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The Quality Management System Effectiveness Vis-A'-Vis Core Processes Implementation

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ABSTRACT

Student satisfaction has become a vital measure of educational effectiveness, particularly in Junior High School, where students experience significant academic, social, and personal development. Understanding their level of satisfaction provides institutions with valuable insights into how effectively they are meeting the needs of learners in key areas, including instruction, curriculum, school environment, facilities, and student support services. The primary objective of this study was to assess the level of satisfaction among junior high school students at UCLM and to identify the significant predictors that influence their satisfaction. Using a quantitative research design, the study employed survey questionnaires administered to 499 students selected through stratified random sampling. Simple frequency and percentage, weighted mean, Chi-square test of independence, and multiple regression analysis were used to analyze the data. The findings revealed that students expressed high satisfaction in areas such as teacher quality and the delivery of instruction. In contrast, relatively lower satisfaction was noted in aspects of school facilities and the learning environment. Findings further revealed that teacher quality, curriculum workload, learning environment, school facilities, and student support services were significant predictors of student satisfaction. This study concluded that focusing on these dimensions can enhance the overall educational experience of Junior High School students. It emphasizes the importance of holistic institutional development to foster student engagement, motivation, and preparedness for higher levels of education.

Keywords: *Customer Satisfaction, Junior High, Philippines, Practical Instruction, Satisfaction Level, Student Satisfaction*

INTRODUCTION

A quality management system (QMS) can be defined as a collection of business processes that consistently focus on meeting customer requirements (Ideagen, 2019). Its purpose is to ensure that, every time a process is performed, the same information, methods, skills, and controls are consistently used and applied. Ultimately, this helps to ensure customer satisfaction (Pavlovic, A., 2019; Ideagen, 2019).

Effective quality management is vital for the growth and success of any organization. It acts as a key resource in cultivating client relationships by aiming to improve the customer service experience. The objective is to enhance customer satisfaction while fostering business expansion (Bakkah Learning, 2017). The cornerstone of a quality organization is an effective quality management system. Although many small businesses may not have extensive resources available to implement quality management, it can still be done effectively. Effective Quality Management systems are rigorous processes that continually increase the economic and quality value of products and services. The QMS works to enhance the customer experience, which, for a small business, is essential to ensure customer retention (Synergos Consultancy

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Ltd., 2020). Inconsistent operations are the enemy of total quality management. Without standardized operations, the organization cannot consistently ensure the quality of products or improve efficiency. Business researchers have found that inconsistent business processes can have five times more negative impacts on the customer than the delivery of an inferior product. In highly regulated industries, inconsistent processes resulting in unreliable product quality can have severe consequences (Stanton, K., 2020). Organizations dedicated to continuous improvement recognize the importance of these actions in strengthening product quality, enhancing customer satisfaction, and improving efficiency, productivity, and profits. Implementing the program is a tacit acknowledgment that, even though the company's operations will never reach perfection, they can constantly be improved upon from yesterday (Reh J.F., 2019).

What is a core process? A core process is an ongoing, end-to-end practice that achieves business goals. It is a process that customers are willing to pay for and one that is crucial for business operations and customer satisfaction. A core process produces value for the customer and starts and ends with the customer's interests. Examples of core processes include sales process, research and development processes, and new product development (Stewart, P., 2022).

Why are core processes important? Core business processes are fundamental activities that contribute directly to a business's success. They reinforce the business' mission, support value delivery, and add to its competitive advantage. As an essential part of business operations and functions, they detail specific activities that every entity needs to perform to provide its service, produce its product, or achieve its goals. Core business processes enable organizations to streamline their workflows, which can increase efficiency, enhance productivity, ensure consistent quality, increase adaptability, and facilitate scalability (Sanchez, M., 2024).

Although measurement and monitoring are often used together in ISO 9001, they have distinct meanings. We monitor by observing something closely so that we can record or detect it. Monitoring is, in effect, a form of surveillance. On the other hand, measurement determines the actual characteristics of something (e.g., sizes, volume, etc.) Monitoring would, therefore, be used to determine when a process approaches a limit. While measuring would provide the actual value of the parameters being examined and determine how it differs from the required value. Although both are meaningful tools, they provide various types of evidence that can be used in decision- making (Vidhya, S., 2017).

It is all too easy for businesses to eventually find themselves in an unproductive cul-desac, wondering how they arrived there. Unfortunately, this is the cumulative result of thousands of decisions made with poor information, gut instinct, or influenced by personalities (Thornton, C., 2020). As ISO 9001 states, Decision-making can be a complex process, and it always involves some uncertainty. It often involves multiple types and sources of inputs, as well as their interpretation, which can be subjective. It is essential to understand cause-and-effect relationships and potential unintended consequences. Facts, evidence, and data analysis lead to greater objectivity and confidence in decision-making (ISO 9001, 2015).

