Quality Management System for Continuous Improvement of Public Elementary Schools

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to examine the quality management system (QMS) for ongoing enhancement in public elementary schools, emphasizing its components and their correlation with organizational readiness and overall service quality.

A descriptive correlational research approach was utilized to investigate essential QMS factors, including management review, risk management, internal quality audit, corrective actions, document information management, knowledge management, training and advocacy, and client/citizen feedback. Factors of organizational preparation encompassed leadership support, employee engagement, resource availability, and company culture. The research assessed ongoing enhancement via service performance, service quality, and customer satisfaction indicators.

The findings indicated that the deployment of a Quality Management System (QMS) positively influenced the quality performance and service delivery of public elementary schools. The system facilitated standardization, enhanced resource management, and promoted more effective data-driven decision-making. Nonetheless, deficiencies were recognized in the comprehensive integration of QMS principles throughout all organizational tiers. Moreover, substantial relationships were identified between service quality and both instructors' awareness of the Quality Management System (QMS) and the schools' preparedness to apply the Department of Education (DepEd) QMS, thereby disproving the null hypothesis.

The study indicates that although QMS has enabled significant enhancements in public elementary school operations, obstacles persist in fostering a pervasive culture of quality and continuous improvement. Augmented awareness, leadership endorsement, and organizational coherence are vital for the profound incorporation of QMS processes.

Keywords: Quality Management System (QMS), Continuous Improvement, Public Elementary Schools, Service Quality, Organizational Readiness, Teacher Awareness, Educational Management, DepEd QMS, Quality Performance, Customer Satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

Quality management has developed into an essential framework for attaining and maintaining competitive advantage across multiple sectors, including education. Historically associated with

industry, quality management systems (QMS) are progressively acknowledged for their capacity to revolutionize educational institutions by promoting continuous improvement and service excellence. Flynn, Schroeder, and Sakakibara (1995) classified Quality Management Systems into core quality management techniques and infrastructure practices, both of which enhance quality performance. In the realm of education, these systems seek to augment academic performance while simultaneously refining institutional processes and enhancing stakeholder satisfaction.

The implementation of Quality Management Systems in educational environments has increased internationally. In Spain, Diez et al. (2018) assessed the influence of two Quality Management System models—the EFQM Excellence Model and the Integrated Quality Project (IQP)—on educational institutions. Their research, encompassing 14 schools and 315 participants, revealed that ongoing quality certification favorably affected staff awareness and conduct, irrespective of the particular approach employed. These findings substantiate the premise that QMS frameworks can induce behavioral and procedural modifications in educational institutions, hence improving the delivery of educational services.

Quality education necessitates a systematic, long-term methodology rooted in planning, goal formulation, and ongoing assessment. Eres (2004) underscored the necessity of synchronizing educational practices with institutional vision and mission to guarantee coherent and sustainable development. Total Quality Management (TQM), a component of Quality Management Systems (QMS), offers a holistic approach to embed quality by engaging all stakeholders—educators, administrators, students, and parents—in a collective dedication to excellence.

Many experts, including Agha et al. (2018), contend that the efficacy of educational institutions depends on their capacity to assimilate TQM principles. Total Quality Management not only improves service quality and employee contentment but also contributes to the overarching objective of societal advancement. Usman (2016) emphasizes the importance of efficient resource allocation, usage, and administration to guarantee superior teaching and learning experiences. The quality of education is intricately connected to the methods schools employ to manage and enhance their operations.

Although the advantages of Quality Management Systems (QMS) in educational environments are extensively recorded, there are still deficiencies in comprehending the significance of organizational preparation for effective QMS implementation. Although prior research associates Quality Management Systems (QMS) with enhanced educational outcomes (Deming, 1986; Juran, 1988; Oakland, 2003), limited investigations have focused on the prerequisites essential for the success of these systems, especially within the public sector. Most current research emphasizes outcomes instead of the readiness variables that influence the effective integration of QMS into institutional culture and practice.

Organizational readiness comprises essential components: leadership commitment, employee engagement, resource availability, and a culture conducive to change and innovation (Marquardt & Engel, 1993; Certo et al., 2019). These elements are the foundation of effective QMS implementation. In the setting of public elementary schools, which are frequently hampered by bureaucratic systems and scarce resources, the degree to which these preparedness characteristics are present remains ambiguous.

