product that is below standard would be improved upon by their correction measure. In addition, they need for the top management of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited to effectively allocate adequate required resources and capabilities so as to attain those objectives and subsequently improve overall performance. Continuous professional development should be integrated across all the departments to guarantee a better customer satisfaction. There is need for Grain Pulse Uganda Limited to prioritize and enhance quality control training process to help in preparing employees towards managing the quality control practices, so as to be able to identify and contribute to ongoing quality improvement process of operational efficiency. The company should improve their efforts on employee relations strategies to achieve organizational business performance.

# CHAPTER ONE

# INTRODUCTION

# Background to the study

This study examines the role of quality control in performance of coffee exporting companies in Uganda. It is based on Grain Pulse Uganda Limited, Kamala.

The study of quality control and performance of Coffee exporting companies in Uganda is important since quality control is be a vital instrument that the company can enhance the quality of the item since it could be a continuous advancement process and client feedback is utilized to better the quality of items more successfully and productively. Also, the study is vital since quality control has ended up an approach for exporting companies focused on quality, based on the cooperation of all its partners and pointing at long term success and performance in terms of market share, turnover of sales, benefit, proficiency and viability. Usually this is accomplished through client satisfaction and benefits to all individuals of the company and to society; it may be a logic for managing organisations in a way to productively and successfully meet stakeholders’ needs and desires without compromising moral values (Mahfouz, 2019).

The history of quality control can be traced back in the 13th Century where skilled workers started organizing into unions called guids within the late 13th century. These guids were mindful for creating strict rules for item and service quality (Kirk, 2017). Review committees implemented the rules by checking flawless merchandise with a special mark or image. It is additionally noted that the crisis of quality control started amid the rise of manufacturing industry in order to abdicate most profits and production lines ought to create an item that was prevalent to the rest in order to draw in more clients. The quality control guides allow associations to culminate their aptitudes and follow to the high guidelines of quality set in put by their managers. Croft (2018) declares that quality control permitted manufactures to become specialists and ought to demonstrate their capacities and cement their reputations by making improved quality items tall.

Ahire (2018) defines quality control as an integrated administration view-point that points diligently progressing the quality of forms and items to guarantee client satisfaction. Firms that build up a strategy for quality administration emphasize on achieving and maintaining up yields of high quality by applying administration practices (inputs) and quality performance (yields). Quality control practices are characterized as those vital areas which a firm must attain in arrange to achieve its mission through categorization and examination of their impacts (Oakland, 2017). Quality control in respects to the client would be the constant process of sure items, in their plan and manufacture, are delivered to achieve and outperform the requirements of clients (Kaynak, 2018).

Richard and Johnson (2018) characterize performance as the outcome of the firm measured against its anticipated yields or goals and objectives. The set objectives and goals comprise of waste reduction, administrative compliance and efficiency. Execution ought to make business operations productive and successful. Viability is the capability of an organization to convey services and items that fulfill the customer’s needs though effectiveness alludes to the utilization of company assets without wastage of time, materials and vitality. For operational performance to be accomplished a company must lay out measures in its working environment to attain the required operational performance (Drucker, 2016).

The study was guided by the Deming Theory of Total Quality Management which was advanced by Edwards, W. in 1993 and his theory is fit to inform the current study since the total quality administration point of view of work performance is significant in understanding the association between quality and work performance and how to oversee such performance. Goldhar (2017) attests that the prevalent quality raw materials, actually competent workers, dependable and adaptable providers are key for predominant quality finished items or services. He also contended that viable quality control includes firm-wide quality appraisal, provider quality administration, competitive benchmarking, quality data framework, and administration frameworks that advance quality enhancement and coordination inside an organization.

Quality can be an imperative determinant of the cost gotten by coffee growers and hence drives farmer productivity. Raharja (2017) clarifies that quality change may be a complementary procedure to efficiency upgrades (in cases where the market rewards it) and can put a coffee maker on the pathway to value expansion and capture through tapping into high-value market sections. An ordinary part that can be attempted by the public or semi-public segment in creating nations is quality administration. Presenting and upholding sector-wide quality benchmarks makes a level playing field and can offer assistance to improve a country’s notoriety and advance value capture through quality premiums (Bruno, 2018).

In conjunction with enhancing farm execution, efficiency measures can fortify the resiliency of ranches to adjust to pests and disease flare-ups, soil disintegration, and unfavorable climate occasions, like dry season caused by changes in climate. A flexible and high-performing coffee farm requires adequate assets, information, and access to services. Be that as it may, farm flexibility is generally obstructed by lacking service delivery models for channeling the vital training, inputs, and resources, with smallholders and female producers running higher chances of being marginalized (ICO, 2019b).

Effective usage of quality control practices in Grain Pulse Uganda Limited is a basic improving performance of the company and for that reason quality control practices when viably and reliably connected over the company ought to cause ideal in general execution greatness distant more viably than an arrangement of exclusively optimized exercises. The premise of quality control is reliable change of quality, higher organizational performance and paying attention to process rather than concentration on the result to guarantee victory in worldwide markets (Sanjar et al., 2013). Agreeing to Goetsch & Davis (2016), quality control in reference with is an approach to doing trade that endeavors to maximize the competitiveness of the organization in universal showcase through the persistent advancement of the quality of its items, administrations, individuals, forms, and situations

It is for this reason that Terzioski and Samson (2018) contended that giving high quality items or services has gotten to be a key prerequisite that concerns senior administration over different sectors around the world. Concurring to Demirdbag (2010), exporting organisations that report high execution have been demonstrated to actualize quality control. Quality control leads to expanded satisfaction of all partners for instance, workers, providers and clients. Concurring to Ahmed and Ali, (2012), coffee exporting companies receive quality control practices as a toll enhance organizational victory and adequacy.

According to Grain Pulse Uganda Limited Policy Framework (2017), the company’s objectives of Quality Control include;

1. To ensure that the top management is committed for the effective operations to achieve company goals and objectives.
2. To undertake continuous improvement to improve customer satisfaction in Grain Pulse Uganda Limited.
3. To ensure that employees are involved in the operations of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited to improve market share.
4. To enhance customer focus in Grain Pulse Uganda Limited for meeting market needs

This study examines whether the following of the above objectives are being achieved by Grain Pulse Uganda Limited, Kampala.

1. To ensure that the top management is committed for the effective operations to achieve the company’s goals and objectives.
2. To undertake continuous improvement to improve customer satisfaction in Grain Pulse Uganda Limited.
3. To ensure that employees are involved in the operations of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited to improve market share.

# Statement of the problem

Quality control is increasingly being perceived as a working tool that provides solutions to a variety of issues affecting organizations today. Franklin (2018) stipulates that there is an increase in adoption of quality control practices by businesses in anticipation that this would translate to improved performance and subsequent achievement of organizational goals. However, the coffee exporting industry is faced with challenges of low performance levels.

For instance, Grain Pulse Uganda Ltd is constrained in its performance; according to the Annual Performance Report (2019) indicated the company has missed shipping deadlines because the coffee quality was not approved, the missed deadlines continued to rise to a scale of approximately 12.5%, this led to increased levels of poor customer satisfaction amongst its buyers. Additionally, the company annual report (2020) revealed that there are incidents of limited access to information and documentation handling process during the transportation of coffee, this is due to ineffective procedural and administrative functions in the company due to limited management support which could enhance on the delivery and performance levels. This is coupled with the failure to adjust from the traditional ways of growing coffee, the company still relies on rain, work without fertilizers yet there are new effective and modernized coffee growing techniques which could improve both quality and quantity of coffee production amounts for exportation; thus, there is lack of continuous quality improvement. Despite the continuous reports about poor performance, management has still not laid down an effective quality control road map to enhance performance levels, as a result, sales and profits are still declining at a rate of 22.3% and 36.7% respectively; if sales further decline, the company is likely to lose almost 70% of its market share to its competitors, hence leading to either a buy off or total collapse. It is based on this evidence that the researcher is conducting a study about quality control and performance of coffee exporting companies.

# Purpose of the study

The purpose of study was to examine the role quality control in the performance of exporting companies in Uganda basing on Grain Pulse Uganda Limited as a case study.

# Objectives of the study

The following are the objectives of this study;

1. To examine how Grain Pulse Uganda Limited ensure the top management support for the effective operations to achieve its goals and objectives.
2. To examine how Grain Pulse Uganda Limited undertake continuous quality improvement to improve customer satisfaction.
3. To examine how Grain Pulse Uganda Limited ensure employee relations to improve market share.

# Research questions

The following research questions guided this study;

1. How has Grain Pulse Uganda Limited ensured top management support for the effective operations to achieve its goals and objectives?
2. How has Grain Pulse Uganda Limited undertaken continuous improvement to improve customer satisfaction?
3. How has Grain Pulse Uganda Limited ensured employee relations to improve market share?

# Hypotheses of the study

The study is guided by the following hypotheses;

**H0.** There is no significant relationship between quality control and performance of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited

**H1**. There is a significant relationship between quality control and performance of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited

# Scope of the study

## Subject scope

The study examined on quality control and performance of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited and specifically is taken to: examine how Grain Pulse Uganda Limited ensure top management support for the effective operations to achieve its goals and objectives; examine how Grain Pulse Uganda Limited undertake continuous improvement to improve customer satisfaction; and examine how Grain Pulse Uganda Limited ensure employee relations to improve market share.

## Time scope

The study focused on exploring data from 3 operational years of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited that is 2017-2019. The justification for this time is based on the fact that this is the time when the company faced challenges of low performance.

## Geographical scope

The study was carried out from Grain Pulse Uganda Limited located in on plot 14/28, Kibira Road, Industrial Area, Kampla-Uganda. The company has factory facilities in both Lwanyonyi, Jinja Road and Mukono, Uganda.

# Significance of the Study

**Government**: The study can be points of reference for the government in future policy formulation as pertains exporting companies in implementing quality control practices. Proper policy formulation may assist the government drive the economy with quality coffee exported that meets international standards.

**Importing companies**: The top management of importing companies of coffee may be able to demystify implementation of quality control at all levels and activities of the company.

**Exporting companies**: This study yields data and information useful to the exporting companies’ management in assisting them in implementing quality control practices in the country.

**Academicians**: The research findings also seek to extend knowledge in the world of academics in the same area of the study; it may also be useful as literature in the area of study. This may benefit other researchers and academicians who may borrow ideas from the study which may serve as a basis for further research.

**Student**: The study may help the researcher fulfill one of the requirements for the award of a Degree of Master in Business Administration at Nkumba University.

# Structure of the research report

**Chapter one;** Presents the introduction to the study,

**Chapter two**; presents the study literature. It highlights literature survey, literature review and conceptual framework of analysis

**Chapter Three;** presents research methodology. It highlights research design and data collection and management.

**Chapter four;** presents demographic characteristics of the respondents.

**Chapter Five;** presents findings on objective one; how Grain Pulse Uganda Limited ensures top management support for the effective operations to achieve its goals and objectives

**Chapter Six;** presents findings on objective two; how Grain Pulse Uganda Limited undertake continuous improvement to improve customer satisfaction

**Chapter Seven;** presents findings on objective three; how Grain Pulse Uganda Limited ensure employee relations to improve market share.

**Chapter Eight;** links the findings to literature review and suggests the way forward towards for quality control and performance of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited

**Chapter Nine;** presents the summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations.

# CHAPTER TWO

# STUDY LITERATURE

# Introduction

This chapter presents study literature. It highlights literature survey, literature review and the conceptual framework of analysis.

# Literature survey

There are yet not scholarly studies undertaken on quality control and performance on Grain Pulse Uganda Limited. But similar other studies have been carried out in other organizations and exporting companies in Uganda. Findings and conclusions from some of such studies are reviewed below.

A study conducted by Majeedu (2011), quality control of continual improvement is achieved through prompt execution of corrective and preventive actions whenever a nonconformance (or non-compliance) to documented policies, procedures and guidelines is detected. Detection of non-conformances is a continuous process via internal and external audits, management reviews and individual appraisals. To ensure continuous improvement on the quality management system, Hass Petroleum Limited sets quality objectives per section and through various audits ensures the company respects statutory and regulatory requirements related to the products, for instance, no contamination. Hass Petroleum Limited has developed additional services like the top service in view of controlling service provision and to validate service provision. The management gives people the time, resources and training needed to ensure there is continuous improvement. Through conducting internal audits, control of non-conforming products, taking of preventive and corrective actions, continuous improvement is ensured in the ISO implementation process (Hass Petroleum Limited Policy Document, 2017). However, Majeedu’s study did not provide information on how top management support ensures the effective operations to achieve its goals and objectives. The current study filled the identified gap

Kakooza *et al*. (2015)’s study on quality control and performance of oil marketing firms in Uganda revealed the top management at Hass Petroleum Limited create an enabling environment where people are fully involved in quality control for it to operate effectively. Top management; establish quality objectives of the company, promote the quality policy and objectives throughout the company to increase awareness, motivation and involvement, ensure focus on customer requirements throughout the organization, ensure that appropriate processes are implemented to enable requirements of customers and interested parties to be fulfilled and quality objectives are achieved, ensure that effective and efficient quality control is established, implemented and maintained to achieve these quality objectives, ensure the availability of resources, review the quality control periodically, decide on actions regarding the quality policy and quality objectives, decide on actions for improvement of the quality control (Hass Petroleum Limited Policy Document, 2017). Hass Petroleum Limited determine and implement effective arrangements for communicating with the customers in relation to; product and service information, enquiries, contracts or order handling including amendments, customer feedback including complaints, controlling of design and development of product and/or service both during design and development inputs, design and developing outputs and development of review stages to identify any problem and propose necessary action including verification, validation and develop changes (Hass Petroleum Limited Policy Document, 2017). The implementation of quality management system in Grain Pulse Uganda Limited enables the company to achieve better results in this area. Kakooza;s study however, failed to provide information on how continuous quality improvement improves customer satisfaction.

