

¹ A Study on ISO 9001 Quality Management System Certifications ² -Reasons behind the Failure of ISO Certified Organizations

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⁷ **Abstract**

⁸ The purpose of this research study was to evaluate the effectiveness of ISO 9001 Certified
⁹ Contracting organizations at United Arab Emirates and identify the potential reasons behind
¹⁰ the failure of ISO 9001 certified organizations. For conducting this study, an in-depth literature
¹¹ review was made. A pilot survey was organized to capture the perceptions of these contracting
¹² organizations. The pilot survey findings were reviewed and resulted in a fine-tuned main
¹³ survey collected from a stratified random sample of 100 organizations out of 800 populations.
¹⁴ Survey findings studied were hypothetically validated and the gaps were identified. In spite of
¹⁵ ISO 9001 certification being a powerful framework for managing the quality systems, the study
¹⁶ results revealed that there were common gaps found in those certified organizations, classified
¹⁷ into 4 basic categories such as a) Leadership related issues b) Strategy related issues c) Quality
¹⁸ system related issues and d) Social responsibility related issues. Out of the nine constructs
¹⁹ tested hypothetically, eight constructs revealed a significant relationship impacting the overall
²⁰ system performance. Out of these 8 significant elements, only 4 have been specified in ISO
²¹ 9001 Standard explicitly. Even though around 15 research studies have been made so far in
²² the same subject worldwide, this study has evaluated the effectiveness of Quality Systems.
²³ Also it will make the Quality Management System (QMS) more vibrant and value-adding.

²⁵ **Index terms**— ISO, ISO 9001, QMS, Quality Management System, Certification.

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²⁷ Organizations

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⁴¹ Systems. Also it will make the Quality Management System (QMS) more vibrant and value-adding.

⁴² I.

43 1 INTRODUCTION

44 International Organization for Standardization (ISO) is the world's largest non-profit organization to develop and
45 publish international management system standards on various subjects such as ISO 9001:2008 (Requirements
46 for a QMS), ISO 14001:2004 (Requirements for an Environment Management System), Food safety standard ISO
47 22000:2005, Information Security Management Standard (ISO 27001:2005), etc. ISO is having a network of more
48 than 160 member countries all over the world. The national standards institutions of countries represent Author
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51 country for governing the accreditation framework. Representatives from all these countries work as a team
52 to generate the concept, draft it, brainstorm and finalize it as an international standard. These standards are
53 generically defined to suit any organization in the world regardless of their size, scope and location.

54 It is optional for the organizations to select the individual standards for implementation as well as certification
55 by third party competent organizations called typically as "Certification Bodies". Since the early 2001, bigger
56 corporates started demanding the ISO certification for their suppliers, with a view to unify the systems of multiple
57 suppliers. This demand, in one way added attraction to ISO standards, but on the other hand, caused these
58 standards turn more theoretical and commercial, thus turning the credibility of certification a question mark.

59 As certification bodies also have to be more and more competitive, a considerable portion of such organizations
60 are not aware of the real benefits of implementing systems are achieved fully or not.

61 After the main certification assessment for ISO, organizations are supposed to be visited periodically say at
62 least once every year, but many of such assessments bring out the system performance is shocking and even for
63 attaining a level of "minimum compliance" is a big deal for those so called "Certified" organizations.

64 Any ISO 9001 certified organization is supposed to have an effective Quality System and achieve maximum
65 customer satisfaction, profit, employee motivation, improvements and minimum rejections, reworks, customer
66 complaints and problems. As the ground reality was questioning this theory, this study was initiated to evaluate
67 how effective were the ISO certified organizations II.