The Department of Education (DepEd) in the Philippines has acknowledged the significance of Quality Management Systems (QMS) and formalized it through directives including DepEd Order No. 009, s. 2021, and DM No. 014, s. 2022. These policies provide a framework for the implementation of QMS

in public schools; nevertheless, the actual adoption at the school level is inconsistent. Consequently, there is an urgent need to examine if public elementary schools are structurally equipped to execute QMS in a manner that fosters enduring educational success.

This study aims to address the highlighted research gap by examining the organizational readiness of public elementary schools in the implementation of Quality Management Systems (QMS). It conforms to national policies and seeks to offer practical insights for the enhancement of the current QMS manual. The study will specifically assess how organizational factors—such as leadership support, employee engagement, resource availability, and institutional culture—impact the efficacy of QMS adoption in these schools.

The study additionally integrates theoretical frameworks that facilitate a multidimensional examination of quality. Total Quality Management (TQM), pioneered by Deming in 1950, underscores the importance of continual enhancement, stakeholder contentment, and decisions informed by data. Total Quality Management provides a strategic framework that aligns effectively with the objectives of public education, especially in the realms of instructional methodologies, curriculum development, and student evaluation.

The study sought to provide a comprehensive examination of the structural and perceptual aspects of quality in public elementary education through the integration of these frameworks. This study evaluates the readiness of institutions to implement Quality Management Systems (QMS) and analyzes the impact of these systems on stakeholder satisfaction and institutional performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Quality management systems (QMS), specifically ISO 9001:2015, improve organizational efficiency, quality, and competitiveness across various sectors, including education. ISO 9001, applicable to enterprises of any scale, advocates for standardized procedures and ongoing enhancement. Educational institutions seek ISO certification to adhere to international standards, enhance worker preparedness, and establish public confidence. Leadership is essential in the implementation of Quality Management Systems, transitioning from designated quality officers to accountability at the top management level. The Philippine government mandates and incentivizes agencies, including educational institutions, to implement Quality Management Systems (QMS). Research indicates that ISO-certified schools provide superior administration, enhanced service delivery, and favorable staff attitudes. Nonetheless, obstacles persist, particularly for SMEs and specific institutions, such as constrained resources and inadequate paperwork. Comparative studies demonstrate that ISO-certified schools exhibit superior process transparency and student outcomes. The integration of e-learning and the quality of mobile government services depend on efficient resource management and dependability. ISO 9001 promotes a culture of quality and responsibility in both the public and private sectors.

The Department of Education (DepEd) established a Quality Management System (QMS) in accordance with ISO 9001:2015 to enhance internal processes, efficiency, and service delivery. Various trainings and seminars were performed nationally, supported by the Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP). Research indicates that ISO 9001:2015 improves organizational performance, stakeholder satisfaction, and fosters continuous improvement; nonetheless, difficulties such as inadequate training, insufficient leadership commitment, and excessive workloads persist. Research underscores the beneficial effects of Total Quality Management (TQM) and ISO standards on educational performance, while stressing the necessity for enhanced stakeholder involvement, training,

and preparedness for certification to maintain quality in education.

The studies highlight critical challenges and strategies for implementing quality management in education. Suleman and Gul (2015) identify planning, funding, and leadership issues in adopting TQM in schools. Ingason (2015) emphasizes strategic planning and involvement in corporate QMS implementation. Radinger (2014) and others stress the role of school leaders in improving teaching and student outcomes. Risk management is essential but underutilized in education (Wandee et al., 2017; Addo et al., 2021). Internal audits enhance accountability and continuous improvement (Ordu & Abraham, 2024). Digital systems, such as DMS and EDMS, improve data handling, while knowledge management boosts institutional performance (Al-Hayaly & Alnajjar, 2016).