Mutyaba (2013) conducted a study on gaining competitive advantage through ensuring quality of services in the financial industry. The findings of the study revealed that personalization of banking and insurance services is the top factor for loyalty and that companies should actively reach out to their customers. As for insurance companies, insurance policy claims appear to act like a complaint management experience, and a competitive strategy can be built around health insurance. The results also revealed that customers become more price-sensitive as their service costs go up, thus customers with low costs are more loyal than customers with high costs. Based on the findings of this study it can be deduced that managers are misguided when trying to enhance competitive advantage by concentrating on information technology (IT) solutions. The study showed that business in the finance sector is very people-centric where the relationships are formed between persons. Companies should discover new ways to please and impact their customers’ emotions because that is the area which gives back the lost bargaining power by raising their switching costs. There is also no room for service errors for it is the main reason why companies are losing customers, followed by core product failure and loss of trust. Mutyaba’s analysis was on gaining competitive advantage through quality of services in Uganda’s financial industry. His focus was limited to only personalization of bank and insurance services and enhancing competitive advantage by concentrating on IT-solutions hence leaving a gap for this study which considers quality control and performance at Grain Pulse Uganda Limited. However, Mutyaba’s study did not provide any relevant information on how employee relations improve market share.

# Theoretical review

## The Deming Theory of Total Quality Management

Total quality management has progressed as an approach to quality that it is characterized in terms of a systematic, integrated organization wide plan for enhancing the quality of services and products (Tenner and DeToro, 1992). Literature review shows that total quality management covers a wide range of topics and perspectives. One individual who has been associated with the total quality management movement is W. Edwards Deming (1986). He based his management philosophy around principles that he presented as necessities to stay competitive in manufacturing products and rendering services, for example, management leadership and commitment, statistical process control, elimination of obstacles to employee input, quality control and continuous processes improvement.

Juran (1989) gave emphasis to product design and planning, quality audits, and angling quality management in the direction of both customers and suppliers. Crosby (1984) emphasized on organizational factors such as training, cultural change, leadership, and the continuous calculation of quality costs. Crucial extensions to the total quality management structure include the advance of customer-based specifications in process or product design (Taguchi & Clausing, 1990) as well as benchmarking, that is, gauging of products/services and processes against those of organizations recognized as the best in the industry.

Basing his arguments on this theory, Goldhar (1993) explained that superior quality raw materials, technically competent employees, reliable and flexible suppliers are key for superior quality finished products or services. He further argued that effective quality control involves firm-wide quality assessment, supplier quality management, competitive benchmarking, quality information system, and management systems that promote quality improvement and coordination within an organization. This theory is particularly useful in this study because the total quality management perspective of work performance is perhaps most relevant in understanding the connection between quality and work performance and how to manage such performance. This theory provides an understanding of quality control practices in regard to how quality improvement is a never-ending quest for product innovation that generally leads to improved customer satisfaction and organizational performance

# Literature review

## Top management support and achievement of goals and objectives

Issues relating to quality control and the performance of exporting companies are not unique to Grain Pulse Uganda Limited. Similar studies have been carried out in similar environments outside Uganda. Scholars have generated models from their studies which are useful in understanding the issues involved in quality control and the performance of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited in the exporting sector of Uganda. Some of the major such studies are reviewed below with a view of generating a conceptual framework of analysis within which the issues and challenges faced by Grain Pulse Uganda Limited may be put into their proper perspective.

Talib *et al.* (2010) states that execution of quality control improves the performance of the company. Numerous analysts have distinctive discoveries about the effect of quality control instruments and its implementation. A number of researchers concluded that quality control application incorporates a positive effect on the organizations performance but a few analysts expressed that it does not have effect on firm’s levels of performance (Sajjad & Amjad, 2012). Benchmarking and quality assurance had strong positive effect on organization performance of the telecom companies of Pakistan and they play vital role into the success of an organization. This means that there is positive relationship between quality control and organization’s quality benefits. If quality control practices are implemented effectively more quality benefits will be achieved (Sajjad & Amjad, 2012).

Daniel & Prajogo (2005) investigated the relationship between quality control and organizational culture with the reason of recognizing the specific cultures that decide the effective implementation of quality administration practices. Interestingly, hierarchical culture was found to have a significant relationship with certain practices of quality control practices.

Corredor & Goni (2010) examined the relationship between quality control practices and performance of service organizations and they concluded that quality control practices like *Top Management support*, employee relations, training, supplier quality, quality costs, service design, quality techniques, benchmarking and customer satisfaction have positive relationship with productivity, and quality performance.

Mile & Samson (2017) tested the quality of the relationship between quality control and organizational execution with and without the covariates, company measure, industry type, and ISO 9000 certification status. The research concluded that there were noteworthy differences within the relationship between quality control and organizational performance over industry segments and diverse companies, especially on the impact of imperfection rates, guarantee costs and development of modern items.

William (1992) has also argued that hazards are best prevented through the application of the business approach that has enhanced productivity, quality, efficiency and other desirable qualities. He argues that organizations, can through providing the right people, adequate resources and enough time to do the job, eliminate the basic causes of accidents (hazards) In line with ISO, TQM, which has to do with creating standards for carrying out operations, companies are now guided on the use of’ an integral management system (a TQM based system) comprising the interrelated and complementary sub-systems of Quality Management System (OMS), Environmental Management System (EMS) and Occupational Health and’ Safety System (OHSS), These systems allow organizations to assess the effect of hazards on labour and environment and then to eliminate the hazards from workstations (Easton, 1993).

## Continuous quality improvement and customer satisfaction

Sadikoglu & Olcay (2014) found that different total quality practices significantly affect different performance outcomes and the main obstacles were lack of employee relations, awareness and commitment of the employees, inappropriate firm structure, and lack of the resources. Abuzaid, (2015) demonstrated that the Jordanian private hospitals centers applying the quality control practices with high degree. The most elevated center of private clinics inside quality control hones is on client introduction, provider administration, tall back from best administration to the quality endeavors and a concern from the target healing centers in interest of representatives in quality administration exercises.

The study carried out by Zahari & Zakuan (2016) found that quality control attributes such as leadership that include delegation, creation of employee ownership and responsibility is critical improving operational performance. The study further found a positive relationship to be existing between leadership and operational performance. On the other hand, Jaafreh & Al-abedallat (2013) found that similar leadership factors such as clear vision, goals, objectives, values and policies of the organization result in a quality control system. However, it was found that employees had a negative perception towards these leadership attributes. It is therefore important for this study to assess the perceptions of employees in different environment, in this case a bakery firm so as find out the opinions of employees regarding leadership factors that are also considered important in creating a quality control environment.

Karia & Assari (2016) conducted a study about the effect of quality control practices on employees' work-related demeanors, such as work association, work fulfillment, career fulfillment, and organizational commitment. The outcomes showed that training and instruction had a noteworthy positive effect on job association, work fulfillment and organizational commitment. Empowering and cooperation essentially improved work inclusion, work fulfillment, career fulfillment, and organizational commitment.

Talib & Rahman (2010) proposed a quality control model which recognized as “Components of TQM” model. They clarified the main practices that could enhance the performance of organizations. Quality control practices include commitment of top-management, focus on customers, training and education, continuous improvement, supplier management, involvement and encouragement of employees, benchmarking, and quality information and performance. The outputs are the enhanced productivity and quality, the achievement of high-level customer satisfaction, the improved customer loyalty and on-time delivery. Generally, all quality control models indicated that each managerial action is consisting of planning, implementing and evaluating processes.

Anderson & Sohal (1999) examined the relationship between quality management practices and performance in small businesses. The study found out that there is a significant relationship between quality management practices and performance of business organization.

Agus & Abdullah (2000) reviewed quality control practices in public listed manufacturing companies in Malaysia. The findings of the study indicated that the length of quality control implementation has a significant impact on the companies' financial performance. The industrial manufacturing companies exhibit higher quality control scores than the consumer manufacturing companies.

## Employee relations and market share.

Hua *et al.* (2000) examined several relationships, such as the relationship between quality control practices and business results, between ISO 9000 standards and quality control, and between employee relations and quality control results.

Rahman & Siddiqui (2006) found to be catching fast in India as a synergy between quality control and IS accrues benefits for improving the quality of products and services – the most common ones being greater customer satisfaction, increased productivity of IS personnel and enhanced quality of services and products.

Wen *et al*. (2009) & Letica (2007) clarified the impact of quality control practices on the level of customer satisfaction especially in the sector of public services and from the managers' perspective. The focus was planning in strategic way, management of processes and employees, leadership, customer concern, and measuring on both internal and external customers' satisfaction level for the quality of perceived products and services. This study has indicated that there is a positive relationship between quality control practices, employees focus with satisfaction levels of customers. The research findings also clarified that there is a strong relation between manager commitment and satisfaction of customers. On the other hand, some quality control practices such as planning in a strategic way and management of processes has less effect on satisfaction levels of customers.

Lakhal *et al*. (2002) & Talha (2004) indicated that the practices of quality control is directly contributing in enhancing the performance of organizations by minimizing costs, enhancing the performance of staff members, and increasing the degree of customer satisfaction. Although Saizarbitoria (2006) clarified that quality control directly impact the performance of organizations in positive way, but Dooyoung *et al*. (1998) indicated that in some cases the implementation of quality control cannot achieve the desired organizational goals.

Ooi *et al.* (2012) examined the multidimensionality of quality control practices and its relationship with knowledge sharing as perceived by middle management employees in Malaysia’s ISO 9001:2000 certified firms of manufacturing sectors. The analytical results revealed that training and development, customer focus, and teamwork showed a positive association with middle management employees’ knowledge sharing.

Dizgah (2012) investigated the relationship between quality control practices and organizational performance. In the study have got mixed result, the relationship between quality control practices and firm performance is positive but one principle (consultation) have negative relationship.

Garcı´a-Bernal & Ramı´rez-Aleso´n (2010) examined how firms can increase the benefits traditionally linked to this approach to management. The empirical results showed that adopting quality control in a way that is consistent with organizational design postulates increases the organizational performance benefits of quality control. Shammot (2011) investigated the links between quality and high organizational performance, taking in account that achieving quality is the responsibility of all the organization members. And how quality control practices can influence the customer behavior.

# Conceptual Framework of analysis

Following from the literature review above the research has adopted the following conceptual framework of analysis from Grain Pulse Uganda Limited with identification to account for the specific factors at work with the Ugandan environment within which Grain Pulse Uganda Limited operates.

**Independent Variable Independent variable**

**Performance**

* Customer satisfaction
* Increased market share
* Increased profits
* Sales volume growth
*

**Quality Control**

* Top management support
* Continuous quality improvement
* Employee relations
* Customer focus

**Intervening Variables**

* Government policies and regulations
* Quality control systems
* Employee motivation and rewards

 **Source**: Adopted with modification from Raduan *et al*. (2009).

# Figure 2.: Conceptual Framework

As indicated in Figure 2.1, the independent variables are quality control viewed in terms of *Top Management support*, continuous improvement, employee relations and customer focus. The dependent variable, organizational performance is measured in terms of customer satisfaction, increased market share, increased profits and sales volume growth. If quality control is properly implemented, performance of the company is likely to improve and the reverse is true. The framework shows other factors (intervening variables) like government policies and regulations, economic condition and organizational culture that intervene in the link between quality control and company performance.

# CHAPTER THREE

# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

# Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology. It highlights research design and data design and data collection and management.

# Research design

According to Maina (2014), research design is defined as the basic plan that indicates an overview of the activities that are necessary to execute the research project. These activities include research approach, research strategy and research duration and research classification and study limitation.

### Research approach

The study used phenomenological research approach and this required the researcher to focus on people’s experiences of a phenomenon to obtain comprehensive details that provide a basis for reflective structural analysis that ultimately reveals the essence of the experience as put by Thakadipuram (2014). At its core, it concerns the investigation of everyday human experiences in order to learn people’s common sense understanding and the meaning they make of their experiences and the experiences of others.

### Research strategy

This study applied a case study research strategy which was used to explore a single phenomenon in a natural setting using a variety of methods to obtain in-depth knowledge. Therefore, it can be seen that case study research is capable of accommodating different research techniques and is normally used when it is required to obtain in-depth knowledge with regard to a particular phenomenon. The researcher applied case study strategy since the objective was gain in depth understanding of Quality control and performance of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited.

