

Zebal, M. A., & Godwin, D. R. (2021). Market orientation in developing nation-Antecedents, consequences and the moderating effect of environmental factors. *Journal of Business Research*. 6(2), 1063- 1070.

Hu, L.T., & Bentler, P. M., (1999). Cutoff Criteria for Fit Indexes in Covariance Structure Analysis: Conventional Criteria Versus New Alternatives. *Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, 6(1), pp.1-55.

Continuous Improvement and Performance of Manufacturing Organisation in Lagos

ANIMASHAUN, Abiodun L. (B.Sc., M.Sc, PGDE IPMA)¹; AKEKE, Adenike. Rita²,
ISMAILA, Yusuf Olajide³ and YOUSOUPH-ADEYI, Abdulwaasih Olawale³

^{1,4} Department of Microfinance and Enterprise Development,
Lagos State Cooperative College

^{2,3} Department of Business Education, College of Vocational and Entrepreneurship
Education, Lagos State University of Education Oto-Ijanikin, Lagos State

GSM and Email Address:

Animashaun, A. L. (animashaunabiodun180@yahoo.com,
+234(0)7031 259901)

Akeke, A. R. (ninikx2002@yahoo.com, +234(0)8028640043)

Ismaila, Y. O. (Olajidediplomacy201 0@gmail.com, +234(0)8029084606)

Yousouph-Adeyi, A. O. (yousouphadeyi@gmail.com, +234(0)8023933371)

ABSTRACT

The study is aimed at investigating the relationship between continuous improvement practices and the performance of manufacturing company using Nestle Foods Nigeria Plc as study field. In line with stated objectives, the study has three research questions and hypotheses. The research was carried out following a descriptive research design. The study was conducted on Nestles personnel from various departments. The sample size for this study was generated using a stratified and purposive sampling procedure, resulting in 81 respondents. The primary information for the analysis was gathered using a questionnaire. Various formats, including qualitative and quantitative data, were collected, with quantitative data recorded in SPSS (Version 22). The researcher discovered a good association between evidence-based decision making, customer focus, employee engagement, and organizational performance. The study indicates that each of the three independent variables analyzed impacted the performance of manufacturing companies. Continuous improvement practices have been shown to have an impact on the organizational performance of manufacturing organizations. The researcher recommended that manufacturing companies understand the significance of continuous improvement methods, particularly their responsibilities in influencing results from incorporating continuous improvement into maintenance procedures.

Key words: Continuous Improvement, Manufacturing Firms, Performance.

INTRODUCTION

The current day business competitions, continuous customer's demands, ever changing technology and globalization is the reason why organisations are making efforts to continuously improve their business strategy in order to maximize performance to meet to customers demand. Thus, the participation of managers and workers in continuous improvement programs can serve as a strategic tool for improving and maintaining competitive advantage using their involvement and knowledge to foster the performance level of an entire organization (Nkonzo, 2019). The concept of continuous improvement practices occurs at the very distinct position within the firm; which takes place at the top leadership level, departmental level, as well as at personal level, the main challenges facing continuous improvement practices are related to the strategic position of the organization (Nkonzo, 2019).

According to Chavez, Yu, Gimenez, Fynes and Wiengarten (2015), operational performance is the strategic variable that promotes competitive advantage. What is more, it is the foundation of quality practices and the super ordinate performance of organisations (Sharma & Modgil, 2020). Moreover, empirical evidence abound that higher levels of operational performance are known to improve effectiveness of production activities, product, services and processes quality (Kaynak, 2008), customers or clients satisfaction (Lau, Lee & Jung, 2018), revenue and profit (Santos, Lannelongue, Gonzalez-Benito, 2019).

Further, Goetsch and Davis (2018) maintained that at the group level, the concepts of continuous improvement practices are not limited to dealing with and addressing problems at a wider scope. In today's world, the accomplishment of manufacturing firms is premised on performance. Further, the companies' aspirations have become quite dynamic; hence there is a need to constantly evaluate them for continuous improvements (Franco, 2017). There is great heterogeneity in the approaches used to view organizational performance. However, the dimensions are broadly categorized as monetary and non- monetary. Firms opt to use any of the approaches based on the management board and the firm's size (Salim et al., 2017).