The quality of service in education, especially within public organizations like DepEd, is a crucial factor influencing client satisfaction. A study conducted in Tagbilaran City Division demonstrated a strong positive correlation between service implementation and satisfaction through Spearman Rank analysis, indicating that internal stakeholders reported significantly higher satisfaction levels than external stakeholders, despite an overall moderate satisfaction rating (Estoria-Maquiling, 2023). Worldwide, parental satisfaction is contingent upon successful communication between home and school. Nonetheless, despite elevated general contentment, apprehensions remain about home learning assistance, academic enhancement, and feedback on socio-emotional growth (Meier & Lemmer, 2015). Expectations affect perceptions of public service provision. Hjortskov (2019) highlighted that previous expectations significantly influence future expectations, although prior fulfillment has variable effects. This underscores the significance of normative views on stakeholder perception. Nguyen et al. (2023) similarly discovered that school reputation significantly forecasts parental happiness and loyalty, with age reducing these effects—reinforcing the idea that public trust and feedback are interconnected.

The utilization of ICT tools has revolutionized parent-teacher communication. In Finland, the majority of towns utilize ICT for student feedback; nonetheless, there are variations in implementation and apprehensions over negative messaging (Oinas et al., 2017). These platforms facilitate bidirectional communication but necessitate ongoing training and equal access to address discrepancies.

Organizational readiness is pivotal to service quality. Schein (2010) posits that leadership establishes transformation objectives, distributes resources, and affects motivation. Transparent communication (Kotter, 1996) and a culture that prioritizes development (Cameron & Quinn, 2011) improve preparedness. Kocoglu (2019) and Kaur & Arora (2021) established that leadership vision, teamwork, and resource availability are critical determinants of QMS effectiveness in educational environments.

Effective leadership is characterized by participation, empathy, and resilience in the face of conflict. Jit et al. (2016) highlighted the significance of servant leadership attributes, including patience and humility, in the settlement of conflicts. Kock et al. (2019) discovered that compassionate leadership enhances performance and job satisfaction by providing emotional support and fostering innovation. Dikun et al. (2022) warned that leaders' hesitance to delegate could hinder their teams' development, particularly in stressful situations.

Transformational leadership, when integrated with employee engagement, reduces role ambiguity in high power distance cultures such as the Philippines (Charoensukmongkol & Puyod, 2024). Employee involvement improves work happiness, performance, and organizational commitment (Sudibjo & Sutarji, 2020; Yandi & Havidz, 2022). Moreover, internal agreement and employee participation in strategic execution are crucial for success (Köseoglu et al., 2020), as is the sharing of knowledge, which only partially mediates the relationship between engagement and organizational performance (Ahmed

et al., 2020).

Access to sufficient resources is essential for service excellence. Esongo (2017) and Ongere & Ogochi (2023) correlated resource availability with system efficacy and student performance. In Kenya, the rapid growth of school enrollment has strained resources, leading to demands for enhanced investments in infrastructure and personnel (Otieno, 2021). Zhang et al. (2020) emphasized the need of perceivability, operability, and robustness of educational materials to assist all learners.

Organizational culture influences stakeholder conduct, creativity, and adaptability to change. Lubis and Hanum (2020) underscored the importance of values and discipline, whereas Kalkan et al. (2020) illustrated the mediating role of school culture in the relationship between leadership and corporate image. Culture enhances teacher efficacy and signifies the institution's dedication to excellence (Rofifah et al., 2021). Atasoy (2020) emphasized the significance of culture in mitigating resistance to change, whereas Caliskan & Zhu (2020) observed that inflexible hierarchies and insufficient autonomy obstruct innovation in higher education.

Service performance, including satisfaction, adaptability, and efficiency, is fundamental to education, healthcare, and public services. The model by Parasuraman et al. (1988) established the basis for assessing service quality, which continues to be essential for consumer satisfaction and institutional reputation.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to determine the respondents' levels of awareness and readiness regarding the Quality Management System (QMS) and their relationship to the service quality of public elementary schools. This design was chosen to provide a clear picture of the current conditions in schools and to explore the relationship between key variables without manipulating any of them. Descriptive statistics such as measures of central tendency and dispersion helped identify patterns, while the correlational aspect allowed the researcher to explore potential links between awareness, readiness, and service quality.

The study used simple random sampling to select respondents from the population of public elementary school teachers within the Schools Division Office (SDO) of Calamba City. A total of 240 elementary teacher-respondents were drawn across ten school clusters. This sampling technique ensured that every member of the population had an equal chance of being selected, making the sample representative of the larger group and minimizing selection bias.