68 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE a) History of QMS ISO 9001 69 Certification

70 During World War II, there were quality problems in many British explosive industries, where bombs were
71 exploding in factories during assembly. The solution adopted to address these quality problems required
72 factories to document their manufacturing procedures and to prove by record-keeping that the procedures were
73 being followed. The standard was BS 5750, and it was known as a management standard because it specified not
74 what to manufacture, but how the manufacturing process was to be managed. In 1987, the British Government
75 persuaded the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) having member countries more than 180,
76 to adopt BS 5750 as an international standard. The international standard was named ISO 9000 series. ISO
77 9000:1987 had the same structure as the British Standard BS 5750, with three models for quality management
78 systems, the selection of which was based on the scope of activities of the organization. ISO 9000:1994 emphasized
79 quality assurance via preventive actions, instead of just checking final product, and continued to require evidence
80 of compliance with documented procedures. ISO 9001:2000 combined the three standards 9001, 9002, and 9003
81 into one, called 9001. Design and development procedures are required only if a company engages in the creation
82 of new products. The 2000 version sought to make a radical change in thinking by placing the concept of process
83 management front and centre ("Process management" was the monitoring and optimizing of a company's tasks
84 and activities, instead of just inspecting the final product).

85 3 Clause 7.4 Purchasing

86 The organization must ensure that purchased product conforms to the requirements. The type and extent of
87 control will depend on the impact of purchased product on the subsequent product realization processes or the
88 final product. The suppliers must be evaluated and selected based on their ability to supply conforming products
89 and criteria for selection, evaluation and re-evaluation must be defined. The results of evaluations and necessary
90 actions must be recorded and records must be maintained.

91 4 Clause 7.5 Production and service provision

92 This clause specifies the requirements on the production or service set up to plan, schedule, instruct, calibrate,
93 validate and preserve the products to ensure conformity to customer requirements.

94 5 Clause 7.6

95 This clause requires the calibration of monitoring and measuring equipments, including the software validation.

96 6 Clause 8 Measurement, Analysis And Improvement

97 The organization must plan and implement measurement, monitoring, analysis and improvement processes needed
98 to ? Monitor the customer satisfaction level.

99 ? Plan and conduct internal audits ? Control of Non-conforming products.
100 ? Manage the corrective and preventive action and estimate their effectiveness. c) Citations & Related Research
101 works ISO management systems have gained a chronic importance developed in the fielding of managing quality
102 since two decades. As remarked by Roger G.Schroeder (2008), "?ISO 9001 Certification has a major impact on
103 worldwide quality practices. Many companies are demanding ISO certification from their suppliers as a condition
104 for doing business". This situation has caused lots of contracting organizations to register for ISO certification.
105 Joseph Juran (2002) said, "Initially the suppliers resisted the Quality System mandated by their customers,
106 afterwards, it became a part of life".

107 The minimum compliance requirements specified in the 9001 shall be implemented consistently, to make
108 the business reach the real "excellence". Barak Michalle (2011) revealed "?the effective communication with
109 customers, employees and stakeholders has become challenging, even when conducted with same cultural
110 framework?" It is essential to think of that business, if the stakeholder needs are not identified, achieved and
111 communicated to them, the business cannot flourish on long time, regardless of ISO certification. There are
112 certain business elements crucial for the business excellence, which are not explicitly in the standard 9001.

113 I. As ??uran (1996) confided that "?The sustaining advantage is achieved by organizing its various activities
114 into tight systems, which support and reinforce each other. In essence the advantage is sustained because,
115 while imitators may adopt various ideas and techniques, the ability to manage interfaces really well?". On the
116 contrary, assuming the organization being certified for a mere compliance to the minimum requirements with a
117 loose system, the advantages also will be minimum or onetime, cannot be sustained. ISO management systems,
118 regardless of their release since 1987, have not been undertaken for any research at India or in the gulf region
119 till 2000. The wide acceptance of the ISO 9001 standard by more than a Million organizations in more than
120 160 countries and business economies (ISO Survey,2009) came from the generic requirements of the standard
121 and it's applicability to all organizations, regardless of type, size and product / service provided (ISO 9001). As
122 been highlighted by Pan (2003), ISO 9001 standard was initially adopted by firms in Europe and in countries
123 with close relationship with UK such as Australia and New Zealand. Nowadays is becoming the most popular
124 standard implemented by manufacturing as well as service organizations. The drivers for ISO 9001 certification
125 vary from one company to another and from one country to another, though the basic themes supporting 9001
126 were the customer satisfaction and continual improvements. ? Johannsen (1996) summarized these drivers as
127 pressures from existing customers, promotional value and the desire of improving management processes and
128 enhancing customer service. ? Buttle (1997) ranked the benefits after conducting a survey on UK businesses
129 and concluded that the most important benefit sought from certification is profit improvement. Out of these
130 researches completed in the subject worldwide as cited above, most of them were comparing the specifications
131 of standards one-another or evaluating the impact of 9001 on a specific area such as Staff motivation or market
132 growth. So far there was no study conducted to evaluate the overall effectiveness of QMS and with suitable
133 recommendations.