Imai and Shingo emphasize that continuous improvement as a quality management approach and philosophy has been the most important factor in Japan's manufacturing achievement. Imai argues that continuous improvement is the unifying thread running through the systems, the philosophy, and the problem-solving tools developed in Japan. He argues out that continuous improvement has been the most important contrast between Japanese and Western management styles. Therefore, it is fascinating to learn that while continuous improvement may have been developed in Japan, it originated in the United States. Schroeder and Robinson, (1993) argue that continuous improvement was brought to Japan from United States of America after the second World War to assist in the reconstruction of Japanese industries.

In the report of Poe, (1991), it was stated that Suzuki, reported that continuous improvement is the Japanese managers' interpretation of Edward Deming's manufacturing philosophy. Therefore, it seems reasonable for Imai to argue that continuous improvement is not a practice peculiar to the Japanese and has implications for all working companies of the world. Schroeder and Robinson agree that although some degree of Japanese success can be attributed to cultural factors, "that is not true as far as continuous improvement programs are concerned" The success of continuous improvement in Japan has not gone unnoticed by U.S. manufacturing managers. It is rare to find a company that has not adopted, or attempted to implement, some kind of continuous improvement strategies. However, the outcome is often a few isolated improvements followed by a lack of enthusiasm, and in the long run, continuous improvement is relegated to the shelf of programs that were tried and failed. Choi and Wasti (2008) observed attempts to implement the Japanese quality methods in six U.S. automotive spare parts suppliers and discovered that only one had a significant, long-term effect.

Nowadays there is a hot issue of continuous improvement (CI) in total quality settings in all the organizations that are going to compete in this global village. Top manufacturers and service enterprises alike have come to see quality as a planned source in their competition. As an outcome, they have committed key resources to develop measures such as deficiency rates, response time, delivery commitments, and evaluation of products, services, and operations performance. It enables the organization to capture the maximum share of the market and to reduce the cost that will help to offer competitive prices.

Statement of the Problem

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

In Nigeria today, performance evidences revealed that many operational problems affect the performance of manufacturing firms and as a result become evident in the country slowly progress towards economic emancipation. As evident from current observation the problems that affect the manufacturing sector mostly includes, insecurity, market-misrepresentation, political instability, state-owned monopolies, poor infrastructure and lack of finance and too much bureaucracy and excessive corruption. Moreover, Sylva (2020) argued that quality, cost, responsiveness (on-time delivery and

service flexibility), innovation and safety are the challenges of operational performance in the Nigerian work environment.

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

On the other hand, Gichuhi (2012) explored the adoption of quality improvement practices in manufacturing firms. The research proposes the need for quality improvement process documentation and more dissemination amongst manufacturing firms. The study also aimed at establishing an association between operational performance and the extent of adopting continuous improvement approaches in the manufacturing sector. Thus, this study seeks to fill the gap by investigating the relationship between continuous improvement practices, specifically evidence-based decision-making, customer focus and employee engagement, and the performance of Nestle Foods Nigeria Plc.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study was to establish a relationship between continuous improvement practices and the performance of Nestle Foods Nigeria Plc.

The specific objectives of the study include

- i. To establish the relationship between evidence-based decision-making and performance of Nestle Foods Nigeria Plc.
- ii. To investigate the relationship between customer focus and performance of Nestle Foods Nigeria Plc.
- iii. To establish the relationship between employee engagement and performance of Nestle Foods Nigeria Plc.

Research Questions

The study shall provide answers to the following questions

1. What is the relationship between evidence-based decision-making and performance of Nestle Foods Nigeria Plc?
2. Is there any relationship between customer focus and the performance of Nestle Foods Nigeria Plc?
3. What is the relationship between employee engagement and the performance of Nestle Foods Nigeria Plc?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses shall be tested in the study

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between evidence-based decision-making and performance of Nestle Foods Nigeria Plc

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between customer focus and the performance of Nestle Foods Nigeria Plc

Ho3: There is no significant relationship between employee engagement and the performance of Nestle Foods Nigeria Plc

Significance of the Study

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

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

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

Scope of the Study

The study's was to establish a relationship between continuous improvement practices and the performance of Nestle Foods Nigeria Plc. The study was undertaken based on decision-making, customer focus and employee engagement.