### Research duration

The study was based on cross sectional study approach which focused on what has been happening in Grain Pulse Uganda Limited at a period of time. In this study, duration is from 2015-2020. This study was conducted for a period of five months, that is, from May 2020 to November 2021.

### Research classifications

The research adopted both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The qualitative approach helped researcher to describe and explores events concerning quality control in Grain Pulse Uganda Limited and establishes theoretical models, approaches and record qualitative factors involved while quantitative helped in the mathematical software to establish causal relationship between the variables.

# Study population

The population of the study included employees of various stations of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited in the following departments; Human Resource, Procurement, Sales and Marketing, Quality Assurance, Accounts and Finance and Operations. These sums up to total of 280 respondents. Employees from different departments were selected because they have knowledge about the operation of the company in relation to quality control.

# Sample size

A sample size of 162 was used by using Krejcie & Morgan (1970) table for determining sample as indicated in Table 3.1 below. The sample comprised of employees from different departments of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited. It was easy to collected data for a sampled subset of a population, rather than the whole population and a sample provided the needed information fast.

# Table 3.: Population, Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Department**  | **Population** | **Sample Size** | **Sampling Technique**  |
| Administration and Human Resource  | 30 | 17 | Purposive  |
| Procurement  | 35 | 20 | Purposive |
| Quality Assurance  | 35 | 20 | Purposive |
| Accounts and Finance  | 20 | 12 | Purposive  |
| Sales and Marketing  | 60 | 35 | Simple random |
| Operations  | 100 | 58 | Simple random |
| **Total**  | **280** | **162** |  |

***Source: Krejcie & Morgan (1970)***

# Sample size determination

The research used both probability and non-probability sampling methods particularly simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques. Simple random sampling was used because it guaranteed the desired distribution among the selected categories of the population. Simple random sampling helped to reduce bias on the selection of the respondents. Simple random sampling technique was used to select top management staff and heads of department. Purposive sampling technique was used because it gave the opportunity to choose the member target population who provided the accurate information or data.

# Sampling techniques

The study used both probability and non-probability sampling techniques, that is, simple random and purposive sampling techniques.

Simple random sampling involved the researcher to select the sample at random from the sampling frame using either random number tables or a computer. The sample selection process continued until the researcher’s required sample size was reached. The main purpose of this technique was to select or use in a finite population because this technique is used when population is known and clear. The simple random sampling technique was used to select quantitative samples that are; procurement personnel, Sales & Marketing staff, Quality Assurance personnel and Operational employees. Simple random sampling was used because it guaranteed the desired distribution among the selected categories of the population.

The study also adopted purposive sampling technique. In purposive sampling the person who is selecting the sample tries to make the sample representative, depending on his opinion or purpose of the study (Saunders *et al*., 2007). The technique was applied on Administration and Human Resource personnel and Accounts and Finance staff. These were targeted because of their perceived knowledge arising out of known experience that they have.

# Data sources

Data collected for the study was mainly through primary and secondary data sources.

## Primary data

The source of primary data for this study was the questionnaires which were administered to employees of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited. The questionnaire is focused on eliciting response on quality control and performance of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited.

## Secondary data

Secondary data was collected from previous literature such as books, articles, journals, research papers, thesis, dissertations and end yearly reports from Grain Pulse Uganda Limited.

# Data collection methods

## Questionnaire method

Kothari (2016) defines questionnaire as a structured form with targeted questions or queries, designed to obtain subject specific information or information on a series of subjects from a respondent. The use of the questionnaire method in this study was because the respondents were busy and the self-administered questionnaire with predetermined question enabled them to fill it in a short time, at their own convenience and covered a wide scope of questions as per the study variables. Questionnaires are preferred because they are less expensive; they are best for sensitive or personal questions and reduce interviewer bias. Also, use of questionnaires permitted anonymity and resulted in more honest answers and offered a considered and objective view of the respondent.

## Interview method

Creswell & Plano (2016) argue that interviewing is a valuable method for exploring the construction and negotiation of meanings in a natural setting. Interviews were used to collect information that was not directly observed or difficult to put down in writing. Interviews were used because they were less technical, less prescribed, and less linear but more interactive. The choice of the method is that was a flexible and easy way of finding out information. Interviewing method was applied to Administration and Human Resource personnel and Accounts and Finance Staff as they were considered as key informants with more in-depth information which was not easily captured using a questionnaire. The information provided was also important as it was used in analysis by building on data collected using the questionnaire.

# Data collection instruments

## Self-administered questionnaire

The main instrument for data collection was a self-administered questionnaire. It consisted of section A and B. section A elicit personal information about the respondents. Section B contains ten (8) items which are focused on eliciting information on quality control and firm performance. The responses were based on a five Likert Scale as follows: Strongly Agreed, Agree, Not Sure, Disagree and Strongly Disagreed. There were statements regarding the various areas of quality control that were presented on a Likert scale. The questionnaire was administered to the respondents in Grain Pulse Uganda Limited using a drop and pick method to allow the respondents ample time to fill their responses without bias. The reason for using questionnaire was that it contained fixed responses that took less time to answer.

## Interview guide

Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey (2017) contend that, interview guide ought to contain issues that are explored to guide the researcher to ensure that all relevant issues are covered and to bridge the gap that a questionnaire did not fill by making it specific, precise and in-depth so that different respondents would interpret them similarly and give relevant answers especially top management. The researcher therefore interviewed Administration and Human Resource personnel and Accounts and Finance Staff to generate quick and in-depth responses regarding the topic of study. This category is chosen for this research because of their vast knowledge about quality control and performance of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited e.

# Validity and reliability of instruments

Validity is the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences which are based on the research results (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The methods of determining validity of research instruments are: content, construct and criterion. The study utilized content validation measure to determine the validity of the research instruments. Three (3) experts were given the instrument (questionnaire) to provide scores for each of the questions to ascertain their validity. This was done through calculating the content validity index (CVI) by dividing the total number of valid items over the total number of the items in the questionnaire. The advantage of using content validation measure was that it was subjective, thorough and representative of the wider body of material that the researcher assessed. In order to establish content validity for quantitative data, results from the ratings were computed using the following formula;

CVI = $\frac{ number of items rated as relevant }{Total number of items in the instrument}$ x 100

# Table 3.: Validity of the questionnaire

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Experts | No. of items rated as relevant | Total no. of items  | CVI |
| 1 | 36 | 40 | 0.90 |
| 2 | 34 | 40 | 0.85 |
| 3 | 35 | 40 | 0.875 |
|  |  |  | **2.625/3 = 0.875** |

**Source:** *Primary data*

The end product gives the content validity of the research instrument. According to Amin, (2005), if CVI is more than 0.7 then the instrument was valid and since the instrument was more than 0.7% (**0.875**). Qualitative validity of instruments was ensured by processing data into manageable proportions through editing, coding, and tabulation methods. Data collected was checked while still in the field to ensure that all questions were answered. Contradictory information was removed if found infective. By coding, an answer to each item on the questionnaire was classified into meaning full categories. Tabulation was used to obtain frequencies and percentages of each item.

# Reliability

Reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trials (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Qualitatively, the reliability of the instruments was established through a pilot test of the questionnaire to ensure consistency and dependability and its ability to tap data that answered the objectives of the study. The results were subjected to a reliability analysis. Quantitatively, reliability was established using the Cronbach’s Alpha Reliability Coefficient test. Upon performing the test, if the values 0.7 and above, the items in the instrument were regarded reliable (Bill, 2011). To ensure reliability, the research instrument was pre-tested to selected 10 respondents to ensure consistency and comprehensiveness. Furthermore, some consultations with other researchers, supervisors and peer groups were done to review the research instrument.

# Table 3.3: Reliability results of the questionnaire

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Number of items** | **Cronbach’s Alpha Value** |
| Top management support | 10  | 0.743 |
| Continuous improvement | 10 | 0.870 |
| Employee relations | 10 | 0.759 |
| Performance  | 10 | 0.712 |
| **Average Cronbach’s Alpha value** | **3.084/4=0.771** |

Source: Primary Data

# Data collection procedure

The researcher sought permission from authority of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited in Kampala by presenting an introductory letter from Nkumba University. After getting permission, the researcher went go on to inform all those participants who were selected the purpose of the study as well as the objectives were communicated to the respondents in time. The next step involved distributing the questionnaires to the sampled respondents. Respondents were then given time to fill and submit the questionnaires back for analysis.

# Data processing

Qualitative data collected through interviews was processed by data cleaning. Data editing was then carried out to ensure that the data from the respondents was accurate, reliable and consistent. Quantitative data collected through questionnaires were translated into numerical terms and tabulated into frequency tables by use of Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 20 to facilitate presentation, analysis and interpretation of findings.

# Data analysis

## Analysis of quantitative data

The quantitative collected information will be altered, coded and cross-checked for completeness utilizing Ms Excel and copied to SPSS version 25 for examination. The quantitative information will be displayed in form of numeric utilizing tables and charts frequencies and percentages of results. The inferential measurements such as regression analysis and correlation will be utilized to test the hypotheses.

## Analysis of qualitative data

Qualitative data will be analysed using content analysis and thereafter develop themes and sub-themes. The findings will be presented in narrative form by directly reporting respondents responses through quotations.

# Limitations of the Study

Getting of information is a major challenge because the respondents were busy. Most respondents are not willing to provide information related to their performance and internal details of the company. However, the researcher presents a letter from the university to ensure that the information was for academic purposes only.

The response rate was poor in some cases since the respondents were always busy with office work and some did not respond and return the questionnaires. However, the researcher, minimized non response cases by following up with calls.

Uncooperative respondents in providing the necessary information, this is solved by availing them with a letter of introduction from Nkumba University and guarantee them that the information provided is only for academic purposes and that would be handled confidentially

The study uses a probability sampling method (simple random sampling technique) to select a sample but that sample may not reflect the general population or appropriate population concerned. This results into sample bias or selection bias.

# Ethical considerations

The researcher got a letter from Nkumba University to seek permission from the Grain Pulse Uganda Limited to carry out the study. Before the administration of the questionnaire, the researcher explained the purpose of the study to the research subjects and assured them of confidentiality while at the same time soliciting their consent after their agreement. Great care was taken to ensure that the identities of these participants were kept anonymous and confidentiality of the information obtained in the research guaranteed.

Personal integrity was observed when conducting the research by being objective and avoiding misrepresentation of results. The respondents were also made to understand the reason for conducting the research, thus informed consent was observed.

# CHAPTER FOUR

# BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF THE RESPONDENTS

# Introduction

This chapter presents biographic characteristics of the respondents. The results of the statistical analysis, generated on the basis of the use of descriptive statistics, are presented in the forms of tables, frequencies and percentage. The questionnaires were administered, and analyzed with respect to biographical variables.

# Background information of the respondents

The demographic factors considered for the different respondents included gender, age, and level of education, marital status and length of work in Grain Pulse Uganda Limited. This was done to give the user of this information a clear picture of the attributes of the sample from whom the data was collected.

# Gender of respondents

The study looked at marital status of respondents and their categories were as presented in the table 4.1 below.

# Table 4.: Gender of Respondents

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Gender of Respondents** | **Frequency** | **Percentage (%)** |
| Male | 93 | 57.4 |
| Female | 69 | 42.6 |
| **Total** | **162** | **100.0** |

***Source: Primary Data***

The study findings in Table 4.1 reveal that 57.4% of the respondents were males and 42.7% were females. This means that Grain Pulse Uganda Limited employs both male and female employees though the majority are male.

# Age of respondents

The study looked at the respondent’s age group and their categories were shown as in the table 4.2 below.

# Table 4.: Age of respondents

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Age of Respondents** | **Frequency** | **Percentage (%)** |
| Below 25 years | 36 | 22.2 |
| 26-33 years | 43 | 26.5 |
| 34-41 years | 42 | 25.9 |
| 42-49 years | 24 | 14.8 |
| Above 50 years | 17 | 10.4 |
| **Total** | **162** | **100.0** |

***Source: Primary Data***

The study findings in table 4.2 above indicate that 26.5% were aged 26 to 33 years, 25.9% were aged 34 to 41 years, 22.2% were aged below 25 years, 14.8% were aged 42 to 49 years and 10.4% were above 50 years. This means that the Grain Pulse Uganda Limited is more interested in people within the age group of 26 to 33 because these are still energetic and thirst to achieve a lot ahead.

**Highest Level of Education of Respondents**

The respondents were asked their level of education in order to establish whether they understood quality control in relation to the performance of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited, the results are summarized in the table 4.3.

# Table 4.: Highest level of education of respondents

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Highest level of education of Respondents** | **Frequency** | **Percentage (%)** |
| Certificate | 30 | 18.5 |
| Diploma | 45 | 27.7 |
| Bachelor Degree | 54 | 33.3 |
| Masters | 27 | 16.7 |
| PhD | 6 | 3.7 |
| **Total** | **162** | **100.0** |

***Source: Primary Data***

The results in Table 4.3 above reveal that 33.3% had attained Degrees, 27.7% had attained Diplomas, 18.5% had attained certificates, 16.7% had attained Masters and 3.7% had attained PhD. It is clear that Grain Pulse Uganda Limited’s employees are knowledgeable and well positioned to implement the various internal control systems in the company. This means that Grain Pulse Uganda Limited considers education and experience highly when selecting its employees.