134 S. Rajaram (2008) mentioned that "ISO 9001 Certification had lot of advantages like Market competitiveness,
135 Consistency in Quality, improved productivity, employee involvement, staff morale and Job satisfaction?", just
136 similar to Mohamed Zairi and Yasar Jarrar (2005) remarked "The practical benefits of working towards and
137 achieving the standard are many. They include improved earning, productivity and profitability?", on the
138 contrary, Zairi reveals a practical situation when the ISO system does not add value to manage the business
139 processes, by mentioning that "ISO 9000 Quality standard is not regarded as a major driver of process performance
140 as the company has a policy on achieving these standards based on commercial needs criteria". If ISO 9001 is not
141 a certification of choice, organizations, under pressure, might choose the shortest way to get certified, which may
142 dilute the professionalism, make a mere bunch of papers, receiving no value addition, as mentioned by James
143 Highlands, "?This has been a huge effort in the company executives struggled to develop what turned out to be
144 a big dump documented system".

145 The above are the classic examples of how the ISO 9001 standard, in spite of its vast applicability, is being
146 misused by certain organizations. This was the starting point to probe further on the effectiveness of ISO certified
147 organizations in the contracting organizations of UAE, who are mostly mandated by their customers to go for it.

148 7 IV. MATERIALS & METHODS

149 A survey was organized with a target group of 100 contractors from UAE as responders. This included Mechanical
150 , Electrical & Civil Contractors.

151 The survey was organized through a formal gathering of key staff from these contracting organizations. The
152 important areas were discussed and their responses were reckoned to arrive at the survey. Data Analysis 4.1.
153 Customer Satisfaction : 56% of organizations stated that they maintain the same level of customer satisfaction
154 before and after ISO Certification. 24% organizations were positive to improve their customer satisfaction, as a
155 result of implementing ISO 9001 System. 20% of organizations did not agree on any such improvement.

156 **8 Continual**

157 Improvements : 28% of respondents had a formal account of the continual improvements after ISO certification.
158 44% respondents felt improvements, but they were not sure whether it was because of ISO QMS and also they
159 did not have any quantified figures behind such improvements.
160 28% organizations denied of any continual improvements after ISO certification.

161 **9 Brand**

162 Image & Ease of Marketing : 60% of respondents were positive to agree that their brand image and ease of
163 marketing were improved after getting certified to ISO 9001. Respondents with no change in this brand image
164 & marketing before and after certification was 40% 4.4 Internal Audits : 32% of respondents revealed that their
165 internal audit process was adding value to their business, 8% of respondents had been neutral whereas 60%
166 organizations denied to agree on any value addition by internal audits. 4.5. Linking ISO with Business Strategy
167 : 48% of respondents gave a shocking reply that the ISO model in their organization had no interface to Strategy
168 and vice versa. 32% of respondents stayed neutral by accepting there was a strategy but unaware of how it was
169 linked to systems. 20% respondents felt positively that their strategy and systems were linked well each other.

170 **10 4.6**

171 Documentation Issues : 52% of responded organization felt that the documents volume increased after ISO
172 certification, 36% felt the same volume of documentation before and after certification where as 12% organizations
173 were happy to streamline and reduce the paperwork after ISO certification.

174 **11 4.7**

175 Cultural & Behavioral Issues :
176 52% of organizations revealed it was very difficult to maintain the System culture and team relationships when
177 the data and information need to be shared within the organization and people need to work as a team. 16%
178 felt a refined culture and behavior in the organization since ISO certification. 32% remained neutral and did not
179 comment anything.