Conceptual Review

Continuous Improvement

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

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

Continuous Improvement Practices

Taylor and Wright (2003) defined continuous improvement practices as the combination of variable factors that will determine whether the firm succeeds or fails to succeed, especially the quality systems within an organization. Four phases are affiliated

with the continuous improvement process, including plan, do, study, and act. Planning entails identifying improvement opportunities and getting ready for change. Product managers will analyze data, research the market, and form an idea for improvement. Planning also entails ensuring time, budget, and resources to execute (Taylor & Wright, 2003). 'Do' entails implementing the identified changes. Studying involves establishing whether the change has brought a desirable outcome. Finally, acting entails implementing a desirable outcome across and organization. The concept of continuous improvement bears many returns and benefits with it.

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

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

Customer Focus: Customer focus involves prioritizing the customer's experience above anything else in the organization. In other words, it implies addressing customers' needs throughout the many stages of their journey, from purchase to disposal (Berman & Evans, 2018). Customer focused businesses devote their resources to identifying and addressing the demands of their consumers, providing exceptional client service, and incorporating customer feedback into product design and other business choices, among other activities (Cravens & Piercy, 2017).

Employees Engagement: Employee engagement is essentially considered a key continuous improvement practice; producing products to the customers' specifications not

only meets the customers' overall expectations but also improves the organisation's performance. Meeting the end user's specific needs and expectations is key to continuous improvement. Customer satisfaction is premised on product service quality (Medne & Lapina, 2019). The goods produced must be of very high standards for the customers to be satisfied. Market dynamics and what is demanded by the customer, who is the end user, determine the product's quality. Organizations should also strive towards people's engagement; this can be achieved by ensuring that all the organization employees are competent and empowered.

Performance of Manufacturing Firms

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

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

Theoretical Review

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

Schumpeterian Theory

The current study is anchored on the Schumpeterian theory that Schumpeter postulated in 1934. The theory of Schumpeterian postulates that the processes in the economy and market are continuous and, as such, need continuous improvement and

modifications. His assertions are anchored on the fact that in an economy at equilibrium, a need arises, creating some forces that culminate in some changes. He reflects an investor as a very instrumental and key player in the firm changes. Furthermore, he believes that innovation is a product of investment where new forms of combination of factors of production are constantly being tested. This, therefore, results in a radical and discontinuous change that amounts to being the key pillars of economic development (Schumpeter, 1934).

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

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

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

Resource-Based View

The resource-based view was first coined by (Barney, 1991). The theory and its proponents postulate that forms and business organizations with valuable, inimitable, immovable, and rare resources gain unique leverage within the marketplace (Hsuan & Kotzab, 2015). Further, the theory postulates that these resources should be heterogeneous, tangible or intangible (Barney, 991). Therefore, the resource-based view attempts to elucidate how tactical property provides a firm with advanced competitive super advantages and superior overall performance. Therefore, Barney asserts that firms

need to exploit the present opportunities through the available current resources while simultaneously creating unique fresh assets, safeguarding their competition level futuristicly, and remaining economically relevant through a process approach (Song, Song, & Benedetto, 2011). The theory, therefore, portents how firms must make internal processes interlink seamlessly for optimum utilization with guaranteed excellent output on the firm's performance.

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

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

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

Research Methodology

The present study has adopted the use of the survey research design which according to Sekaran and Bougie (2013) is a way of setting objectives for data collection, designing the study, preparing a reliable and valid survey instrument, administering

survey, managing and analyzing survey data, and reporting the results. Primary data was gathered and used for this study through the administration of questionnaire.

The study population as obtained from the human resource department of the company comprised permanent staff in Nestle Nig Plc, totaling one hundred and twenty (120) as presented in the table below.

Table 1: Staff Population as provided in the office

Staff	Male	Female	Total
Management staff	5	2	7
Senior Staff	26	23	49
Junior Staff	42	22	64
Total	73	47	120

Using the krejcan and Morgan Sample Size formula, the sample size determined from the population was 98 respondents. Therefore, the sample size for this study is still ninety eight (98). The purposive and accidental sampling techniques were adopted in selecting the respondents.

Primary data was obtained through the administration of questionnaire to the respondents. A 16 items on continuous improvement and performance was adapted from the study of Nganga and Nyaga (2022). The instrument had been subjected to a reliability test and the Cronbach alpha obtained for the test was 0.785 indicating that the instrument is valid to test the identified variables. Further data analysis on the study hypotheses were carried out using Pearson Product Moment Correlation.