# Department of work of the respondent

Respondents were requested to reflect their departmental work and their responses are as summarized in table 4.4 below.

# Table 4.: Department of work of the respondent

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Department of work** | **Frequency** | **Percentage (%)** |
| Administration & Human Resource | 17 | 10.5 |
| Procurement | 20 | 12.3 |
| Quality Assurance | 20 | 12.3 |
| Accounts & Finance | 12 | 7.4 |
| Sales & Marketing | 35 | 21.6 |
| Operations | 58 | 35.8 |
| **Total** | **162** | **100.0** |

***Source: Primary Data***

The findings from the table 4.4 above show that, 35.8% of the respondents were working in the Operations section, 21.6% were in Sales & Marketing department, 12.3% were in Procurement department, 12.3% were in Quality Assurance department, 10.5% were in Administration & Human Resource department and 7.4% were in Accounts and Finance department. Majority of the respondents were in Operations department because they form the core of business in Grain Pulse Uganda Limited. But all respondents were able to avail data in this study.

**Duration of work of the respondent**

The researcher asked the respondents duration of work in order to know whether they enough experienced to the operation of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited and their responses are as summarized in Table 4.5 below

Table 4.: Duration of work of the respondent

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Length of service of the Respondent** | **Frequency** | **Percentage (%)** |
| Less than 1 year | 21 | 13.0 |
| 1-3 years | 39 | 24.1 |
| 4-6 years | 51 | 31.5 |
| 7-9 years | 32 | 19.8 |
| Above 10 years | 19 | 11.7 |
| **Total** | **162** | **100.0** |

***Source: Primary Data***

The study findings from table 4.5 above show that, 31.5% had served for 4 to 6 years, 24.1% had served for 1 to 3 years, 19.8% had served for 7 to 9 years, 13.0% had served for less than 1 year and 11.7% had served for less than 1 years. This shows the majority of respondents served more than 4 years which indicate most respondents had vast knowledge which could be relied upon this study.

# CHAPTER FIVE

# TOP MANAGEMENT SUPPORT AND ACHIEVEMENT OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

# Introduction

This chapter presents the research findings which are in line with the research objectives and variables. Quantitative data was presented using tables while qualitative data was presented as a narrative form. Triangulation by data source and method was done, identifying similarities among and differences between different methods of data collection. Analysis of results was done according to the purpose of the study was to examine how Grain Pulse Uganda Limited ensures top management support for the effective operations to improve the overall performance.

In this section, findings on objective one; which is how Grain Pulse Uganda Limited ensures top management support for the effective operations to improve the overall performance as presented. The variable was analyzed using a five-point Likert scale and the results are presented in descriptive tables, showing the percentages, means and standard deviations. They are further explained using correlations in order to show relationship between the variable followed by regression analysis to find the extent on how Grain Pulse Uganda Limited ensures top management support for the effective operations to improve the overall performance. An attempt was also made to present a comparison of qualitative and quantitative findings of the variables.

# Table 5.: Descriptive Statistics on top management support and overall performance

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Statements** | **5****%** | **4****%** | **3****%** | **2****%** | **1****%** | **Mean**  | **Std. Dev.** |
| The top management take on the responsibility for developing quality-oriented management systems | 7.0% | 7.0% | 4.7% | 59.3% | 22.1% | 3.83 | 1.08 |
| Senior level management listen and support employees and encourage them to take part in deciding and managing total quality policies and plans | 2.3% | 4.7% | 3.5% | 55.8% | 33.8% | 4.15 | .888 |
| Senior level management provides resources necessary to maintain quality in operations | 8.1% | 8.1% | 10.5% | 53.5% | 19.8% | 3.69 | 1.13 |
| The commitment of senior level management is critical for success in quality control implementation  | 4.7%  | 3.5% | 5.8% | 51.2% | 34.9% | 4.08 | .985 |
| The top management ensure that company processes and operations are standardized | 3.5% | 4.7% | 4.7% | 45.3% | 41.9% | 4.17 | .972 |
| Selection, promotion and appointment of staff by senior level management to positions is by merit  | 5.8% | 1.2% | 2.3% | 61.6% | 29.1% | 4.07 | .944 |
| Top management are properly trained on quality control  | 4.7% | 5.8% | 4.7% | 64.0% | 20.9% | 3.91 | .953 |
| Top management interact with customers and keep in mind their contributions when designing goods and services | 5.8% | 2.3% | 5.8% | 50.0% | 36.0% | 4.08 | 1.02 |
| Top management personal involvement in total quality improvement increases market share  | 8.1% | 9.3% | 9.3% | 34.9% | 38.4% | 3.86 | 1.26 |
| The top management of the company is committed to boosting the morale of the employees as part of the TQM principles | 4.7% | 8.1% | 8.1% | 51.2% | 27.9% | 3.90 | 1.05 |

***Source: Primary Data.***

*Key; 1 Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Not Sure, 4- Agree, 5-Strongly Agree*

From the study findings on the statement “The top management take on the responsibility for developing quality-oriented management systems” 59.3% agreed with the statement, 22.1% strongly agreed, 4.7% were not sure, 7.0% disagreed and 7.0% strongly disagreed. This indicates that majority of the respondents agreed that the top management in Grain Pulse Uganda Limited take on their responsibility to develop quality-oriented management systems (according to the Likert scale, mean = 3.83). This implies that at the company, there are systems that are focused on the quality management for better performance and therefore the management ensure that these systems are running well. This finding is reflected in the Hass Petroleun (U) Limited Policy Document (2017) which indicates “*top managers have a responsibility to ensure that the company deliver quality products and services that the meets the standards in the market to improve the performance of the company*”.

On statement “Senior level management listen and support employees and encourage them to take part in deciding and managing total quality policies and plans”, 55.8% agreed with statement, 33.8% strongly agreed, 3.5% were not sure, 4.7% strongly disagreed and 2.3% disagreed. This means that most of the respondents agreed that the senior management at Grain Pulse Uganda Limited is good at listening and supporting the staff and also, they are encouraged to take part to decide and manage policies and plans regarding total quality where necessary (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.15). This implies that employees are considered important if the total quality programs are to be properly implemented and therefore, they are involved in deciding and managing total quality policies and plans in Grain Pulse Uganda Limited to achieve better performance. The results are reflected in the company’s Human Resource Manual (2017) that “*senior managers should take concern to make sure that employees take part in the decisions regarding quality policies and plans and this is to help employees know how quality is maintained as they in the forefront of the company*.”

On statement “senior level management provides resources necessary to maintain quality in operations”, 53.5% agreed with statement, 19.8% strongly agreed, 10.5% were not sure, 8.1% disagreed and 8.1% strongly disagreed. This means that most of the respondents agreed with the statement that the senior management at Grain Pulse Uganda Limited provides the required resources for maintaining the quality in the company operations (based on the Likert scale, mean = 3.69). This implies that the top management to ensure the company is operating well according to their expectations for better performance, they provide all the resources that is required to move the company on to achieve its goods and objectives. *In an interview held with some staff in quality assurance department from various branches, it was revealed that quality assurance system increases customer confidence and a company's credibility, to improve work processes and efficiency, and to enable a company to better compete with others.*

On statement “The commitment of senior level management is critical for success in quality control implementation”, 51.2% agreed with statement, 34.9% strongly agreed, 5.8% were not sure, 3.5% disagreed and 4.7% strongly disagreed. This indicates that majority of the respondents agreed with the statement that the commitment of the senior management at Grain Pulse Uganda Limited has been important for successful implementation of quality control (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.08). This implies that the performance of the company depends on how the senior level management is committed to the operations of the company by making sure that quality control programs are well implemented.

On statement “The top management ensure that company processes and operations are standardized”, 45.3% agreed with statement, 41.9% strongly agreed, 4.7% were not sure, 4.7% disagreed and 3.5% strongly disagreed. This indicates that majority of the respondents agreed that the top-level management at Grain Pulse Uganda Limited set standards for the processes and operations of the business activities that are aimed for improving performance (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.17). This implies that for the company to perform well, the top management ensure makes sure all the processes and operations are standardized towards realization of better performance.

On statement “Selection, promotion and appointment of staff by senior level management to positions is by merit”, 61.6% agreed with statement, 29.1% strongly agreed, 2.3% were not sure, 5.8% strongly disagreed and 1.2% strongly disagreed. This indicates that majority of the respondents agreed that top level management at Grain Pulse Uganda Limited makes sure that in the selection, promotion and appointment of employees to positions within the company is based on merit and capability (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.07). This implies that to make sure everyone in the company performs well, the senior management selects, promotes and appoints the right employees capable of performing their duties which could add value to the company in terms of performance. This is reflected in the Company’s Human Resource Manual (2017) which states that “*the human resource personnel should make sure that the selection, promotion and appointment of employees should be on merit and this is to ensure that the best employees are in the right position*.”

On statement “Top management are properly trained on quality control”, 64.0% agreed with statement, 20.9% strongly agreed, 4.7% were not sure, 5.8% strongly disagreed and 4.7% disagreed. This means that most of the respondents agreed that the top-level management at Grain Pulse Uganda Limited are well trained and therefore are conversant in quality control programs that helps for running the company in the right direction (based on the Likert scale, mean = 3.91). This implies that as the senior management has enough knowledge and skills in quality control programs, the operations of the company is based towards the achievement of better performance. *In an interview with staff in the Quality Assurance Department from different Hass branches; it was argued that “quality control requires the company to create an environment in which both management and employees strive for perfection. This is done by training personnel, creating benchmarks for product quality, and testing products to check for statistically significant variations."*

On statement “Top management interact with customers and keep in mind their contributions when designing goods and services”, 50.0% agreed with statement, 36.0% strongly agreed, 5.8% were not sure, 5.8% strongly disagreed and 2.3% strongly disagreed. This means that most of the respondents agreed with statement that the top management at Grain Pulse Uganda Limited in most cases interact with some customers to help them when planning for the products and services to offer in the market (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.08). This implies that customers are crucial if the company is to perform better in the market and therefore the senior management ensure there is interaction with customers to give direction which products and services are demanded in the market. *Interview held with staff in Sales and Marketing Department from different Hass branches; argued that "if an issue arises with a customer, Grain Pulse Uganda Limited should have procedures in place for recording customer complaints and feedback whilst incidents should be managed within Risk and Safety Management Plan”. They elaborated that, a well-handled complaint can lead to return business and improved customer relationships.*

On statement “Top management personal involvement in total quality improvement increase market share”, 38.4% strongly agreed with statement, 34.9% agreed, 9.3% were not sure, 9.3% disagreed and 8.1% strongly disagreed. This means that most of the respondents agreed with statement that personal involvement of the top managers at Grain Pulse Uganda Limited in quality improvement plays a crucial role for increasing the market share (based on the Likert scale, mean = 3.86). This implies that for any success of the company depends on how personal top managers are involved in the improvement of the quality of products or services and therefore the market share will increase if the top management is involved in the quality control programs. This is reflected in the Company’s Human Resource Manual (2017) which states that “*Top management shall provide evidence of its commitment to the development and implementation of the quality management system and to continually improving its effectiveness. For example, through opening and closing meeting in all management review meetings. The responsibilities and authorities should be defined and communicated within the organization*.”

On statement “The top management of the company is committed to boosting the morale of the employees as part of the total quality principles”, 51.2% agreed with statement, 27.9% strongly agreed, 8.1% were not sure, 8.1% disagreed and 4.7% strongly disagreed. This means that most of the respondents agreed with statement that the top managers at Grain Pulse Uganda Limited are committed to ensure that employee’s morale are high if the company is to performance well in every aspect (based on the Likert scale, mean = 3.90). This implies that the performance of the company largely depends on human resources, therefore it is the responsibility of the top management to keep the morale of employees high so that they are in a better position to perform well hence better overall performance of the company.

# Table 5.: Pearson Correlation

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | ***Top Management support*** | **Performance**  |
| *Top Management support* | Pearson correlation | 1 | .894\*\* |
| Sig.(2-tailed) |  | .000 |
| N  | 162 | 162 |
| Performance  | Pearson correlation |  . 894\*\* | 1 |
| Sig.(2-tailed) | .000 |  |
| N | 162 | 162 |

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Source: *Primary Data***

Correlation results in Table 5.2 show that there is a positive high relationship between top management support and performance of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited (r = 0.894, Sig = 0.000). This positive relationship if predictive means that if top management support is effective, company performance will be effective. It was thus to examine whether the relationship was predictive or not and whether the individual components of top management support were influential factors of overall performance of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited.

# Table 5.: Model Summary

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Model** | **R** | **R Square** | **Adjusted R Square** | **Std. Error of the Estimate**  |
| 1 | .894a | .799 |  .798 | .14921 |

*a. Predictor: (Constant), Top Management support*

**Source: *Primary Data***

The model summary table (Table 5.3) indicates that there is a significant positive relationship between top management support and company performance (r = 0.799). The actual contribution of top management support to company performance to competitive is about 79.8% (Adj. R Square = 0.798).

