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**INFLUENCE OF SELECTED TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT
PRINCIPLES ON PERFORMANCE OF THE INDEPENDENT
ELECTORAL AND BOUNDARIES COMMISSION IN
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University of Nairobi, Kenya**Dr. Patrick Cheben Simiyu**Lecturer, Department of Open Learning
University of Nairobi, Kenya**ABSTRACT**

Recent researches have shown that TQM improves organization's performance. However, little studies have been carried out, even as IEBC performance has been faced with a lot of quality performance issues that is why the researcher carried out a research on the above subject in West Pokot County, Kenya. The study achieved the following objectives: To establish how focus on the customer and problem prevention principle influence performance of IEBC in West Pokot County. The research is based on the assumption that the adoption of TQM principles influences the performance of the IEBC in West Pokot County. Ex post facto research design and descriptive research design was used. The target population in this case was 180232 registered voters of West Pokot County. The sample size was 399 respondents of which 8 were IEBC staff in the four constituency offices of the county. Questionnaires and interviews were used by the researcher to collect data and the pilot study was done in the neighboring Trans Nzoia County. The split half technique was used to establish the reliability of the instruments. The researcher used descriptive statistics to analyze data. The major findings were that focus on customer with a mean of 4.8933 influence IEBC performance most followed by problem prevention with a mean of 4.8419 where the maximum score was 5. Based on the research findings, IEBC should adopt the principle of focus on customer and principle of problem prevention as the two principles greatly influenced performance of IEBC in West Pokot County.

Key Words: Quality principles, performance, Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission, focus on customer, problem prevention

INTRODUCTION

Most institutions worldwide have principles that guide attainment of institutional objectives and goals. The principles are meant to ensure effectiveness and efficiency in service delivery to clients and hence indicative of institutional performance. Institutions in charge of national elections, just like other institutions have adopted certain principles to guide the organization to realize their objectives.

The principles constitute strategies in Total Quality Management (TQM). TQM is a management philosophy that aims at bringing together organizational functions which include finance, marketing, engineering, production, design, customer services so as to satisfy customers and organizational objectives. Shewhart, (1931) held that to determine if the process is in control or stable or being affected by fixable cause; the use of techniques in statistics should be employed. The study recommended modern day quality tools such as control charts. The attempt made quality relevant for the process rather than for the finished product. The focus on preventing defects and quality assurance lead to an approach that was proactive through use of modern equipment. This increased the involvement of other functions through total quality control, which motivated managers to actively seek perfection. Such endeavor was perceived negatively as acting on defects that hurt an organization, but positively it made an organization to obtain competitive advantage.

The socio-economic factors that affect people's willingness to vote are "geographical location, age, and gender, level of education, ethnicity, religious affiliation, earnings, social position and daily activities" (Cummings & Wise). Through voting, people have the power to make a difference and to contribute to the democratic process in their countries. Unfortunately, in some other countries like the United States of America, people do not make an effort to vote massively as a way of practicing their rights. In 2004 election, only 58.3% of the American people voted (Cumming & Wise). If people would, perhaps, have a greater impact on government. Studies have connected socio economic variables like education and income to elections (Schlozman & Brady, 1995). In their study of 324 legislative elections conducted in 91 electoral democracies from 1972 to 1995; Blais & Dobrzynska, (1998) found out that socio economic environment highly influenced turnout in an election. This was according to their study of 1972 to 1995 in 324 elections. However, Fornos et al. (2004) disagreed that the socio-economic factors had any significant impact to turnout in South America.

Posner and Simon, (2002) reported that a decline in economy affects negatively the ratings of sitting African governments. This public dissatisfaction is commonly expressed or shown through apathy rather than voting for opposing candidate during elections.

Lower voter participation is not an indication that people are no longer interested in politics. There are other ways of people involvement in politics such as social media and mass protests. Turnout in an election is an indication active involvement in government by citizens. A stable and thriving democracy is indicated by high turnout. Apathy among the voters is in most cases caused by a suspicious electoral process. There is a concern that many people will shun February's presidential elections in Uganda. They cite myriad issues, some think voting won't lead to leadership change, some that the elections are rigged, and others argue that the country's leadership has failed to improve their lives. "There is no need of voting. Ugandans remain poor, and every time we vote, nothing changes," (2015). This frustration is shared by millions of Ugandans. In the 2011 presidential elections, quite a good number of people registered as voters failed to cast their vote. In 1996 and 2001, when the current president was still popular, voter turnout was 72.6% and 70.3% respectively. In 2006, it dropped to 69.7% and in 2011, it fell to 59.3%. The number of eligible voters has been growing from 13 million in 2011 to 15 million in 2016, but still voter turnout was even lower. Dr. Sewanyana (2015), was quoted as he expressed that, "there is still no adequate health care". He notes that voting in Uganda is a waste of time since leadership is recycled and main problems like unemployment and salary increment are not addressed.