Return rate

From the ninety-eight (98) instruments that were administered to the respondents, only eighty-one (81) were returned ad filled correctly. This is about 81% return rate which is considered good. Therefore, the analyses in this section is based on the returned instruments as shown below.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

There is no significant relationship between evidence-based decision-making and performance of Nestle Foods Nigeria Plc

Table 2: Correlation analysis of the relationship between evidence-based decision-making and performance

		Evidence Based	Performance
Evidence Based	Pearson Correlation	1	.758**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000

	N	81	81
Performance	Pearson Correlation	.758**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	81	81

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

From the table, the computed value of Pearson product moment correlation coefficient showed a positive and strong relationship. The coefficient value r is about 76% (0.758). The correlation analysis implies that there was a significant relationship between evidence-based decision-making and performance of Nestle Foods Nigeria Plc, Lagos State.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant relationship between customer focus and the performance of Nestle Foods Nigeria Plc

Table 3: Correlations Table of Relationship between customer focus Programme and performance

		Customer focus	Performance
Customer Focus Prog	Pearson Correlation	1	.746
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	81	81
Performance	Pearson Correlation	.746	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	81	81

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

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table displays the Pearson correlation coefficients, significance value, and relationship between customer focus and the performance of Nestle Foods Nigeria Plc. The correlation coefficient is 0.746. This imply a relatively strong and positive correlation, this indicates that there is significant relationship between customer focus and the performance of Nestle Foods Nigeria Plc, Lagos State.

Hypothesis Three

There is no significant relationship between employee engagement and the performance of Nestle Foods Nigeria Plc

Table 4: Correlations Table of Relationship between employee engagement and performance

		Employee Engagement	Performance
Employee Engagement	Pearson Correlation	1	.862
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	81	81
	Pearson Correlation	.862	1

Performance	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	81	81

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

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table displays the Pearson correlation coefficients, significance value, and relationship between employee engagement and the performance of Nestle Foods Nigeria Plc. The correlation coefficient is 0.862. This imply a relatively strong and positive correlation, this indicates that there is significant relationship between employee engagement and the performance of Nestle Foods Nigeria Plc, Lagos State.

Discussion of Findings

The analyses above revealed that there is a significant relationship between continuous improvement indicators and organisational performance of manufacturing companies. The result of the three tested hypotheses confirmed this position. The first hypothesis has it that evidence based decision making is positively related to organisation performance. The result show that alignment with strategic goals was a crucial evidence-based decision-making indicator integrated into the organisation to enhance its organizational performance. The results agree with Perez (2017), who conducted a study in Australia to develop a process model to elucidate why some managers engage in evidence-based decision-making more than others. Perez found that learning goal orientation and the theory of expected action explain unique variations in evidence-based decision-making. Learning goal orientation and subjective norms are the best predictors of the intention to follow evidence-based decision-making and its subsequent implementation.

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

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

The study established that concern about service delivery is also a customer focus measure adopted to enhance organizational performance. The study results agree with Gathiaka (2013), who investigated the impact of customer focus techniques on service delivery at Nairobi's Immigration Department and found out that all four variables were

used at very low levels, resulting in service delivery that was not as successful as intended.

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

Conclusion

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

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

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

Recommendations

The study recommended among so many other possible options that;

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

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

Manufacturing companies must acknowledge the value of continuous improvement methods, particularly their roles in affecting the results of continuous improvement implementations in the manufacturing process. In this situation, it is critical for managers to realize the importance of continuous improvement processes in the field of manufacturing and to understand how they may be used to improve the business's overall performance.

Further research on the other factors that contribute to Organizational Performance other than continuous improvement initiatives should be considered to provide a balance of knowledge on the subject matter.

REFERENCES

Aborisade, O. (2013). Data collection and new technology. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning (iJET)*, 8(2), 48-52.

Abuto, J. (2015). Business process re-engineering as an approach to strategicn change at Kenya Revenue Authority. *Unpublished MBA Project*, . University of Nairobi.

Achieng, J. O. (2020). Total Quality Management Practices on Customer Satisfaction at Safaricom Public limited company, Kenya. *international Journal of Business Management, Entrepreneurship and Innovation*, 2(4), 63-75.