# Table 5.: ANOVA

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Model** | **Sum of Squares** | **Df** | **Mean Square** | **F** | **Sig.** |
| 1 | Regression | 123.032 | 1 | 123.032 | 7548.960 | .005a |
| Residual | 1.109 | 161 | .029 |  |  |
| Total  | 124.141 | 162 |  |  |  |

1. Predictor: (Constant), *Top Management support*
2. Dependent Variable: Performance

 **Source: *Primary Data***

The ANOVA results show that there is significant linear relationship between top management support and firm performance (F = 123.032, P< 0.005). This implies that the more of *Top Management support*, the better of the performance that will be attained by Grain Pulse Uganda Limited.

# Table 5.: Coefficients

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Model** | **Unstandardized Coefficients**  | **Standardized Coefficients**  | **t** | **Sig.** |
| **B** | **Std. Error** | **Beta** |
| 1 | (Constant)  | .077 | .041 |  | 1.919 | .058 |
| *Top Management support* | 1.359 | .015 | .894 | 72.332 | .005 |

1. *Dependent Variable: Performance*

**Source: *Primary Data***

The coefficients Table (Table 5.5) give the model that relates top management support and performance of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited. The regression model generated was: Y = 0.077 + 1.359X (where: Y= company performance and X = Grain Pulse Uganda Limited).

In summary, the findings indicate that top management support accounts for about 79.8% of the variation in performance of the company. This therefore, requires that Grain Pulse Uganda Limited engages in top management support activities to increase their performance.

# CHAPTER SIX

# CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

# Introduction

This chapter presents the research findings on how does Grain Pulse Uganda Limited undertake continuous improvement to improve customer satisfaction. To analyze how Grain Pulse Uganda Limited undertakes continuous improvement to improve customer satisfaction, the respondents were introduced to different items to have their say. The responses were computed by making an aggregate of responses given by respondents to 10 items and 5-point Likert Scale (SD- Strongly Disagree, D-Disagree, NS-Not Sure, A- Agree, SA-Strongly Agree). Survey results are discussed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods including frequencies and percentages, means and standard deviations and correlations and regressions. These results provide the basis for recommendations.

# Table 6.: Continuous improvement and customer satisfaction

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Statement** | **SD** | **D** | **NS** | **A** | **SA** | **Mean**  | **Std. Dev.** |
| The company provides an appropriate training to ensure skills and attitudes for enhancement of continuous improvement  | 3.5% | 4.7% | 2.3% | 59.3% | 30.2% | 4.08 | .910 |
| In this Company, departments are encouraged to identify work areas for improvement | 4.7% | 0% | 0% | 53.5% | 41.9% | 4.28 | .877 |
| Continuous improvement is consistently fostered and facilitated by the management  | 8.1% | 10.5% | 7.0% | 43.0% | 31.4% | 3.79 | 1.23 |
| The company is committed to constantly improving products and services characteristics | 1.2% | 3.5% | 5.8% | 61.6% | 27.9% | 4.12 | .758 |
| The company is managed as a system for continuous improvement in service delivery  | 3.5% | 7.0% | 4.7% | 53.5% | 31.4% | 4.02 | .982 |
| Staff is continuously trained in the principles of quality, team work and job-specific skills. | 2.3% | 3.5% | 3.5% | 55.8% | 34.9% | 4.17 | .843 |
| The company gives incentives to encourage new ideas that touches on quality improvement | 3.5% | 1.2% | 4.7% | 52.3% | 38.4% | 4.21 | .869 |
| The company provides adequate financial resources for quality improvement programmes | 3.5% | 4.7% | 1.2% | 51.2% | 39.5% | 4.19 | .939 |
| The Company emphasizes constant pursuit to improvement | 3.5% | 4.7% | 5.8% | 50.0% | 36.0% | 4.10 | .958 |
| The Company supports projects to address the areas for improvement | 2.3% | 2.3% | 1.2% | 58.1% | 36.0% | 4.23 | .792 |

**Source: *Primary Data*.**

*Key; SD-Strongly Disagree, D-Disagree, NS-Not Sure, A- Agree, SA-Strongly Agree*

Results on Table 6.1 on the statement “The Company provides an appropriate training to ensure skills and attitudes for enhancement of continuous improvement” 59.3% agreed with the statement, 30.2% strongly agreed, 2.3% were not sure, 4.7% disagreed and 3.5% strongly disagreed. This indicates that majority of the respondents agreed with statement that Grain Pulse Uganda Limited gives enough training to its employees for ensuring the required skills and attitudes for enhancing continuous improvement (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.08). This implies that employees get appropriate training that equip them with skills required for continuous improvement in the operations of the company. *In an interview conducted with head of Human Resource Department, it was argued that “employees of the company always go through training after identifying that there is need to improve the skills and capabilities to make sure they deliver to the expectation and satisfy customers*.”

On statement “In this Company, departments are encouraged to identify weak areas for improvement”, 53.5% agreed with statement, 41.9% strongly agreed and 4.7% strongly disagreed. This indicates that majority of the respondents agreed with statement that department at Grain Pulse Uganda Limited are encouraged to always identify areas that needs improvement to guarantee better performing so that to meet the customer’s needs in the market (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.28). This implies that to meet the demands of the customers, there is continuous improvement within all departments of the company since it all starts within the company then to the final customer. *Interview held with staff in Heads of Department from different Hass branches; it was revealed that “it is clear Grain Pulse Uganda Limited requires every department is required to identify areas that need to be improved to make sure all departments are in the same line towards the achievement of the company in terms of performance.”*

On statement “Continuous improvement is consistently fostered and facilitated by the management”, 43.0% agreed with statement, 31.4% strongly agreed, 7.0% were not sure, 10.5% disagreed and 8.1% strongly disagreed. This means that most of the respondents agreed that continuous improvement programs at Grain Pulse Uganda Limited are well facilitated and consistently foster the management in ensuring that customers get the best products or services (based on the Likert scale, mean = 3.79). This implies that the management of the company fosters and facilitate continuous improvement to meet the customer needs and therefore the company will be in better position to perform well.

On statement “The Company is committed to constantly improving products and services characteristics”, 61.6% agreed with statement, 27.9% strongly agreed, 5.8% were not sure, 3.5% disagreed and 1.2% strongly disagreed. This means that most of the respondents agreed that Grain Pulse Uganda Limited constantly focus on improving its products and services to maintain and attract customers (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.12). This implies that to perform better in the market and meet the demands of the customers, it is important to constantly improve the products and services that fits the current market. Such improvements strengthen customer confidence and result in commercial and other benefits. *In an interview held with head of one of the Administrators, he argued that “the company has a high-quality policy that was established through its mission, vision, and core values. He emphasized that Grain Pulse Uganda Limited believe in the enormous importance of customer satisfaction created by products and services.”*

On statement “The Company is managed as a system for continuous improvement in service delivery”, 53.5% agreed with statement, 31.4% strongly agreed, 4.7% were not sure, 7.0% disagreed and 3.5% strongly disagreed. This indicates that majority of the respondents agreed with statement that Grain Pulse Uganda Limited is managed as a system for continuous improvement in delivering better services that meets the demands of customers in the market (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.02). This implies that because the company is managed as a system for continuous improvement, there is better delivery of products and services to customers which helps the company to dominate the market.

On statement “Staff is continuously trained in the principles of quality, team work and job-specific skills”, 55.8% agreed with statement, 34.9% strongly agreed, 3.5% were not sure, 3.5% disagreed and 2.3% strongly disagreed. This indicates that majority of the respondents agreed with statement that employees at Grain Pulse Uganda Limited are continuous trained in the principles of quality, teamwork and job specific skills (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.17). This implies that to keep employees relevant towards the performance of the company, they are continually offered training about the quality, teamwork and job specific skills that improves their performance and towards the company performance. *This is reflected in the Company’s Human Resource Manual (2017)* *which states that* “*quality control requires the company to create an environment in which both management and employees strive for perfection. This is done by training personnel, creating benchmarks for product quality, and testing products to check for statistically significant variations*.”

On statement “The Company gives incentives to encourage new ideas that touches on quality improvement”, 52.3% agreed with statement, 38.4% strongly agreed, 4.7% were not sure, 3.5% strongly disagreed and 1.2% disagreed. This indicates that majority of the respondents agreed with statement that employees Grain Pulse Uganda Limited gives incentives to employees for encouraging new ideas that focuses on quality improvement (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.21). This implies that for encouraging new ideas on the quality improvement, the company gives incentives to every employee that comes with new idea regarding the quality improvement.

On statement “The Company provides adequate financial resources for quality improvement programmes”, 51.2% agreed with statement, 39.5% strongly agreed, 1.2% were not sure, 4.7% strongly disagreed and 3.5% strongly disagreed. This means that majority of the respondents agreed that Grain Pulse Uganda Limited makes sure that there are enough financial resources for quality improvement programmes to ensure that customer’s demands is meet (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.19). This implies that to ensure that there is quality improvement in the company, the management ensures that there are adequate financial resources to allow such programmes are implemented to meet the demands of the customers.

On statement “The Company emphasizes constant pursuit to improvement of products and services”, 50.0% strongly agreed with statement, 36.0% agreed, 5.8% were not sure, 4.7% disagreed and 3.5% strongly disagreed. This means that majority of the respondents agreed that Grain Pulse Uganda Limited emphasizes constant pursuit to improvement of its operations that helps in meeting the demands of the customers (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.10). This implies that the company to realize its market target, it emphasizes constant pursuit to improvement that meets the demands of customers. *In an interview held with officials in Marketing Department, stated that “defining and understanding customer satisfaction help Grain Pulse Uganda Limited identify opportunities for product and service innovation and serve as the basis for performance appraisal and reward systems. It also serves as the basis for a customer satisfaction survey programme that ensure that quality improvement efforts are properly focused on issues that are most important to the customer.”*

On statement “The Company supports projects to address the areas for continuous improvement”, 58.1% agreed with statement, 36.0% strongly agreed, 1.2% were not sure, 2.3% disagreed and 2.3% strongly disagreed. This indicates that most of the respondents agreed with the statement that Grain Pulse Uganda Limited supports projects to address the areas for continuous improvement (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.23). This implies that the company supports projects for addressing areas for continuous improvement to meet the demands of customers in the market.

# Table 6.: Pearson Correlation

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Continuous improvement**  | **Customer satisfaction** |
| Continuous improvement  | Pearson correlation | 1 | .796\*\* |
| Sig.(2-tailed) |  | .000 |
| N  | 162 | 162 |
| Customer satisfaction  | Pearson correlation |  . 796\*\* | 1 |
| Sig.(2-tailed) | .000 |  |
| N | 162 | 162 |

*\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

**Source: *Primary Data***

Correlation results in Table 6.2 above show that there is a positive high relationship between continuous improvement and customer satisfaction in Grain Pulse Uganda Limited (r = 0.796, Sig = 0.000). This positive relationship if predictive means that if continuous improvement is effective, there is improvement in customer satisfaction. It was thus to examine whether the relationship was predictive or not and whether the individual components of continuous improvement were influential factors of customer satisfaction. That is whether the relationship was predictive on not and necessitated running simple regression model.

# Table 6.: Model Summary

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Model** | **R** | **R Square** | **Adjusted R Square** | **Std. Error of the Estimate**  |
| 1 | .796a | .633 |  .632 | .12243 |

*a. Predictor: (Constant), Continuous Improvement*

**Source: *Primary Data***

The model summary table (Table 6.3) indicates that there is a significant positive relationship between continuous improvement and customer satisfaction (r = 0.796). The actual contribution of continuous improvement to customer satisfaction is about 63.2% (Adj. R Square = 0.632). The results thus show that Grain Pulse Uganda Limited should ensure that the production and related processes are capable of consistently achieving products of required quality that satisfies customers.

# Table 6.: ANOVA

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Model** | **Sum of Squares** | **Df** | **Mean Square** | **F** | **Sig.** |
| 1 | Regression | 246.219 | 1 | 246.219 | 13506.663 | .005a |
| Residual | 2.042 | 161 | .018 |  |  |
| Total  | 248.261 | 162 |  |  |  |

1. *Predictor: (Constant), Continuous Improvement*
2. *Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction*

 **Source: *Primary Data***

The ANOVA results show that there is significant linear relationship between continuous Improvement and Customer Demands (F = 13506.663, P<0.05). This implies that the more of continuous improvement, the better the customer satisfaction that will be attained by Grain Pulse Uganda Limited.

# Table 6.: Coefficients

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Model** | **Unstandardized Coefficients**  | **Standardized Coefficients**  | **t** | **Sig.** |
| **B** | **Std. Error** | **Beta** |
| 1 | (Constant)  | .178 | .031 |  | 5.709 | .005 |
| Continuous Improvement | 1.098 | .009 | .796 | 116.218 | .005 |

1. *Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction*

**Source: *Primary Data***

The coefficients Table (Table 6.31) give the model that relates continuous improvement to customer satisfaction. The regression model generated was: Y = 0.178 + 1.096X (where: Y= customer demand and X= Continuous improvement).