A World Bank analysis of the annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate for Kenya indicates a correlation between low economic growth and electioneering periods. Each of the general elections since independent Kenya has been characterized by events which would in turn have an impact on Kenya's political economy. Most Kenyans feel that after general elections nothing improves that can put smiles in their lives therefore, they see no need of going to the polls. "Voting is a habit" (Ouko, 2015) but good leadership after the vote isn't the result of the habit. In Europe and across Africa, the principles of customer focus, long term commitment, quality as everyone's job and problem prevention are critical in ensuring a successful election process is realized in general elections. It is in this manner that the principles referred here are conceived as institutional principles that the researcher intends to investigate in line with the election institutions rating the four principles are key in establishing the extent to which general election was successful and hence favorable performance, successful election without repeat election.

The table below shows the voting trends in Kenya since 2002 to demonstrate low voter turnout against the registered voters.

Table 1: General election voter turnout trend in Kenya since 2002

Year	Registered voters	No. of new voters	Votes cast	Spoilt votes
2002	10451150	10451150	5975910	114006
2005	11800000	1348850	6158072	180400
2007	14267764	2467764	9877028	97601
2010	12616627	1651137	9106285	218633
2013	14352533	1735906	12330028	108975
2017	19611423	5258890	15593050	411510
2017(FPE)	1961142	5258890	37616217	37713

Source: IEBC manual 2018

In most established democracies the trend of voter turnout has been declining since 1980s. Low voter turnout is usually considered to be undesirable as it should not exist where adequate voter education has been done. Consequently, West Pokot County is no different in its voting trends either. Over the years, voter turnout has been declining in general elections. Even up to the ward level, the trend is all the same. The tables below proves that, even as population of eligible voters of West Pokot County increases, the voter turnout continues to decrease.

Table 2: Voter turnout in general elections since 2007 for West Pokot County

Year	Registered Voters	No. of new voters	Votes cast	Spoilt Votes
2007	76659	76659	53151	365
2013	120986	44327	100878	721
2017	180241	59255	151086	448

Source: IEBC West Pokot County Registry 2018

Even though the percentage voter turnout shows an increase over the years, the voter turnout compared to the registered voters is still low and this prompted the researcher to investigate the influence of adopting Total Quality Management principle at the IEBC. Voters constitute IEBC customers and subsequently their level of satisfaction of the services of the common staff is critical. Are the prospective voters dissatisfied with the registration process successfully? Are those who registered satisfied with the internal environment in general elections? How does the principle of focus on customer influence the service production by IEBC in the general election? Spoilt votes clearly show there is something wrong with voter education as inadequate education may result into inability for voters to cast their votes appropriately.

Statement of the Problem

Globally the need to strengthen democracy require adoption of TQM principles to ensure successful elections. Since early 1970s the quality of democratic processes in many wealthy democracies has been affected by the rising inequality in economy since poor citizens are excluded from electoral activities such as party membership, voting and participation in politics. Solt, (2018). Kenya's IEBC and in particular West Pokot County IEBC staff, organization principles are critical in exploring the scenario of quality elections and hence the need to unravel how quality service principles influence IEBC performance in West Pokot County. Scenario of spoilt votes and repeat election as a result of challenged election process has continued to influence negatively voter's attitude to elections hence leading to low voter turnout. Voter turnout and spoilt votes are indicators of voter apathy and poor voter education, which greatly reflect IEBC performance status. On the other hand, successful election with no spoilt votes and minimal court cases reflect a successful election.

Purpose of the Study

This study investigated the influence of focus on the customer and problem prevention Total Quality Management Principles on the performance of Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) in West Pokot County, Kenya.

Objectives of the Study

- i. To establish how focus on the customer principle influences performance of IEBC, West Pokot County
- ii. To establish how problem prevention principle influences performance of IEBC, West Pokot County

Research Questions

- i. How does focus on the customer principle influence performance of IEBC in West Pokot County?
- ii. How does problem prevention principle influence performance of IEBC in West Pokot County?