A researcher-made instrument was utilized to collect relevant data aligned with the study's objectives. The questionnaire consisted of six major parts: (1) School Profile, capturing demographic and operational details; (2) Quality Management System, measuring awareness and readiness across eight QMS components; (3) Organizational Readiness, assessing readiness in leadership, employee involvement, resources, and culture; (4) Service Performance, gauging internal stakeholder assessments on instruction, administration, student support, and facilities; (5) Service Quality, focusing on reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy, and responsiveness; and (6) Customer Satisfaction, examining satisfaction with the school's management system and communication. A 4-point Likert scale was used throughout the instrument. It underwent expert validation and pilot testing to ensure reliability and content validity.

The research followed a systematic procedure beginning with the identification of a research problem, followed by a review of related literature to support the study's framework. After defining the research objectives, a validated sampling plan was established. The researcher crafted and refined the research

instrument, which was validated by a panel of experts and subjected to pilot testing. Upon securing necessary approvals from the SDO Calamba City, data collection was conducted using both online forms and printed questionnaires. The collected data were then analyzed using appropriate statistical tools, followed by interpretation and formulation of conclusions and recommendations based on the study's findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

Category	Small	Medium	Large	Extra Large	Total	% of Total
Total Number of Schools	19	77	132	12	240	100.0%
Location						
- Rural	9	13	11	2	35	14.6%
- Urban	10	64	121	10	205	85.4%
ISO Certification						
- With ISO	2	10	73	5	90	37.5%
- Without ISO	17	67	59	7	150	62.5%
ISO Certification Duration						
- 1 Year	1	4	20	2	27	11.3%
- 2 Years	0	6	44	3	53	22.1%
- 3 Years	1	3	9	0	13	5.4%
- Uncertified (Not ISO)	17	64	59	7	147	61.3%
SBM Level						
- Level 1	4	6	5	1	16	6.7%
- Level 2	15	68	79	3	165	68.8%
- Level 3	0	3	48	8	59	24.6%

The aggregated data from 240 public elementary schools indicate a significant urban concentration (85.4%) and a majority of large-sized institutions (55%). ISO certification is predominantly possessed by major schools (30.4%), but 62.5% of all schools remain uncertified, with small and medium institutions encountering difficulties in maintaining quality assurance systems. Regarding School-Based Management (SBM), the majority of schools (68.8%) are classified at Level 2, signifying partial institutionalization, whilst Level 3, the highest tier, is predominantly attained by large and extra-large schools. Smaller schools are predominantly situated at Level 1, indicating nascent or restricted SBM adoption.

Recent research (Cruz-Benito et al., 2021; Wogu & Crawford, 2022) highlight that educational quality systems such as ISO and SBM flourish in contexts characterized by robust leadership, consistent resources, and institutional backing—conditions more prevalent in urban and larger schools. In contrast, smaller and rural schools frequently lack resources and access to training, which impacts their

performance and compliance. Zawacki-Richter et al. (2020) propose adaptive, decentralized quality frameworks to mitigate these discrepancies.

These findings highlight the pressing necessity for equity-oriented policies that provide scalable and contextually relevant quality management solutions. Customized assistance, including leadership development and strategic resource distribution, is crucial for small and rural schools to bridge the disparity in ISO compliance and SBM progress

Table 2. Teachers' Level of Awareness and School Readiness on DepEd's Quality Management System

Variable	Mean	SD	Description
Management Review	3.644	0.3707	Aware
Risk Management	3.628	0.4044	Aware
Internal Quality Audit	3.642	0.4338	Aware
Corrective Action	3.623	0.4339	Aware
Document Information Management	3.653	0.3959	Aware
Knowledge Management	3.713	0.4081	Aware
Training and Advocacy	3.703	0.3677	Aware
Citizen/Client Satisfaction Management	3.632	0.3928	Aware

Table 2 reveals that teachers exhibit a high level of awareness and readiness across all components of DepEd's Quality Management System (QMS), with mean scores consistently above 3.6, indicating they are "extremely aware." This suggests strong familiarity and engagement with key QMS elements such as management review, risk management, and knowledge management. These findings align with studies by Garcia and Lim (2020), which emphasize the importance of staff awareness in effective QMS implementation. The results imply that ongoing training and advocacy efforts have been successful, supporting sustained quality improvements in schools.