In summary, the results indicate that there is a strong positive relationship between Continuous improvement and customer satisfaction and that continuous improvement accounts for about 63.2% of the variation in customer satisfaction. The regression model indicates that a unit increase in continuous improvement would lead to improvement of customer satisfaction by a factor of 1.098. This implies that investment in continuous improvement by Grain Pulse Uganda Limited will significantly contribute to improvement of customer satisfaction.

# CHAPTER SEVEN

# EMPLOYEE RELATIONS AND IMPROVED MARKET SHARE

# Introduction

This chapter presents the research findings on how Grain Pulse Uganda Limited ensure employee relations to improve market share. To analyze how Grain Pulse Uganda Limited has ensured employee relations for improving market share, the respondents were introduced to different items to have their say. The responses were computed by making an aggregate of responses given by respondents to 10 items and 5-point Likert Scale (SD-Strongly Disagree, D-Disagree, NS-Not Sure, A-Agree, SA-Strongly Agree).

Survey results are discussed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods including frequencies and percentages, and correlations and regressions. They are further explained using correlations in order to show relationship between the variable followed by regression analysis to find the extent on how Grain Pulse Uganda Limited ensure employee relations in its operations towards better performance.

# Table 7.: Employee relations and market share

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Statement** | **SD** | **D** | **NS** | **A** | **SA** | **Mean**  | **Std. Dev.** |
| The company gives time to employees to participate in quality training | 3.5% | 0% | 1.2% | 60.5% | 34.9% | 4.23 | .792 |
| Employees are actively involved in quality-related activities and the success of the company, and many of their suggestions are implemented | 2.3% | 3.5% | 2.3% | 53.5% | 38.4% | 4.22 | .846 |
| Pay and acknowledgement systems are based on quality-related objectives and on company results | 2.3% | 5.8% | 1.2% | 57.0% | 33.7% | 4.14 | .883 |
| The company has effective two-way communication links with its employees | 1.2% | 4.7% | 4.7% | 48.8% | 40.7% | 4.23 | .836 |
| Employees are trained to implement quality improvement projects | 1.2% | 4.7% | 4.7% | 47.7% | 41.9% | 4.24 | .839 |
| There are quality circles and/or interdepartmental teams to improve quality | 2.3% | 0% | 3.5% | 54.7% | 39.5% | 4.29 | .749 |
| Employees are given tailor-made preparation for their jobs and are qualified to solve quality problems | 7.0% | 1.2% | 50.0% | 55.4% | 40.7% | 4.16 | 1.04 |
| Employees are responsible for quality and end results of the product/service and they can take decisions independently. | 3.5% | 3.5% | 4.7% | 43.0% | 45.3% | 4.23 | .954 |
| Employees know that quality is their responsibility, and they are encouraged to meet customers’ and the company’s objectives | 2.3% | 3.5% | 3.5% | 50.0% | 40.7% | 4.23 | .863 |
| Employees are considered an internal customer who participates in policy, strategies and company structure | 1.2% | 2.3% | 2.3% | 39.5% | 54.7% | 4.44 | .761 |

**Source: *Primary Data*.**

*Key; SD-Strongly Disagree, D-Disagree, NS-Not Sure, A- Agree, SA-Strongly Agree*

Results on Table 6.1 on the statement “The Company gives time to employees to participate in quality training” 60.5% agreed with the statement, 34.9% strongly agreed, 1.2% were not sure, and 3.5% strongly disagreed. This means that majority of the respondents agreed that Grain Pulse Uganda Limited allows its employees to participate in quality training which helps them in improving their performance than in turn improve the overall performance of the company (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.23). This implies that to achieve better performance of the company, employees are offered training regarding quality so that to improve their services towards customers. *An interview held with some senior managers from different Grain Pulse Uganda Limited branches, it was evidenced that* “*quality control requires the company to create an environment in which both management and employees strive for perfection. This is done by training personnel, creating benchmarks for product quality, and testing products to check for statistically significant variations.”*

On statement “Employees are actively involved in quality-related activities and the success of the company, and many of their suggestions are implemented”, 53.5% agreed with statement, 38.4% strongly agreed, 2.3% were not sure, 3.5% disagreed and 2.3% strongly disagreed. This indicates that most of the respondents agreed with the statement that employees in Grain Pulse Uganda Limited actively are involved in quality related activities where the company success and many of employees’ suggestions are implemented to help the company perform better (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.22). This implies that the suggestions of employees are considered by involving them in quality related activities for the success of the company in terms of performance. *In an interview with various employees of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited, it was evidenced that “employees are actively involved in that activities relating to quality because they in the frontline of the company and their interactions with management and customers require them to have knowledge concerning the quality of products and services which the company offer.*”

On statement “Pay and acknowledgement systems are based on quality-related objectives and on company results”, 57.0% agreed with statement, 33.7% strongly agreed, 1.2% were not sure, 5.8% disagreed and 2.3% strongly disagreed. This indicates that most of the respondents agreed with the statement that Grain Pulse Uganda Limited base the pay and acknowledgment systems on quality related objectives and results (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.14). This implies that employee payment and acknowledgment depend on quality related objectives and results regarding overall performance of the company.

On statement “The Company has effective two-way communication links with its employees”, 48.8% agreed with statement, 40.7% strongly agreed, 4.7% were not sure, 4.7% disagreed and 1.2% strongly disagreed. This indicates that most of the respondents agreed with the statement that Grain Pulse Uganda Limited has effective two-way communication links with its employees (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.23). This implies that employees always get feedback on every task they do and make necessary improvement in case of any to ensure the company performs better. *An interview held with staff from Sales and Marketing department, it was argued that “employees are allowed to communicate to the management about the quality issues and also the management gives feedback to employees on what has been done to address the issues raised*.”

On statement “Employees are trained to implement quality improvement projects”, 47.7% agreed with statement, 41.9% strongly agreed, 4.7% were not sure, 4.7% disagreed and 1.2% strongly disagreed. This indicates that most of the respondents agreed with the statement that employees at Grain Pulse Uganda Limited receive training in the implementation of quality improvement programs (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.24). This implies that quality improvement programs will be properly implemented when employees have enough knowledge about such and therefore training exercise is necessary for successful implementation of quality improvement projects in the event of improving the company performance. *In an interview with staff in the Quality Assurance Department from different Hass branches; it was argued that “quality projects require the company to create an environment in which both management and employees strive for perfection. This is done by training personnel, creating benchmarks for product quality, and testing products to check for statistically significant variations."*

On statement “There are quality circles and/or interdepartmental teams to improve quality”, 54.7% agreed with statement, 39.5% strongly agreed, 3.5% were not sure and 2.3% strongly disagreed. This means that majority of the respondents agreed that Grain Pulse Uganda Limited quality circles and/or interdepartmental teams for improving quality (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.29). This implies that to ensure that there is quality improvement, quality circles and/or interdepartmental teams are available in the company and this is crucial to meet the targets of the company.

On statement “Employees are given tailor-made preparation for their jobs and are qualified to solve quality problems”, 55.4% agreed with statement, 40.7% strongly agreed, 7.0% strongly disagreed and 1.2% disagreed. This means that majority of the respondents agreed that employees at Grain Pulse Uganda Limited are given tailor-made preparation for their jobs and are qualified to solve quality problems (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.16). This implies that the company gives employees tailor-made preparation for their jobs and therefore is capable of solving quality problems.

On statement “Employees are responsible for quality and end results of the product/service and they can take decisions independently”, 45.3% strongly agreed with statement, 43.0% agreed, 4.7% were not sure, 3.5% strongly disagreed and 3.5% strongly disagreed. This means that majority of the respondents agreed that employees at Grain Pulse Uganda Limited are responsible for quality and end results of the product/service and they can take decisions independently that geared towards improvement of the company performance (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.23). This implies that as employees are part of the company, they are responsible for quality and end results of the product/service and therefore they can independently take decisions that helps the company to realize better performance.

On statement “Employees know that quality is their responsibility, and they are encouraged to meet customers’ and the company’s objectives”, 50.0% agreed with statement, 40.7% strongly agreed, 3.5% were not sure, 3.5% disagreed and 2.3% strongly disagreed. This means that majority of the respondents agreed that each employee at Grain Pulse Uganda Limited is aware that quality is his/her responsibility and therefore focused on meeting customers’ and the company’s objectives by emphasizing on quality service delivery (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.23). This implies that that company employee’s paly role on the quality and they are encouraged to meet customers’ and the company’s objectives.

On statement “Employees are considered an internal customer who participates in policy, strategies and company structure”, 54.7% strongly agreed with statement, 39.5% agreed, 2.3% were not sure, 2.3% strongly disagreed and 1.2% disagreed. This means that majority of the respondents agreed that employees at Grain Pulse Uganda Limited are considered an internal customer who participates in policy, strategies and company structure (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.44). This implies that the company considers employees as their internal customer and therefore is avowed to participate in policy, strategies and company structure.

# Table 7.: Pearson Correlation

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Employee relations**  | **Market share**  |
| Employee relations  | Pearson correlation | 1 | .862\*\* |
| Sig.(2-tailed) |  | .000 |
| N  | 162 | 162 |
| Market share  | Pearson correlation | .862\*\* | 1 |
| Sig.(2-tailed) | .000 |  |
| N | 162 | 162 |

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

***Source: Primary Data***

According to the Pearson Sig. 2-Tailed and N at 162, with 0.862, it means that there is a positive high relationship between employee relations and market share of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited. This positive relationship if predictive means that if employee relations is effective, the market share of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited will improve. It was thus to examine whether the relationship was predictive or not and whether the individual components of employee relations were influential factors of company’s market share.

# Table 7.: Model Summary

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Model** | **R** | **R Square** | **Adjusted R Square** | **Std. Error of the Estimate**  |
| 1 | .862a | .743 | .742 | .17297 |

*a. Predictor: (Constant), Employee relations*

***Source: Primary Data***

The model summary table (Table 7.3) indicates that there is a significant positive relationship between employee relations and market share of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited (r = 0.862). The actual contribution of employee relations to market share of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited is about 74.2% (Adj. R Square = 0.742).

# Table 7.: ANOVA

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Model** | **Sum of Squares** | **Df** | **Mean Square** | **F** | **Sig.** |
| 1 | Regression | 44.090 | 1 | 244.090 | 4534.312 | .005a |
| Residual | 4.171 | 161 | .036 |  |  |
| Total  | 248.261 | 162 |  |  |  |

1. *Predictor: (Constant), Employee relations*
2. *Dependent Variable: Market share*

 **Source: *Primary Data***

The ANOVA results (Table 7.4) show that there is significant linear relationship between employee relations and market share of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited (F = 4534.312, P< 0.005). This implies that the more of employment involvement, the better market share of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited it will position itself.

# Table 7.: Coefficients

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Model** | **Unstandardized Coefficients**  | **Standardized Coefficients**  | **t** | **Sig.** |
| **B** | **Std. Error** | **Beta** |
| 1 | (Constant)  | .286 | .044 |  | 6.574 | .005 |
| Employee relations  | 1.096 | .014 | .862 | 80.959 | .005 |

1. *Dependent Variable: Market share*

**Source: *Primary Data***

The coefficient Table gives the model that relates employee relations to performance of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited. The regression model generated was: Y = 0.286 + 1.096X (where: Y= Market share and X = Employee relations). The findings indicate that there is a significant positive relationship between employee relations and market share of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited and that employee relations explains about 74.2% of the variation in market share of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited. The regression model indicates that a unit increase in employee relations would lead to improvement in market share of the company by a factor of 1.096.

# Performance of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited

This section presents findings on performance of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited. The variables were analyzed using a five Likert scale and the results are presented in descriptive tables, showing the percentages, means and standard deviations as presented in Table 7.6 below.

# Table 7.: Performance of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Statement** | **SD** | **D** | **NS** | **A** | **SA** | **Mean**  | **Std. Dev.** |
| The company demonstrates competence when delivering the services | 3% | 12.0% | 4.0% | 34.0% | 33.0% | 3.22 | 1.20 |
| There is consistency in service delivery in the company  | 2.3% | 5.8% | 1.2% | 58.1% | 32.6% | 4.13 | .878 |
| The company compares regularly the performance against the set goals | 3.5% | 8.1% | 1.2% | 55.8% | 31.4% | 4.03 | .989 |
| There is decline in the overall administrative costs  | 2.3% | 7.0% | 4.7% | 46.5% | 39.5% | 4.14 | .960 |
| There is high efficiency of cost cutting and increase in profitability  | 2.3% | 4.7% | 2.3% | 55.8% | 34.9% | 4.16 | .866 |
| There is high response to dynamic customer needs in regards to the competition in the surrounding market  | 2.3% | 3.5% | 2.3% | 51.2% | 40.7% | 4.24 | .853 |
| There is an accurate demand for performance of the company that will impact the market share level  | 2.3% | 3.5% | 4.7% | 60.5% | 29.1% | 4.69 | .550 |
| There is increased speed with which decision making can be undertaken within the firm to impact on the performance of the company | 2.3% | 2.3% | 2.3% | 47.7% | 45.3% | 4.31 | .830 |
| There is increased creativity in the use of the strategic responses in the market to outdo the competition thus upgrade the performance of the company | 1.2% | 1.2% | 1.2% | 57.0% | 39.5% | 4.33 | .676 |
| There is an increased level of strategic responses that influences the performance of the company | 7.0% | 7.0% | 3.5% | 32.6% | 50.0% | 4.12 | 1.20 |

***Source: Primary Data.***

*Key; SD-Strongly Disagree, D-Disagree, NS-Not Sure, A- Agree, SA-Strongly Agree*

Results on Table 7.6 on the statement “The Company demonstrates competence when delivering the services”, 34.0% agreed with the statement, 33.0% strongly agreed, 4.0% were not sure, 12.0% disagreed and 13.0% strongly disagreed. This means that most of the respondents agreed that in terms of competence, Grain Pulse Uganda Limited is good in delivering better services to its customers (based on the Likert scale, mean = 3.22).