Significance of the Study

The findings of this research are informative as they provide vital information to different stakeholders. The findings may therefore enable the IEBC in adoption of total quality management principles so that the public can have more trust in their formal undertakings.

Delimitation of the Study

Delimitation refers to the scope of the study. This research was delimited to registered voters of West Pokot County, Kenya, who constituted accessible population, and subsequently respondents of the study. The IEBC staff in the four constituencies took part as key informant respondents. No other person was investigated.

Limitations of the Study

The researcher anticipated to encounter some limitations given that information sought may not be given by particular IEBC staff without authorization. A permit was sought before collecting data as this helped establish a research protocol and subsequently a rapport with respondent.

LITERATURE REVIEWED

Principle of focus on the customer and performance of IEBC

Focus on the customer is critical in ensuring successful election. Voter transportation is a technique that enhances focus on the voters external environment that include poor weather, inadequate transport and illiteracy challenges among voters has continued to undermine voter turnout. When there is rain and voters are discouraged to report to a polling station, it is important to provide adequate transport for the elderly and the sick must travel to a station more than 2 kilometers from their home. This arrangement enhances election environment that may lead to a higher voter turnout and successful election process. Illiterate voters may also be assisted to vote by ensuring assigning special IEBC staff to support them when at the polling station. The strategies to enhance participation in elections should include use of mobile polling stations for the sick, the elderly and the pastoralists' community who are nomadic.

We seek to answer these questions to ourselves. Do leaders matter more to unsophisticated voters or are they just as important to the politically sophisticated? (Brooks and Manza, 1997; 1997; Dittmar, 2015; File, 2014) did an analysis on voter characteristics of reported voters in presidential election years with a specific focus on age, race, sex and educational attainment (literacy) that were historically associated with turnout. Non- voters are younger, less educated and less affluent than are likely voters. Most voters are married. Huckfeldt (1979) observes that, people in a rich community are more likely to participate in apolitical process than people in a poor community but living in a cosmopolitan community increases participation.

Principle of problem prevention and performance of IEBC

The relationship between voter education and performance of IEBC after every general election is one of the most debated in a recent turnout. Civil societies warned that lack of civic education could jolt the general election. "Polls could witness massive irregularities since voters are yet to be sensitized on election procedures and their rights to vote". The more than 200 voter education providers accredited by the Independent and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) to support its 2900 officials undertaking civic education, argued that a decline in voter participation in electoral process points to a democracy deficit (2017). Gabriel Mukele, former vice chair of (ECK) attributes poor voting patterns to ignorance arising from poor performance by IEBC with regard to voter education. "There is a need now more than ever to demonstrate to the electorate why the principles of problem prevention matter. It must be understood that bad leaders are elected by good citizens who do not vote and that problem prevention by IEBC is a necessary avenue that enables the electorate to exercise their democratic right. Tumwa underscores the importance of educating voters and recalls a time when the defunct ECK had to work closely with civil society groups due to lack of funds to promote voter education. Voter education is the surest way of problem prevention and subsequently enhanced performance of IEBC.

However, the issue handouts is working against this. "The rationality of voting is the Achilles' heel of rational choice theory in political science" (Aldrich, 1997). Downs (1957) notes that a voter may be motivated by other factors that are not self-centered. That where individual benefits of being informed are more than the costs involved then the individual becomes rational since they feel it is their duty to be informed. A research by Delli Carpini and Keeter (1996) and, Lijphard (1997) show that the degree to which an individual voter makes an effort depends on many things such as socio-economic factors and education.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

According to Sekaran (2003), a study design is a framework upon which decisions are made on how data collection is done, analyzed, interpreted and the conclusions derived from them. Ex post facto research is used when it is difficult to manipulate characteristics of the participants. The fact has to happen first before investigation begins and the researcher doesn't interfere. I was interested in finding out how the adoption of TQM principles influence performance of IEBC. I can only ascertain whether the customers were served, problems were well prevented, there are long term commitments and if quality was everyone's job after the general elections because that is when the IEBC staff interact mostly with their clients. Descriptive research design was also used where the happenings were observed.

Target Population

Target population refers to the entire group of individuals or objects to which researchers are interested in generating the conclusions. Target population has varying characteristics and is also known as the theoretical population. . Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) defines it "as the researcher's interest group in its entirety". According to the IEBC (2017), West Pokot County has 180232 registered voters. Therefore, our target population in this study is 180232 registered voters.