Table 3. Level of Organizational Readiness

Variable	Mean	SD	Description
Leadership Backing	3.742	0.3583	Highly Ready
Employee Involvement	3.68	0.3494	Highly Ready
Resource Accessibility	3.636	0.3726	Highly Ready
Organizational Culture	3.695	0.3528	Highly Ready

Table 3 shows that schools demonstrate a high level of organizational readiness, with all variables—leadership backing, employee involvement, resource accessibility, and organizational culture—scoring above 3.6, described as "highly ready." This indicates strong institutional support and a positive environment conducive to implementing quality management systems. These results are consistent. Kang (2020) who observed that fostering a learning-oriented culture profoundly influences employee engagement and job satisfaction, hence enhancing workforce motivation. Popenici (2021) asserts that collaboration augments productivity and creativity, essential components for organizational success.

Table 4. Stakeholders' Assessment on School Services

Variable	Mean	SD	Description
Quality Instruction	3.68	0.36	Excellent
Administrative Efficiency	3.66	0.38	Excellent
Student Support Services	3.60	0.52	Excellent
School Facility	3.61	0.38	Excellent

Table 4 reveals that stakeholders rate school services highly, with all variables—quality instruction, administrative efficiency, student support services, and school facility—scoring above 3.6 and described as "Excellent." This indicates strong performance in delivering educational services and supporting the school community. These findings align with Garcia and Lim (2020), who emphasize that effective service delivery is integral to sustaining educational quality. The results imply that schools are successfully meeting stakeholder expectations, which is crucial for maintaining trust and ongoing support for quality management initiatives.

Table 5. School's Level of Service Quality as Assessed by Stakeholders

Variable	Mean	SD	Description
Reliability	3.67	0.36	Excellent
Responsiveness	3.69	0.37	Excellent
Assurance	3.71	0.35	Excellent
Empathy	3.72	0.36	Excellent
Tangibles	3.68	0.37	Excellent

Table 5 shows that stakeholders rate the school's service quality as "Excellent" across all dimensions: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles, with mean scores above 3.67. This indicates a consistently high perception of the school's ability to deliver dependable, timely, and empathetic services, supported by tangible resources. These results support the findings of Dela Cruz et al. (2021), who highlight the importance of comprehensive service quality in fostering stakeholder satisfaction and trust. The high ratings imply that the school effectively meets stakeholder expectations through strong service delivery and quality management practices.

Table 6. School's Level of Customer Satisfaction

Statement	Mean	SD	Description
1. How satisfied are you with the school's management system?	3.73	.45	Very Satisfied
2. How would you rate the functionality of the school's management system in managing students and teachers' information?	3.69	.47	Very Satisfied
3. How would you rate the quality of the school's assistance and its responsiveness?	3.67	.47	Very Satisfied
4. How would you rate the quality of the school's training and resources using its management system?	3.63	.49	Very Satisfied

5. How would you rate the frequency and quality of the school's communication with stakeholders about the school management system?	3.65	.48	Very Satisfied
Overall	**3.67**	**.36**	**Very Satisfied**

Table 6 shows high stakeholder satisfaction with the school's management system, reflected in a mean rating of 3.672. This indicates effective system functionality, communication, and resource availability that meet community needs. High satisfaction fosters trust, collaboration, and active participation, which can improve educational outcomes. Effective communication sustains transparency and strengthens relationships, supporting findings by Keller et al. (2021) and Bates (2020). Emphasizing training and resources ensures efficient system use, boosting satisfaction (Jones & Lee, 2022). Overall, a cohesive management structure enhances decision-making and responsiveness, improving the school climate (Smith & Wang, 2023).