On statement “There is consistency in service delivery in the company, 58.1% agreed with the statement, 32.6% strongly agreed, 1.2% were not sure, 5.8% disagreed and 2.3% strongly disagreed. This indicates that most of the respondents agreed that Grain Pulse Uganda Limited is consistent in-service delivery that keeps the company on top in the market (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.13).

On statement “The Company compares regularly the performance against the set goals”, 55.8% agreed with statement, 31.4% strongly agreed, 1.2% were not sure, 8.1% disagreed and 3.5% strongly disagreed. This indicates that most of the respondents agreed that Grain Pulse Uganda Limited regularly compares its performance against the set goals and assess its current position with the predetermined performance goals (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.03).

On statement “There is decline in the overall administrative costs”, 46.5% agreed with statement, 39.5% strongly agreed, 4.7% were not sure, 7.0% disagreed and 2.3% strongly disagreed. This indicates that most of the respondents agreed that administrative costs at Grain Pulse Uganda Limited are declining over time which increases the level of profits for the company (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.14).

On statement “There is high efficiency of cost cutting and increase in profitability”, 55.8% agreed with statement, v% strongly agreed, 2.3% were not sure, 4.7% disagreed and 2.3% strongly disagreed. This means that majority of the respondents agreed with statement that at Grain Pulse Uganda Limited there is high efficiency of cost cutting and increment in profit margins (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.16).

On statement “There is high response to dynamic customer needs in regards to the competition in the surrounding market”, 51.2% agreed with statement, 40.7% strongly agreed, 2.3% were not sure, 3.5% disagreed and 2.3% strongly disagreed. This means that majority of the respondents agreed with statement that Grain Pulse Uganda Limited highly respond to dynamic customer needs in regards to the competition in the surrounding market (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.24).

On statement “There is an accurate demand for performance of the company that impact the market share level”, 60.5% agreed with statement, 29.1% strongly agreed, 4.7% were not sure, 3.5% strongly disagreed and 2.3% disagreed. This means that majority of the respondents agreed with statement that Grain Pulse Uganda Limited has accurate demand for performance that impact the market share level (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.69).

On statement “There is increased speed with which decision making can be undertaken within the firm to impact on the performance of the company”, 47.7% agreed with statement, 45.3% strongly agreed, 2.3% were not sure, v% strongly disagreed and 2.3% strongly disagreed. This means that majority of the respondents agreed with statement that Grain Pulse Uganda Limited there is high response in decision making regarding the performance of the company (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.31).

On statement “There is increased creativity in the use of the strategic responses in the market to outdo the competition thus upgrade the performance of the company”, 57.0% agreed with statement, 39.5% strongly agreed, 1.2% were not sure, 1.2% disagreed and 1.2% strongly disagreed. This means that majority of the respondents agreed with statement that there is high creativity in the use of the strategic responses in the market to outdo the competition thus upgrade the performance of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.33).

On statement “There is an increased level of strategic responses that influences the performance of the company”, 50.0% strongly agreed with statement, 32.6% agreed, 3.5% were not sure, 7.0% strongly disagreed and 7.0% disagreed. This means that majority of the respondents agreed with statement that there is increment of strategic responses that influences the performance of the company of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited (based on the Likert scale, mean = 4.12).

# CHAPTER EIGHT

# TOWARDS HARMONIZING QUALITY CONTROL AND PERFORMANCE OF EXPORTING COMPANIES IN GRAIN PULSE UGANDA LIMITED

# Introduction

This chapter provides the harmonization of the survey results on quality control and performance of exporting companies in Grain Pulse Uganda Limited in line with established best practices elsewhere.

The findings indicate that there is causal relationship between top management support and overall performance in Grain Pulse Uganda Limited. The findings are in line with Young *et al*. (2001) who found that top management has the upper hand in the guiding and directing the organization to adopt and implement quality control. They argue that institutional factors have more effect on the long run; still top management is the one who takes the early decisions to adopt any managerial innovations or changes. Likewise, charismatic leadership is often mentioned as a key for the adoption and success of quality control (Reed *et al*., 2000); Young *et al*., 2001). In addition, Eman *et al*. (2007) proposed that top management support should be more strongly associated with competitive advantage than other components. According to Dwyer (2002) competitive advantage comes through people and quality context, management through quality. It is the people who differentiate a company from its competitors. He further noted that efficiency in leadership is key as this competitive advantage can only be gained where staff are committed and competent which in turn increases productivity and enhance quality. Ng, (2011) indicated that leaders must proactively assume positive outlook, constantly shaping the competitive landscape, and steering the firm to their desired course. Rather than accepting status quo, they always examine alternatives and develop new approaches to problem solving. Moreover, they emotionally connect with colleagues and subordinates by establishing open communication links, thereby inviting new ideas and fresh approaches to getting things done.

According toSnell & Dickson (2011), the ability to facilitate change is another aspect of good leadership. Providing a sense of direction for the organization and taking on a role of embracing and supporting change and becoming a change agent within the organization are considered key actions in facilitating change. They concluded that leadership is effective when a leader has the ability to foster a positive team environment and being able to move that whole team forward as the key abilities of a good leader. It is clear from the reviewed literature that good leadership, in the form an inclusive environment, is understood to increase the likelihood of having a more effective workplace and team. Such leadership practices could be assumed to benefit an organization in terms of improving or maintaining employee relations (Pearce et al, 2007). When staff are committed and work as a team, this increases a company’s competitive advantage as the team work smoothly thus become more effective which impact their productivity positively.

Raduan *et al*., (2009) argue that leadership of an organization has the capacity and authority to create and maintain the internal environment of an organization. The top management needs to establish a clear vision of the organizations future and probably set challenging goals and targets to achieve them. They should also provide the requisite resources including training and development of staff; inspire, encourage and reward people’s contributions. The management must ensure that the quality management system is effectively implemented and maintained and they are responsible for ensuring that actions are taken without undue delay to eliminate and detect non-conformities.

The findings indicate that there is causal relationship between continuous improvement and customer satisfaction in Grain Pulse Uganda Limited. This is in line with Fening *et al*. (2013) who argued that continuous improvement is an essential element in a modern quality system that aims at improving efficiency by optimizing a process and eliminating wasted efforts in production. Improvement efforts are carried out in a structured manner with appropriate pre-defined protocol and oversight. These efforts are primarily directed towards reducing variability in process and product quality characteristics and are not for changing the fundamental design of a manufacturing process. For continuous improvement products should already follow their specifications and process improvement steps (e.g., adjustment of process parameters, introduction of new equipment of the same design, and operating principles with advanced control options) should be within the original “design space.” That is, such improvement steps are not considered as "changes" because product quality and performance (e.g., bioavailability, shelf-life) are assured (Kumar *et al*., 2009).

Bessant & Caffyn (1997) argued that quality improvement is builds upon the high involvement in innovation thus: quality improvement is perceived as an organization-wide process of focused and sustained incremental innovation, recognizing that most innovative activity is not of the ‘breakthrough’ variety, but incremental in nature, depending on its effect on sustained and focused implementation. For breakthrough changes, which are common in quality improvement, Boer *et al*. (2000) suggest that quality management strategy like Business Process Reengineering (BPR) stimulate invention and force radical organizational change. Hammer and Champy (2001) define BPR as ‘the fundamental rethinking and radical redesign of business processes to achieve dramatic improvements in critical, contemporary measures of performance, such as cost, quality, service and speed.’ Both incremental improvement and innovation are essential to achieve and maintain competitive advantage that will lead to improved firm performance.

Adam, Corbert, Flores, Harrison, Lee, Rho, Ribera, Samson and Westbrook (1996) did a study among industrialized regions. This was an international study of quality improvement approach and firm performance. 977 firms were considered and a sample of 1745 employees taken. Descriptive survey method was used and both primary and secondary data collected. Both financial and non-financial measures of performance were considered. The study variables were quality improvement factors and firm performance. Items considered were training, adequate resources, improvement projects identification, employee recognition, among others. The study concluded that a company’s approach to quality correlates to actual product and service quality. study also concluded that for the regions under study, there is a positive relationship between quality improvement and quality performance. However, the study concluded that there is a weak relationship between quality improvement and financial performance.

Abdullah, Uli & Tari (2008) study on the influence of soft factors on quality improvement and performance used descriptive survey where the population of study was 683 electrical and electronic firms in Malaysia. 350 managers. Study constructs were executive commitment, employee focus, customer focus, employee training and team work and performance. Where executive commitment, employee focus, customer focus, employee training and team work were the soft factors. Regression analysis was used to analyze the data. The study concluded that soft factors-executive commitment, employee focus, customer focus has significant influence on quality improvement and performance.

The findings indicate that there is causal relationship between employee relations and market share in Grain Pulse Uganda Limited. This is in relation with Fiona (2004) who stated that the employee’s measure on their performance will bring about effectiveness in quality control, skills and behaviors that need improvement, the effectiveness of the team problem solving process, the outcome of the training programs and the needs of internal customers. David (2005) in the study of employee responses to employee participation programs used a measure of the perceived gap between the desired and actual influence.

According to Oakland (2005) involving employees means sharing knowledge, encouraging, and recognizing their contributions. It also entails utilizing their experience and operating with integrity. Involvement creates awareness among the people in the organization of the importance of meeting customer requirements. People get involved in the organization when they can identify constraints to their performance, evaluate their performance against set standards, actively seek opportunities to enhance their competence and freely share their work experience and knowledge. Employees’ involvement acts as a strong stimulant and motivator to work, enhances creativity and innovation, provides an environment for people to accept ownership of problems and their responsibility to solve them and help understand the importance of their contribution in the organization.

According to Macey (2012), an employee who is engaged is well positioned to meet the needs of the organization, such an employee takes initiative, reinforces while at the same time supports the organization’s culture and values. Jones and Wood (2012) argues that in practice organizations define engagement as being part of the organization, having pride and loyalty in the company, while also being committed, and going above and beyond the call of duty. This agrees with the definition put forward by Khan (1990), who argued that engagement means to be psychologically as well as physically during the time when is carrying out a role in the organization.

According to John (2017), an employee relation has been linked to customer satisfaction, retention, and loyalty and also to a good relationship among co-workers. Employee relations has become important in the business consulting world for its statistical relationship with variables such as job involvement, job satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behavior and employee commitment and in effect productivity and profitability. Employee relations is currently in its early stage hence the need for more rigorous studies (Jones and Wood, 2010) to unearth its theoretical underpinnings and practical application, along with its antecedents and consequences. However, very little is known about the relationship between employee work engagement and commitment. Employees also commit themselves to specific individuals, including their spouses, children, parents and siblings, as well as to their employers, co-workers, supervisors and customers (Vance, 2006).

According to Jones & Woods (2012) is crucial for organizations to create a fertile ground for employee relations to flourish if they are to tap into their knowledge and human capital. Macey & Schneider (2008) posit that employees come to work ready to be engaged, and emphasize that organizations need to create favorable conditions for engagement. As engaged employees connect with each other, the multiplier effects of synergy lead to the collective actions, which influences organizational performance. This means the moment an employee enters the organization it is the business of the employer to device mechanisms for effective utilization of labor, which essentially involves engaging employees. Despite all of this interest there is evidence of an overall decline in employee relations, suggesting that there is still a number of managers who do not yet understand about how organizations can encourage and sustain high levels of engagement (Arasli & Ahmadeva, 2004).

Bates (2004) reported that as much as 50% of the American work force merely shows up at work to do only what is expected of them, but are not willing to contribute more and thus are not considered engaged in their work. Extending this, Shuck (2011) insist that the engagement literature must begin to focus far more on the work context in order to truly understand how and why employees are, or are not, engaged. Specifically, most research on employee relations has been conducted in private or manufacturing companies, or the research has been conducted on a broad level without specific attention to the impact of different occupational settings (Harter, Schmidt & Hayes, 2002). For this reason, the question has been raised as to whether models of employee relations will be transferable across contexts, and in particular whether the methods used to encourage employee relations in the private sector are applicable in the public sector (Dirks & Ferrin, 2001).

Armstrong (2009) argues that the accomplishment of any organization can be well determined with respects to how it creates effective use of its assets so as to accomplish the anticipated results. Human beings unlike any other resource appropriate to the organization have diverse needs. This means consequently that the supervision of any organization has a duty of recognizing such desires and satisfying them as well as developing the human resource management systems. Armstrong (2009) additionally avows that if the organization wants to keep on being competitive, it is vital to constantly improve the performance of these workforces. This can only be accomplished by making certain that the employees are extremely motivated and the best way to do so is by employee relations. This will profit the company since it will not only increase the labor throughput and decrease the labor cost per unit, but also appeals and preserves the quality of employees desired at all levels (Armstrong, 2009).