Employee productivity increases when the company recognizes and implements the importance of Quality Management in all its business activities, as employees realize they are working on something unique and of high quality. Quality management practices can reduce human error and improve a company's validation activities. The employees will have a set of guidelines to follow during their day-to-day operations, which helps eliminate guesswork and ensures compliance.

Under a Quality Management System (QMS), processes should be subjected to tighter management and control. It is wise to expect changes in how the staffs interacts and the distribution of responsibility and accountability. Considering staff perception, recognizing employee attitudes and addressing any concerns they may hold is a vital part of the managerial strategy when implementing a Quality Management System (QMS). An organization should not shut its ears to employee suggestions. Employees are the ones who will

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use the quality management system, so making any necessary amends to fit their needs and improve usability makes sense (Pavlovic, A., 2019). Despite incorporating motivational and social elements into the QMS, employees often do not fully appreciate these systems and sometimes fail to comply with their rules. Dahlgaard, Kristensen, and Kanji (2002) also highlighted the importance of employee satisfaction and proposed methods for measuring it, as well as its potential use as a tool for continuous improvement. Moreover, employee surveys, when used effectively, can serve as catalysts for improving employee attitudes and driving organizational change (Saari & Judge, 2004).

Based on the premises mentioned above, the researchers conducted a study on the effectiveness of the Quality Management System Vis-À-Vis Core Processes implementation to determine what aspect of the QMS implementation process needs to be maintained, enhance, or revised. The result of the study will be used for continual improvement.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aimed to determine the level of effectiveness of the quality management system in relation to the core processes implementation; the study sought to discern what areas of the QMS need improvement. The findings will be used to design an action plan for the continual improvement of QMS processes implementation.

METHODOLOGY

To determine the effectiveness of the quality management system in relation to the implementation of core processes, the researchers employed a quantitative research approach. Concerning its objectives, this study was organized under the descriptive type of research. The implementation of this investigation falls under the category of applied research.

The researchers conducted this evaluation at the University of Cebu Lapulapu and Mandaue (UCLM) campus. The University's location is near the old Mactan Bridge, which separates the cities of Mandaue and Lapu-Lapu. The institution offers educational programs from nursery to college. Currently, 30 academic and support offices on campus are certified to ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management by the certifying agency Bureau Veritas. The Institutional Quality Assurance Office monitors the implementation of the core processes, of the offices mentioned above in accordance with the standards and requirements of the ISO certification. The respondents of this study were sixty-one (61) office employees working at various offices of the University. All respondents are integral to implementing the core processes of their respective departments. Moreover, the respondents already experienced internal quality audits and management review processes.

To gather the necessary data for achieving the objectives of this study, the researchers employed a researchers-made instrument that underwent validation by a pool of internal quality auditors of the University as well as pilot testing. The research instrument contained two parts. The first part presents the profile of the respondents, followed by a questionnaire assessing the effectiveness of the QMS in relation to the implementation of core processes. Statistically, the research instrument was found to be sound, and the collected data were analyzed using simple frequency counts, percentages, weighted means, Chi-square test, and T-test.

During the data collection process, the researchers strictly adhered to the standard ethical principles of research. Four basic principles were observed: the principle of respect for persons, beneficence, informed consent, and justice. For the sake of respect for persons, the researchers treated the respondents as autonomous agents, and those with diminished autonomy were entitled to protection. In affording beneficence, respondents were treated ethically by respecting their decisions and protecting them from

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harm, as well as by ensuring their well-being. For informed consent, the respondents were provided with comprehensive information about the research without duress or inappropriate inducement. Lastly, the principle of justice was applied. The researchers observed fairness in the distribution, or "what is deserved," in the treatment of the respondents. Careful consideration was given to the overall societal impact of the study in selecting participants, as well as the benefits and burdens that arose from it.

The respondents were informed about the study's objectives, methodology, and anticipated benefits. They were also notified of their: (a) right to abstain from participation, (b) right to terminate at any time their participation, and (c) the confidentiality of their answers. No staff became a respondent of this study unless they had given the notice mentioned above and freely given their consent to participate. No pressure or inducement was applied to encourage staff to participate as a respondent. The researchers ensured confidentiality by strictly following the principles of keeping the responses private and for study use only.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results of the data gathered. The first section describes the profile of the respondents in terms of position, length of service, and gender. The succeeding section discusses the level of effectiveness of the quality management system in relation to the implementation of core processes, focusing on quality objectives and planning, monitoring and measurement, analysis and evaluation, and continual improvement.