Table 3: Target Population

CONSTITUENCY	TARGET POPULATION
Kapenguria	55601
Sigor	33929
Kacheliba	42632
Pokot South	48070
TOTAL	180232

Source: IEBC West Pokot County registry

Sampling Procedure and Sampling Size

A sample is the chosen representative fraction of the population for survey. According to Kothari (2004) he describes a sample size is "a sub-set of the total population that is used to give the general views of the target population" This section presents sampling procedures that were used and the sample size.

Sample Size Determination

The study used a formula by Yamane, (1967). Yamane (1967) provided a simplified formula to calculate sample sizes. A 95% confidence level and P= 0.05 are assumed for equation below.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

n was sample size

N was population size

e was the level of precision

in this case our sample size was 399

The researcher adopted the probability type of sampling where each member of the probability group had an equal chance of being selected in the sample. Out of the 399 targeted respondents, 8 are the IEBC staff of their respective constituencies where they are employed.

Sampling Procedure

Ogula, (2005) wrote that, the sampling process is choosing the number of individuals for a research such that the chosen group represents the larger group (target population). In this research the cluster sampling procedure was used. Our target population was drawn from the four constituencies of West Pokot County, Kenya.

Table 4: Sample Size

RESPONDENTS	SAMPLE SIZE
Kapenguria	121
Sigor	73
Kacheliba	93
Pokot South	104
IEBC staff	8
Total	399

Research Instruments

Research instruments are tools designed for data collection that will be analyzed. In this study the researcher used interview and questionnaire. A questionnaire is a data collection instrument consistent of a series of questions and other prompts for the purpose of gathering information from respondents (Wikipedia, 2012). The pilot study was done in Trans Nzoia County, which neighbors West Pokot County. This helped identify problems that the respondents encountered and also, if the items in the instruments yielded the required information for the study.

Instrument Validity

An instrument is valid if it works as it is expected to work. Bond, (2003) sees “validity as the core of any form of assessment that is trustworthy and accurate”. The researcher used the content validity which is concerned with how well the content of the instruments samples the kind of things about which conclusions are to be drawn. In this regard the supervisor confirmed the validity of the questionnaire and interview instruments.

Instrument Reliability

A test can be said to be reliable if it produces same results when it is used by different researchers under stable conditions. If the results are differ then the test is unreliable. Reliability of a test is the extent of freedom from errors of measurement. A measurement becomes less reliable with increasing errors. (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003; Mcmillan and Shumacher, 2001, 2006; Moss, 1994; Neuman, 2003). The researcher employed the split half method in the pilot study to determine the instrument reliability. This happened before the actual research was done. Kerhinger (2009) writes that “If the reliability of the instrument that is obtained is between 0.5 and 1.0, the instrument will be deemed reliable”.

Data Collection Procedure

The researcher obtained an introductory letter from the University of Nairobi that was used to supply for a research permit, and then proceeded to the study area for appointments with eligible voters and subsequent collection of data. The respondents were requested to participate in the research through a covering letter that was attached to the

questionnaires. The researcher first conducted a pilot study that was used to ascertain instrument reliability and validity.

Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis is a process of inspecting data to meaningful insights. The researcher used descriptive analysis, which helps researchers summarize the data and find patterns. This includes checking the questionnaires if they were all and well filled and dividing them into sub themes for easier analysis.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Focus on the customer principle and performance of IEBC

The researcher sought to know whether the IEBC West Pokot County understands customer needs, whether it focuses on the customer as the center piece of their operation and whether ensuring every vote counts can lead to achievement of its objectives.

The researcher found it reasonable to establish whether the IEBC West Pokot County focuses on the customer as a way of improving its performance. The results of the findings are indicated in the table 10.

Table 5: Response on focus on customer principle and performance of IEBC

Does the IEBC focus on understanding		
Customer current and future needs?	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	324	84
No	54	14
I do not know	8	2
Total	386	100

84% of the respondents indicated that IEBC was focusing on the customer while 14% said they IEBC was not focusing on customer future and current needs. 8% of the respondents did not know. These findings are collaborated in a research by G. S. Kim (2016) who said that Customer satisfaction, employee engagement and continuous improvement are positively related to management. The majority respondent's answers are a clear indication that they feel their needs are being catered for by the IEBC West Pokot County.