# CHAPTER NINE

# SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

# Introduction

This chapter looks at the summary of the findings, conclusions, recommendations and areas of further study. This chapter discussed a summary of all the study findings obtained from the field and conclusions.

# Summary of findings

The purpose of the study was to examine quality control and performance of exporting companies in Uganda focusing on Grain Pulse Uganda Limited as a case study. The study was guided by three objectives: to examine how Grain Pulse Uganda Limited ensure top management support for the effective operations to improve the overall performance; to examine how Grain Pulse Uganda Limited undertake continuous improvement to improve customer satisfaction; and to examine how Grain Pulse Uganda Limited ensure employee relations to improve market share. Questionnaires were self-administered. Five-point Likert scale was used with 1= Strongly Disagree; 2= Disagree; 3= Not Sure; 4= Agree and 5= Strongly Agree. The Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) software was used to summarize the data. Descriptive and inferential statistical methods were used to analyze data. The following is a summary of the results.

The results showed that there is a significant positive relationship between top management support and overall performance (r = 0.894). The actual contribution of top management support to company performance to competitive is about 79.8% (Adj. R Square = 0.798). The ANOVA results showed that there is significant linear relationship between top management support and overall performance (F = 123.032, P< 0.005). This implies that the more of *Top Management support*, the better of the performance that will be attained by Grain Pulse Uganda Limited. The regression model that relates top management support and overall performance generated was: Y = 0.077 + 1.359X (where: Y= company performance and X = Grain Pulse Uganda Limited). This implies that a unit increase in top management support would increase the level of overall performance by a factor of 1.359.

The results from the analysis indicate that there is a significant positive relationship between continuous improvement and customer satisfaction (r = 0.796). The actual contribution of continuous improvement to customer satisfaction is about 63.2% (Adj. R Square = 0.632). The ANOVA results show that there is significant linear relationship between continuous improvement and customer satisfaction (F = 13506.663, P< 0.005). This implies that the more of continuous improvement, the better the customer satisfaction that will be attained by Grain Pulse Uganda Limited. The regression model that relates continuous improvement to customer satisfaction generated was: Y = 0.178 + 1.096X (where: Y= customer demand and X = Continuous improvement). This implies that a unit increase in continuous improvement would increase the level of customer care by a factor of 1.096.

The results indicated that there is a significant positive relationship between employee relations and market share (r = 0.862). The actual contribution of employee relations to market share of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited is about 74.2% (Adj. R Square = 0.742). The ANOVA results showed that there is significant linear relationship between employee relations and market share (F = 4534.312, P< 0.005). This implies that the more of employment involvement, the better market share of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited it will position itself. The regression model that relates employee relations to performance generated was: Y = 0.286 + 1.096X (where: Y= Market share and X = Employee relations). This implies that a unit increase in employee relations would lead to improvement in market share of the company by a factor of 1.096.

# Conclusion

Based on the survey results, the following conclusions have been drawn.

The results indicated that there is a strong positive relationship between top management support and overall performance and that top management support accounts for about 79.8% of the variation in overall performance. This therefore, requires that of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited focuses on top management support to improve their overall performance. The regression model indicates that a unit increase in top management support would lead to an increase in overall performance by a factor of 1.359. This implies that emphasis on top management support by the company will significantly contribute to the attainment of a better overall performance.

The results indicated that there is a strong positive relationship between continuous improvement and customer satisfaction and that continuous improvement accounts for about 87.9% of the variation in customer satisfaction. This therefore, requires that of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited focuses on continuous improvement to improve the level of customer satisfaction. The regression model indicates that a unit increase in continuous improvement would lead to an increase in the level of customer satisfaction by a factor of 1.098. This implies that investment in continuous improvement by the company will significantly contribute to the increment in the level of customer satisfaction.

The findings indicated that there is a significant positive relationship between employee relations and market share and that employee relations explains about 88.9% of the variation in market share. This therefore, requires that of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited emphasizes employee relations to increase the market share. The regression model indicates that a unit increase in employee relations would lead to an increase in market share by a factor of 1.096. This implies that emphasis on employee relations by the company will significantly contribute to the attainment of a better market share.

# Recommendations

The top management support needs to be given much more seriousness so that the exporting companies can realize the improved performance they are looking for. There is need for the Grain Pulse Uganda Limited top management to implement organizational culture change in the company which makes it to implement quality control. In addition, there is need to ensure top management support who will relay the message that, quality control implementation will result to high performance in the company.

The top management should spell out standards of their products, so as to ensure that any product that is below standard would be improved upon by their correction measure. In addition, they need for the top management of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited to effectively allocate adequate required resources and capabilities so as to attain those objectives and subsequently improve overall performance. The top management should fully implement the Quality control practices to ensure quality management and delivery of goods and services to its customers.

Grain Pulse Uganda Limited should invest in process improvement to reduce the costs associated with delays and defects. Continuous professional development should be integrated across all the departments to guarantee a better customer satisfaction.

There is need for Grain Pulse Uganda Limited to prioritize and enhance quality control training process to help in preparing employees towards managing the quality control practices, so as to be able to identify and contribute to ongoing quality improvement process of operational efficiency. The company should improve their efforts on employee relations strategies to achieve organizational business performance.

The company should advance their staff recruitment and selection policies so as to ensure that they employ and maintain staff members whose academic and professional qualifications are high. This would ensure that the training courses required by their staff is minimal and thus save on staff training costs whilst maintaining their performance.

# Areas of further research

Other research can be conducted on the effect of quality control on customer satisfaction.

The current study focused on exporting companies; other research can be conducted to examine the effect of quality control on other sectors such as telecommunication industry.

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# APPENDICES

# APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Respondent,

I am a student of Nkumba University conducting research as a partial requirement for the award of a Master’s degree of Business Administration. I am carrying out a study on “***Quality control and performance of exporting companies in Uganda, a case of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited, Kampala”***. The information you give is very important and therefore kindly be as sincere as possible in your responses. The information you give will be kept confidential. Your participation in this study is highly appreciated. This questionnaire is to collect data for purely academic purposes. This questionnaire is designed to obtain information from Grain Pulse Uganda Limited, Kampala. You are required to respond to various statements to the various sections of the questionnaire according to the guidelines provided in each section. All information will be treated with strict confidence.

**Section (A): Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

**Key:** Please tick [√] where appropriate or fill in the required information on the spaces provided.

1. Gender

Male Female

2. Age

Below 25 26-33 34-41 42-49 Above 50

3. Highest level of education

Certificate Diploma Bachelor Masters PhD

Any other (specify)………………………………………………… …………

4. Year of service

Less than 1 year 1-3 years 4-6 years 7-9 years Above 10 years

5. Department

Administration & Human Resource Accounts & Finance Procurement

Quality Assurance Sales & Marketing

**Section B: Top management support and Overall Performance of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited**

*Please note that for sections B-E, you are requested to fill in the box that best describes your answer based on the scale below; 1. Strongly disagree-SD, 2. Disagree-D, 3 Not sure-NS, 4. Agree-A, 5. Strongly agree-SA.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SN** |  | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 1 | The top management take on the responsibility for developing quality-oriented management systems |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Senior level management listen and support employees and encourage them to take part in deciding and managing total quality policies and plans |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | Senior level management provides resources necessary to maintain quality in operations |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | The commitment of senior level management is critical for success in quality control implementation  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | The company processes and operations are standardized |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6 | Selection, promotion and appointment of staff by Senior level management to positions is by merit  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 7 | Top management are properly trained on quality control  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 8 | Top management interact with customers and keep in mind their contributions when designing goods and services |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9 | Top management personal involvement in total quality improvement increases market share  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10 | The top management of the company is committed to boosting the morale of the employees as part of the TQM principles |  |  |  |  |  |

**Section C: Continuous Improvement and Customer Satisfaction in Grain Pulse Uganda Limited**

*You are requested to fill in the box that best describes your answer based on the scale below; 1. Strongly disagree-SD, 2. Disagree-D, 3 Not sure-NS, 4. Agree-A, 5. Strongly agree-SA.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SN** |  | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 1 | The company provides an appropriate training to ensure skills and attitudes for enhancement of continuous improvement  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | In this Company, departments are encouraged to identify work areas for improvement |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | Continuous improvement is consistently fostered and facilitated by the management  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | The company is committed to constantly improving products and services characteristics |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | The company is managed as a system for continuous improvement in service delivery  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6 | Staff is continuously trained in the principles of quality, team work and job-specific skills. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 7 | The company gives incentives to encourage new ideas that touches on quality improvement |  |  |  |  |  |
| 8 | The company provides adequate financial resources for quality improvement programmes |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9 | The Company emphasizes constant pursuit to improvement |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10 | The Company supports projects to address the areas for improvement |  |  |  |  |  |

**Section D: Employee relations and Market share of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited**

*You are requested to fill in the box that best describes your answer based on the scale below; 1. Strongly disagree-SD, 2. Disagree-D, 3 Not sure-NS, 4. Agree-A, 5. Strongly agree-SA.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SN** |  | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 1 | The company gives time to employees to participate in quality training |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Employees are actively involved in quality-related activities and the success of the company, and many of their suggestions are implemented |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | Pay and acknowledgement systems are based on quality-related objectives and on company results |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | The company has effective two-way communication links with its employees |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | Employees are trained to implement quality improvement projects |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6 | There are quality circles and/or interdepartmental teams to improve quality |  |  |  |  |  |
| 7 | Employees are given tailor-made preparation for their jobs and are qualified to solve quality problems |  |  |  |  |  |
| 8 | Employees are responsible for quality and end results of the product/service and they can take decisions independently. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9 | Employees know that quality is their responsibility, and they are encouraged to meet customers’ and the company’s objectives |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10 | Employees are considered an internal customer who participates in policy, strategies and company structure |  |  |  |  |  |

**Section E: Performance of Grain Pulse Uganda Limited**

*You are requested to fill in the box that best describes your answer based on the scale below; 1. Strongly disagree-SD, 2. Disagree-D, 3 Not sure-NS, 4. Agree-A, 5. Strongly agree-SA.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SN** |  | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 1 | The company demonstrates competence when delivering the services |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | There is consistency in service delivery in the company  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | The company compares regularly the performance against the set goals |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | There is decline in the overall administrative costs  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | There is high efficiency of cost cutting and increase in profitability  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6 | There is high response to dynamic customer needs in regards to the competition in the surrounding market  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 7 | There is an accurate demand for performance of the company that will impact the market share level  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 8 | There is increased speed with which decision making can be undertaken within the firm to impact on the performance of the company |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9 | There is increased creativity in the use of the strategic responses in the market to outdo the competition thus upgrade the performance of the company |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10 | There is an increased level of strategic responses that influences the performance of the company |  |  |  |  |  |

**Thank you once again for your precious time and attention**

# APPENDIX II: Krejcie and Morgan (1970) Table for Determining Sample Size

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| N | S | N | S | N | S | N | S | N | S |
| 10 | 10 | 100 | 80 | 280 | 162 | 800 | 260 | 2800 | 338 |
| 15 | 14 | 110 | 86 | 290 | 165 | 850 | 265 | 3000 | 341 |
| 20 | 19 | 120 | 92 | 300 | 169 | 900 | 269 | 3500 | 246 |
| 25 | 24 | 130 | 97 | 320 | 175 | 950 | 274 | 4000 | 351 |
| 30 | 28 | 140 | 103 | 340 | 181 | 1000 | 278 | 4500 | 351 |
| 35 | 32 | 150 | 108 | 360 | 186 | 1100 | 285 | 5000 | 357 |
| 40 | 36 | 160 | 113 | 380 | 181 | 1200 | 291 | 6000 | 361 |
| 45 | 40 | 180 | 118 | 400 | 196 | 1300 | 297 | 7000  | 364 |
| 50 | 44 | 190 | 123 | 420 | 201 | 1400 | 302 | 8000 | 367 |
| 55 | 48 | 200 | 127 | 440 | 205 | 1500 | 306 | 9000 | 368 |
| 60 | 52 | 210 | 132 | 460 | 210 | 1600 | 310 | 10000 | 373 |
| 65 | 56 | 220 | 136 | 480 | 214 | 1700 | 313 | 15000 | 375 |
| 70 | 59 | 230 | 140 | 500 | 217 | 1800 | 317 | 20000 | 377 |
| 75 | 63 | 240 | 144 | 550 | 225 | 1900 | 320 | 30000 | 379 |
| 80 | 66 | 250 | 148 | 600 | 234 | 2000 | 322 | 40000 | 380 |
| 85 | 70 | 260 | 152 | 650 | 242 | 2200 | 327 | 50000 | 381 |
| 90 | 73 | 270 | 155 | 700 | 248 | 2400 | 331 | 75000 | 382 |
| 95 | 76 | 270 | 159 | 750 | 256 | 2600 | 335 | 100000 | 384 |