Al-Tit, A. A. (2017). factors affecting orgaizational Performance of Manufacturing Firms. *International Journal of Engineering Business Management*, 2(4), 18-47.

Baba, V. V. (2017). Toward a theory of evidence based decision making. Management decision.

Bahri S., H. D. (2012). Implementation of Total Quality Management and its effect on Organization performance of manufacturing industries through Organization Culture In South Sulawesi, Indonesia. *Journal of Business and Management*, 10-24.

Barasa, L. V. (2019). Innovation inputs andefficiency: Manufacturing frims in Subsaharan Africa. *European Journal of innovation management*, 22(1), 59-83.

Batia, B. H. (2019). Act Your Age? Age interpreneurial behaviour, Social capital and performance. *Employee Relations*, 42(2), 349 - 365.

Berman, B. &. (2018). *Retail Management : A strategic Approach*, 12th Eddition. Pearson Education.

Briner, R. B. (2019). Evidence Based management: concept cleanup time. *Academy of management perspectives*, 23(4), 19-32.

Bruce, A. &. (2005). Top Executive Renumeration. *Journal of Management*, 42(7), 2260-2380.

Caldas, L. F. (2019). Industry innovation spending and openness to collaboration as levers for firm performance. *European Journal of Innovation*, 22(4), 1460 - 1470.

Carelse, B. M. (2017). *Investigating the impact of service quality and customer satisfaction on customer loyalty in life insurance in South Africa*.

Cawe. M. (2016). *Factors contributing to Employee Engagement in South Africa*. Johannesburg: University of Witwatersrand.

Chi, C. &. (2009). Employee satisfaction, Customer satisfaction and financial performance. *International Journal of Financial performance*, 245-253.

Cravens, D. &. (2017). *Strategic Marketing* (10 ed.). Mc Graw - Hill.

Debanth R, D. B. (2016). Customer relationship management theory and research in the new millennium: directions for future research. *Journal of Relationship Marketing*, 4, 299- 325.

Dung N., H. N. (2018). Ownership feature and firm performance via corporate innovation performance. *does IT REALLY MATTER FOR VIETNAMESE SMEs? Journal of Business and Economic Studies*, 25(2), 239-250.

Eggert A., H. J. (2014). Revenue and profit implication of industrial service strategies. *Journal of Service Research*, 17(1), 23-29.

Fellnhofer, K. (2019). The complementary effect of firms' and team leaders' entrepreneurial orientation on innovation success and performance. *International Journal of Management*, 23(5), 19-43.

Franco, M. A. (2017). Circular economy at micro level: A dynamic view of incumbents' struggles and challenges in the textile industry. *A journal of cleaner production*, 168, 833-845.

Frank B., Simper N., Cai B. Salem D., Kaupp J. & LINDEL-Y-Pearl,.. (2018). Enhancing Development of competencies by means of continuous improvement processes. *Canadian Public Policy*, 44(1), 56-57.

Gathiaka. (2013). *Influence of customer focus strategies on service delivery at the department of Immigration in Nairobi, Kenya*. Nairobi: Kenyatta University.

Gichuhi, C. T. (2012). *Quality Improvement practices: patterns of Adoption by manufacturing firms in Nairobi Kenya*. Doctoral Dissertation, University of Nairobi.

Giles-Merrick, S. (2018). *Employee engagement from viewpoint of employees in academia*.

Kuo, T. C. (2009). Employees' perspective on the effectiveness of ISO 9000 certification: a total quality management framework. *Total Quality Management*.

Lundamark, E. &. (2006). Effects of quality management according to ISO 9000: a Sweedish of the transit to ISO 9000:2000 quality standards in small software firms. *Total Quality Management and Business Excellence*, 17(8), 1021-1042.

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

Pavlic, I. &. (2008). Implementation of Integrated Management Systems in hotel industry of the dubrvnic riviera. *An Enterprise Odyssey: Tourism- Governance and EnterpreneurshipCatvat* (pp. 1874-1882). Faculty of Economics and Business .

Vin., W. S. (2011). Cultural influences on TQM implementation and financial performance in Tunisian firms.

Wahid Ab, R. &. (2009). Critical success factors and problems in ISO 9000 Maintenance. *Journal of Quality Management*, 26(9), 881-893.