Table 1
Position

Position	f	Percentage
Head of Office	15	25.00%
Staff	46	75.00%
Total	**53**	**100.00%**

Table 1 presents the number of office personnel respondents classified into two categories using the quota sample method. The inquiry revealed that most respondents are office staff, which accounts for 75.00 percent.

Table 2
Length of Service

Length of Service	f	Percentage
2 – 5 years	38	62.00%
6 – 10 years	16	26.00%
11 – 15 years	2	3.00%

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16 – 20 years	2	3.00%
21 – 25 years	3	5.00%
Total	**61**	**100.00%**

Table 2 discloses that most of the respondents had served UCLM from two (2) to five (5) years already. The majority result of the length of service is an essential factor to consider because the percentage represents the number of personnel with less experience in implementing the quality management system.

Table 3
Gender

Gender	f	Percentage
Male	24	39.00%
Female	37	61.00%
Total	**61**	**100.00%**

Table 3 displays the gender distribution of the respondents, with the majority being female, accounting for 61%.

Table 4
The Quality Management System Effectiveness vis-a'-vis Core Process in Relation to Quality Objectives and Planning

Variable	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
A. Quality Objectives and Planning			
1. Served as guidance in determining the customer's requirement, need, and expectation needed in the formulation of the quality objectives of every core process.	4.39	Extremely Effective	2
2. Guide formulation of plan in order to attain the quality objectives per core process.	4.39	Extremely Effective	2
3. Enabled the office to implement its plan with standard control mechanisms for the attainment of the key point indicators.	4.36	Extremely Effective	3

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4.	Enabled the office to implement its plan with standard control mechanisms for the attainment of the key point indicators.	4.33	Extremely Effective	4
5.	Allowed the office to initiate continual improvement to its quality objectives and plan.	4.44	Extremely Effective	1
	Aggregate Mean	**4.38**	**Extremely Effective**	

Table 4 shows the level effectiveness of the quality management system (QMS) in the aspect of quality objectives and planning - the foundational process that aligns organizational goals with customer needs and operational execution. The outcome with an aggregate mean of 4.38 and interpreted as extremely effective suggests that the office personnel experiences with the QMS quality objectives and planning exceeded their expectations about its usefulness in relation to the implementation of their actions for the core processes.

According to Bugdol, Marek and Jedynak, Piotr (2022), quality objectives determine the directions of undertaken improvement activities and allow organizations to measure the effectiveness of their quality management system. The finding is further supported by Taxmann (2024) which stated that: planning is the process of setting goals, and organizing the resources and efforts to carry out those actions. It involves anticipating future needs and circumstances, making decisions about the best course of action, and preparing for potential challenges or opportunities.

Table 5
The Quality Management System Effectiveness vis-a'-vis Core Process in Relation to Monitoring and Measurement

Variable		Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
B.	**Monitoring and Measurement**			
1.	Served as guidance in determining what needs to be monitored, and measured in relation to the implementation of the core processes.	4.43	Extremely Effective	1
2.	Guide formulation of the methods to be used for the monitoring and measurement to ensure valid result.	4.31	Extremely Effective	4
3.	Enabled the office to set schedules when monitoring and measuring shall be performed.	4.28	Extremely Effective	5

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4.	Required the office to retain and maintain documented information as evidence of the result.	4.33	Extremely Effective	3
5.	Required the office to make a regular assessment of the results of the monitoring and measurement.	4.36	Extremely Effective	2
	Aggregate Mean	**4.34**	**Extremely Effective**	

Table 5 indicates the level of effectiveness of the quality management system in the area of monitoring and measurement. The finding reveals that the office personnel consider the implementation of the quality management system as extremely effective in providing them the mechanism to perform regular and appropriate monitoring and measurement of the key performance indicators of their core processes. The QMS served as guidance to establish methods, set schedules, maintain documented information, and conduct regular assessment to be used for the monitoring and measurement of the processes for continual development and growth.

Effivity (n.d.) espouse that measurement and monitoring go beyond ISO compliance. It helps organization tracks performance, identify processes and areas that need improvement, and verify if the corrective actions taken are effective. In short, measurement and monitoring help the organization makes better decision. It diminishes the risk of errors and ensures that the organization is able to deliver consistent quality at all times. Measurement focuses on quantifying specific aspect of the processes. For example, production time, defect rates, or customer satisfaction scores. The numbers will give clear, objective understanding of how well the processes are performing. Monitoring on the other hand, is about keeping an eye on the process over time. It is like a continuous check up. The organization monitors to ensure that everything stays within the acceptable limits.