The researcher sought to understand whether the achievement of objectives has a direct correlation with customer focus. The results are as indicated in the table.

Table 6: Focus on customer principle and performance of IEBC

Indicators	Min score	Max. Score	Actual Mean	Rank
Voter education	1	5	4.8933	1
Voter registration	1	5	4.7734	2
Suppliers	1	5	4.2533	3
Communication	1	5	4.0133	4
Service Charter	1	5	3.0523	5

Legend

1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Not sure; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree

The outcome put voter education at number one with a mean of 4.8933. The response shows that respondents believe if voters are educated on the correct way of voting and how to follow procedures during the voting process then the IEBC performance will improve. According to IEBC voter education course book for primary school pupils in Kenya; “voter education addresses voter’s motivation and preparedness to participate fully in elections by providing information about voting and the electoral process”. It further says that “voter education helps to ensure that voters are ready, willing, knowledgeable and able to participate in electoral politics”. The respondents were however not sure if service charter with a mean score of 3.0523 could improve performance of IEBC performance. Customers will always tell if they are satisfied with the service or not, hence all undertakings must put customers into consideration (Covey, 2006). All the other indicators; Voter registration (4.7734), suppliers (4.2533) and communication (4.0133) showed that focusing on the customer can improve IEBC performance in West Pokot County.

Problem prevention principle and performance of IEBC

The third objective, the researcher sought to determine how the adoption of problem prevention principle of TQM influences performance of IEBC, West Pokot County. The respondents had to indicate whether or not the adoption of problem prevention principle of TQM influence the performance of IEBC West Pokot County.

Table 7: Findings on whether staff activities during elections influence performance of IEBC

Do staff activities during elections		
Influence Performance of IEBC	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	353	91.5
No	33	8.5
Total	386	100

The findings revealed that 353(91.5%) of the respondents agreed that IEBC staff activities during elections affect/influence IEBC performance in west Pokot County. 33(8.5%) of the respondents however disagreed.

Table 8: Problem prevention principle and performance of IEBC

Indicators	Min score	Max. score	Actual Mean	Rank
Rewards / motivation	1	5	4.8419	1
Appraisal of employees	1	5	4.8341	2
Internal environment scanning	1	5	4.8393	3
External environment scanning	1	5	4.0906	4
SOPs	1	5	3.0051	5

Legend

Strongly agree-5; Agree-4; Not sure-3; Disagree-2; Strongly Disagree-1
SOPs = Standard operating procedures

The findings in table 4.9 indicate that the adoption of problem prevention principle depends greatly on appraisal of employees and offer of rewards and motivation to employees. Good remuneration motivates employees to perform well. These findings mirror those of Ajila, (1997), that show a person who is motivated intrinsically will be keen to his work to the extent to which the tasks in the work are inherently rewarding to him or her. The results of a study by Vroom, V. (1964) indicate that an individual who is extrinsically motivated will remain committed as long as he is receiving an external reward. An employee who is enticed with occasional rewards is compelled to do more for the company s/he is working for. The respondents returning the same verdict with a mean of 4.8419 must have been convicted by the same reasoning. Internal environment scanning and external environment scanning with mean scores of 4.8393 and 4.0906 respectively were also positive indicators. The use of standard operating procedures in problem prevention however was not considered by many respondents returning a not sure rating of 3.0051. This could be attributed to the fact that many might not have understood it.

Conclusions

After results analysis, the researcher concluded as follows:

That the adoption of principles of problem prevention and focus on the customer in TQM greatly influenced IEBC performance in west Pokot County. However, the use of standard operating procedure manuals (SOPs) by the IEBC had no impact on performance improvement in the eyes of respondents. It is important for IEBC to sensitize their staff and stake holders on the importance of such procedure as registration, voting, results transmission and many others as put up in their manuals so as to reduce confusion and failure. The service charter was not displayed in County offices and that explains why the staffs were not sure on its effect on performance. It is important for the commission to explain to the customer on the services they do and how long it would take for each. This reduces time wastage hence improving performance.

Recommendations for Policy and Practice

To improve performance of IEBC in west pokot,

- i. That during the crafting of strategic plan, it should not be a thing of the head office only but rather the views of the county staff should be taken into consideration. This makes the employees feel they own the objectives and therefore work hard for them.
- ii. That the commission should always evaluate its employees and where the employees have surpassed expectations; rewards should be given.

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