Table 7. Test of the Relationship between Quality Management System and Service Performance

Quality Management System	Service Performance				
	Quality Instruction	Administrative Efficiency	Student Support Services	School Facility	Overall Service Performance
Management Review	.608[**]	.509[**]	.627[**]	.548[**]	.663[**]
Risk Management	.599[**]	.551[**]	.677[**]	.557[**]	.690[**]
Internal Quality Audit	.556[**]	.548[**]	.568[**]	.535[**]	.638[**]
Corrective Action	.570[**]	.550[**]	.629[**]	.525[**]	.658[**]
Document Information Management	.617[**]	.578[**]	.628[**]	.563[**]	.690[**]
Knowledge Management	.629[**]	.546[**]	.605[**]	.504[**]	.660[**]
Training and Advocacy	.674[**]	.568[**]	.671[**]	.559[**]	.715[**]
Client/Citizen Feedback Management	.702[**]	.589[**]	.623[**]	.592[**]	.724[**]
Overall Quality Management System	.734**	.660**	.746**	.651**	.807**

The results highlight that a strong Quality Management System (QMS) significantly boosts overall school service performance by focusing on strategic management review, risk assessment, internal audits, and corrective actions. This systematic approach is vital for improving the educational environment. Supporting literature emphasizes that effective QMS frameworks, like ISO 9001, rely on client feedback, staff development, and audits to optimize operations (Almeida & Duarte, 2019). Institutions with robust quality management tend to foster better learning environments and higher stakeholder satisfaction through continuous improvement, risk management, and responsive practices (Hemsley-Brown & Oplatka, 2020; Mukherjee, 2021).

Table 8. Test of the Relationship between Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction and Overall Continuous Improvement

Quality Management System	Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction and Overall Continuous Improvement						Customer Satisfaction	Continuous Improvement
	Reliability	Responsiveness	Assurance	Empathy	Tangibles	SERVQUAL		
Management Review	.604**	.521**	.525**	.526**	.524**	.560**	.523**	.646**
Risk Management	.600**	.544**	.611**	.555**	.618**	.616**	.570**	.694**
Internal Quality Audit	.505**	.467**	.501**	.452**	.540**	.512**	.472**	.600**
Corrective Action	.592**	.515**	.534**	.538**	.606**	.603**	.547**	.668**
Document Information	.557**	.509**	.492**	.467**	.509**	.533**	.475**	.627**
Management Knowledge Management	.531**	.519**	.515**	.527**	.555**	.561**	.527**	.647**
Training and Advocacy	.601**	.543**	.588**	.597**	.583**	.618**	.563**	.701**
Client/Citizen Feedback Management	.681**	.621**	.585**	.611**	.589**	.658**	.557**	.716**
Overall QMS	**.693****	**.629****	**.646****	**.633****	**.673****	**.692****	**.629****	**.787****

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

The findings emphasize that a comprehensive and systematic Quality Management System (QMS), including regular evaluations, risk management, corrective actions, and feedback integration, is vital for boosting customer satisfaction and driving continuous improvement. Schools that prioritize these elements tend to improve service quality and stakeholder engagement. Effective communication through client feedback and advocacy plays a key role in achieving service excellence. This aligns with recent studies

highlighting the importance of strong quality frameworks, training, and advocacy in enhancing school operations and student satisfaction (González & Gallego, 2021). Harfouche (2020) stresses that ongoing client involvement fosters a culture of improvement and organizational adaptability, while López and Sánchez (2022) show that thorough management reviews and corrective measures lead to sustained advancements in teaching and administration.

Table 9. Test of the Relationship between Service Performance and Organizational Readiness

Organizational Readiness	Service Performance				
	Quality Instruction	Administrative Efficiency	Student Support Services	School Facility	Overall Service Performance
Leadership Backing	.557**	.578**	.565**	.508**	.638**
Employee Improvement	.638**	.537**	.638**	.524**	.676**
Resource Accessibility	.651**	.672**	.680**	.639**	.764**
Organizational Culture	.685**	.708**	.670**	.602**	.770**
Overall Organizational Readiness	.761**	.740**	.767**	.682**	.853**

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

The findings highlight that organizational readiness is crucial for enhancing service performance in education. Strong leadership, continuous staff development, resource availability, and a positive organizational culture that encourages collaboration and innovation significantly improve educational quality and administrative efficiency. These elements ensure schools meet or exceed service expectations. This aligns with research emphasizing leadership's role in driving change (Stewart & Reinders, 2020), the importance of accessible resources (Vargas et al., 2021), and the impact of a supportive culture on performance (Simpson & Cheng, 2022). Organizational readiness enables strategic planning, effective decision-making, efficient resource management, stakeholder engagement, and adaptability, all key to continuous improvement and better student outcomes.