Moreover, the finding of the study can be supported by Janice George-Pinard (2023) who stated that: monitoring and measuring are integral components in the journey of business development. They serve as compasses, guiding the business through the complexities of progress and efficiency. Monitoring and measuring not only enable effective management but also pave the way for continuous improvement, resources optimization, and strategic success in the dynamic landscape of business growth. In essence, they unlock the door to strategic success, ensuring business thrives. Peter Drucker underscores the critical role of quantifiable data and metrics in effective management and continues improvement. He emphasizes measurement is more than just tracking performance; it stands as the cornerstone of proficient management, informed decision-making, and the relentless pursuit of continuous improvement. Therefore, incorporating monitoring and measuring practices becomes pivotal when formulating a growth strategy.

Table 6
The Quality Management System Effectiveness vis-a'-vis Core Process in relation to Analysis and Evaluation

Variable	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
C. Analysis and Evaluation			

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1.	Required the office to analyze and evaluate appropriate data, and information arising from the monitoring and measurement to address issues and concerns.	4.30	Extremely Effective	3
2.	Required the office to use the results of the analysis to evaluate conformity to standards and compliance with requirements of the core processes implemented.	4.28	Extremely Effective	4
3.	Required the office to use the results of the analysis to evaluate the level of the customer satisfaction of the core processes implemented.	4.26	Extremely Effective	5
4.	Required the office to use the results of the analysis to evaluate if planning has been implemented effectively.	4.36	Extremely Effective	2
5.	Required the office to use the results of the analysis to evaluate the effectiveness of the actions taken to address risks and opportunities.	4.38	Extremely Effective	1
	Aggregate Mean	**4.31**	**Extremely Effective**	

Table 6 exhibits the level of effectiveness of the Quality Management System (QMS) in relation to analysis and evaluation—a core process that ensures data-driven decision-making and process improvement. The results divulge strong performance across all indicators, with an aggregate mean of 4.31 interpreted as extremely effective. This finding indicates that the office personnel regularly performed robust analysis and evaluation of the data from the results of their core processes monitoring and measurement. It further suggests that the QMS enable them to acquire robust analytical and evaluation skills to determine if their core processes implementation conforms to standards, complies regulatory requirements, attains the desired customer satisfaction, action plans have been implemented accordingly, and risks and opportunities are managed.

According to qmswrapper (n.d.), the aim of the analysis and evaluation is for the organization to interpret and understand the current situation of quality elements, resources, processes, products, and services, through different quality aspects using different methods. The goal is for the organization to decide whether those elements reach the desired objectives. Moreover, ISO Template (2021) stated that both analysis, as well as evaluation of data, is important; that means data analysis through statistical techniques, trend analysis, etc. and interpretation of the analyzed data so that it can be used in appropriate manner for decision making and action planning.

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Table 7
The Quality Management System Effectiveness vis-a'-vis Core Process in Relation to Continual Improvement

Variable	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
D. Continual Improvement			
1. Required the office to perform the plan, do, check, act cycle for continual improvement of the implementation of the core processes.	4.39	Extremely Effective	2
2. Required the office to continually improve the suitability, adequacy, and effectiveness of the core processes implemented.	4.43	Extremely Effective	1
3. Served as guidance to encourage office personnel engagement in the implementation of the core processes.	4.33	Extremely Effective	4
4. Required the office to use data-driven decision making for the improvement of the core processes implemented.	4.31	Extremely Effective	5
5. Encouraged the office personnel to adapt to a culture that embraces changes and feedback for improvement.	4.34	Extremely Effective	3
Aggregate Mean	**4.36**	**Extremely Effective**	

Legend:

Weight	Mean Range	Interpretation
5	4.20 – 5.00	Extremely Effective
4	3.40 – 4.19	Very Effective
3	2.60 – 3.39	Effective
2	1.80 – 2.59	Less Effective
1	1.00 – 1.79	Not Effective

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Table 7 displays the level of effectiveness of the Quality Management System (QMS) in term of continual improvement. The findings disclose that the office personnel rated the process with an overall aggregate mean of 4.36 that is interpreted as extremely effective. This result suggests that the effectiveness of the QMS in relation to their core process exceeds their expectation. The outcome can be theorized that the QMS enables the offices to perform the plan, do, check, and act cycle, continually improve the suitability, adequacy, and effectiveness of their core processes, guide the personnel engagement, implement data-driven decisionmaking, and allow personnel to adapt a culture that embraces changes and feedback for improvement.

According to Reagan Pannell (2022), continual improvement is an ongoing effort to improve products, services, or processes. This can be done through small changes or by making radical improvements. The goal of continual improvement is to make things better in a way that is efficient and effective. Continual improvement is a powerful tool that helps individuals and organizations to constantly enhance performance and achieve better results. By continually looking for ways to improve, the organization can identify areas of weakness, streamline processes, and enhance skills and knowledge. This will lead to increased efficiency, higher quality work, and greater satisfaction for everyone involved. In today's competitive business environment, it is more important than ever for companies to continually strive for improvement. By constantly looking for ways to optimize their processes and products, businesses can stay ahead of the curve and maintain a competitive advantage.

Table 8
Summary of the Quality Management System Effectiveness vis-a'-vis Core Process

Variable	Aggregate Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
2.1 **Quality Objectives and Planning**	4.38	Extremely Effective	**1**
2.2 **Monitoring and Measurement**	4.34	Extremely Effective	**3**
2.3 **Analysis and Evaluation**	4.31	Extremely Effective	**4**
2.4 **Continual Improvement**	4.36	Extremely Effective	**2**
Aggregate Mean	**4.35**	**Extremely Effective**	

Table 8 presents the aggregate weighted mean scores and rankings of the Quality Management System (QMS) effectiveness in relation to the offices core processes. The results indicate how the office employees perceive the effectiveness of each item and the overall aggregate mean of 4.35, interpreted as extremely effective.

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Table 9
Significant relation between the profile and the Quality Management System Level of Effectiveness vis-a'-vis Core Process

	(P-value)	Decision	Interpretation
Profile of the Respondents and the level of Effectiveness of the QMS vis-a'-vis Core Process	0.339	Accept Ho	There is no significant relationship

Table 9 finding suggests that employees' demographics have no significant influence on their perceptions of the QMS effectiveness, reinforcing the notion that the system operates consistently across diverse employee groups. Therefore, if enhancements are necessary, they should be directed toward the overall improvement of the QMS rather than tailored to specific demographic segments.

Table 10
A significant difference between the Quality Management System Level of Effectiveness when grouped according to profile

	T-test (P-value)	Decision	Interpretation
Level of effectiveness of the Quality Management System when grouped according to position.	0.319	Accept Ho	There is no significant difference
Level of effectiveness of the Quality Management System when grouped according to length of service.	0.248	Accept Ho	There is no significant difference
Level of the effectiveness of the Quality Management System when grouped according to gender.	0.151	Accept Ho	There is no significant difference

Table 10 indicates that perceptions of the Quality Management System's (QMS) effectiveness are consistent across various employee profiles, including position, length of service, and gender. This suggests that the QMS is implemented uniformly and is generally perceived as effective, regardless of demographic differences. However, further qualitative investigation may provide deeper insights into the reasons behind this uniformity and help identify whether targeted improvements are necessary for specific employee groups.

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CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the effectiveness of the UCLM quality management system in relation to the implementation of the offices core process in terms of quality objectives and planning, monitoring and measurement, analysis and evaluation, and continual improvement is extremely effective. It was also gleaned statistically that there is no significant relation between the profile and the level of effectiveness as well as there is no significant difference in the level of effectiveness when grouped according to profile. The results concur with the Total Quality Management framework as described by Peter Landau (2022) as the as the work to maintain success by doing what is necessary to improve customer satisfaction.

Of course, that satisfaction is needed in employees and business processes – long before any product or service reaches its customer. Total Quality Management is a management approach that focuses on delivering products and services with the highest quality to maximize customer satisfaction and meet regulatory standards. Total quality management is an organization – wide effort for continuous improvement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers recommend the following actions:

1. For quality objectives and planning, the Institutional Quality Assurance office shall establish and implement means through procedures and forms to enable offices to implement its plan with standard control mechanism(s) for the attainment of the established key point indicators.
2. For monitoring and measurement, the Institutional Quality Assurance office shall establish and implement means through procedures and forms to enable offices to set schedules when monitoring and measuring shall be performed.
3. For analysis and evaluation, the Institutional Quality Assurance office shall strengthen the established requirement requiring the offices to use the results of the analysis to evaluate the level of the customer satisfaction for the implementation of their core processes.
4. For continual improvement, the Institutional Quality Assurance office shall strengthen the established requirement requiring the offices to use data driven decision-making for the improvement of the implementation of their core processes.

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