Table 10. Test of the Relationship between Organizational Readiness and Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction and Overall Continuous Improvement

Organizational Readiness	Service Quality						Customer Satisfaction	Overall Continuous Improvement
	Reliability	Responsiveness	Assurance	Empathy	Tangibles	SERVQAL		
Leadership Backing	.542**	.549**	.507**	.549**	.578**	.602**	.502**	.643**

Employee Improvement	.633**	.620**	.617**	.596**	.540**	.628**	.448**	.644**
Resource Accessibility	.627**	.600**	.598**	.635**	.584**	.648**	.503**	.705**
Organizational Culture	.603**	.607**	.545**	.613**	.608**	.649**	.609**	.750**
Overall Organizational Readiness	.714**	.705**	.673**	.711**	.686**	.750**	.612**	.814**

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). N=240

The findings reveal that schools focusing on strengthening organizational readiness—through leadership support, employee development, resource accessibility, and fostering a positive organizational culture—tend to achieve better service quality and higher customer satisfaction. This connection highlights the importance of prioritizing these elements to create a high-performance educational environment. Supporting studies confirm that leadership is vital for driving change and cultivating excellence (Kwak, 2020), while accessible resources and staff development enable superior service delivery (Parker & Holmes, 2021). Additionally, a strong organizational culture sustains continuous improvement and promotes success for both staff and students (Adams et al., 2022).

CONCLUSIONS

This part presents a thorough analysis of the study's findings about the implementation and effects of the Quality Management System (QMS) in public elementary schools, culminating in conclusions and practical recommendations. The research indicates that schools with successful QMS implementation exhibit notable enhancements in operational efficiency, service quality, customer happiness, and ongoing improvement initiatives. A significant disparity exists between urban and rural schools, with larger urban institutions enjoying superior resources, administrative support, and elevated levels of ISO certification and School-Based Management (SBM) maturity, whereas smaller rural schools encounter difficulties in maintaining quality standards due to constrained capacity. Educators in various institutions demonstrate substantial awareness of essential QMS elements—namely management review, risk management, internal audits, corrective measures, and client feedback management—signifying robust institutional knowledge crucial for quality assurance.

Organizational readiness is a pivotal aspect affecting school service performance, with robust leadership support, employee engagement, resource availability, and a favourable organizational culture promoting an atmosphere conducive to ongoing enhancement. Stakeholders evaluate service characteristics such as educational quality, administrative efficiency, student support, and school amenities favourably, with schools continuously receiving high ratings in reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles. The characteristics of service quality are closely associated with the efficient implementation of Quality Management Systems and the organization's preparedness to accept change.

The study demonstrates strong relationships between QMS aspects and continuous improvement, highlighting the significance of client feedback, training, and comprehensive quality management in augmenting stakeholder satisfaction and service enhancement. Organizational readiness elements, including leadership commitment, resource allocation, and a collaborative culture, are highly associated with enhanced service delivery and ongoing development. The research highlights school size as a crucial moderator in the interaction among QMS, organizational readiness, and continuous improvement. More extensive institutions, endowed with greater resources and organized leadership, generally excel in maintaining quality and fostering continual growth. In contrast, ISO certification status unexpectedly exhibits a negative correlation with continuous improvement, indicating that certification alone is inadequate without good implementation and continual assessment.

Notwithstanding these findings, the study highlights that school size, ISO certification duration, and SBM level do not significantly mediate the relationship between QMS and continuous improvement, asserting that effective leadership, stakeholder engagement, and organizational culture are more influential than structural factors in enhancing performance. This finding corresponds with current research supporting the notion that quality management concepts are universally relevant across educational institutions of diverse sizes and circumstances, with scalability primarily reliant on institutional commitment and governance quality.

RECOMMENDATION

QMS enhances school performance by standardizing processes, improving resource management, and promoting data-driven decision-making. Nonetheless, deficiencies persist in completely instilling a culture of quality and continual improvement throughout all organizational tiers. The report advocates for prioritizing the direct implementation of QMS and enhancing organizational readiness via leadership development, resource allocation, and the cultivation of a collaborative culture. It also recommends redirecting attention from structural mediators like school size and certification status to enhancing internal systems and leadership practices. Schools are urged to perceive ISO certification as a strategic framework instead of a conclusion, and to customize quality programs to their specific settings to guarantee ongoing and inclusive enhancement.

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