180 **12 Management Commitment**

181 : 32% of the respondents revealed a positive commitment from their top management, 52% did not agree on the
182 adequate commitment by top management. 16% of organizations did not have any comments.

183 4.9 Motivation & Recognition : Even though most organizations had a HR mechanism for promotions,
184 increments, etc 64% organizations felt the staff role in ISO system and achievements were not the basis for
185 recognition, but the sales & operational performance only. 24% respondents were happy to get motivated and
186 recognized for their contribution related to Quality improvements. 12% of respondents were neutral.

187 4.10 Bureaucracy in Systems : 56% of respondents feel the necessity to re-engineer their end to end processes
188 and eliminate non-value adding processes. 24% respondents had no bureaucracy issues. 20% of them had no
189 comments.

190 4.12 Internal Communication : 68% of organizations were happy with a well established internal network
191 of communication through Telephones, E-mails, Newsletters, meetings, seminars including the state of art
192 technologies like GPRS. 20% felt a boring formal way of communication primarily by letters. 12% stayed neutral.

193 4.13 ISO Awareness : 64% of respondents felt that their staff were aware of their system, its policy and the
194 objectives related to them. 20% of respondents were facing a challenge in promoting the system awareness and
195 16% stayed neutral.

196 4.14 Organizational Learning : 56% of organizations responded of no common mechanism to benchmark or
197 learn the best practices within various departments of the organizations or outside the organization. 32% of the
198 respondents replied that their organization encourages knowledge sharing and 12% did not have any relevant
199 idea.

200 4.15 Customer Complaints : 36% of respondents claimed to reduce the customer complaints after certification.
201 24% of respondents did not accept to reduce customer complaints since certification. 40% of respondents were
202 neutral that there is no change in the number of complaints before and after certification. 4.16 Customer feedback
203 : 28% of the respondents agreed with an effective feedback system being available at their company. 52% did
204 not agree that they have any effective means to measure the customer feedback. 20% stayed neutral 4.17 Job
205 responsibility, Authority and Accountability : 36% of organizations were not aware of their job roles and the
206 accountability behind it. 28% responded to know their roles well. 36% of respondents stayed neutral.

207 **13 4.18**

208 In-process Quality & Efficiency : 32% of the respondents stated a clear improvement in the inprocess quality
209 and efficiency since getting certified. 20% stayed with no comments whereas 48% did not agree with in-process
210 quality and efficiency improvements since certification. 44% of respondents had opinion that their organization

211 has effective quality systems after certification, 56% respondents felt that their system was not effective even
212 after certification .

213 **14 4.26**

214 Hypothesis Testing : Primary data collected were analyzed for the internal relationship between variables.
215 Hypothesis testing was carried out for 9 constructs as below:-As an example, the first one is illustrated below in the
216 tables 2 & 3:-HO : Null hypothesis: There is no relationship between internal audit and customer complaint HA :
217 Alternative hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between internal audit and reduction of customer
218 complaint Thus, we would reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis that there is a
219 significant relationship between internal audit and reduction of customer complaint.

220 Similar to the test indicated above, other tests were conducted and the result is as below:-There is a significant
221 relationship hypothetically proven between No significant relationship between j) No. of years of organization's
222 existence in the market and top management commitment.

223 V.

224 **15 CONCLUSION a) Summary of Conclusion:**

225 Even though more than a million organizations have been certified to ISO QMS 9001 standard till date, there
226 were certain common problems faced by majority of these certified organizations, which influences their business
227 performance. When an organization carefully eliminates these above mentioned gaps, it can be sure of the whole
228 business model to be effective with value added processes, methods, systems and efficient resources contributing
229 for continual improvements and towards business excellence. b) Scope for further Research:

230 The study was used to evaluate the level of effectiveness of QMS 9001 systems and classify the broad categories
231 of gaps.

232 As a matter of logic, when the organizations struggle to demonstrate a minimum compliance to QMS, it
233 may not be possible for these organizations to reach the business excellence, unless a customized model bridges
234 between the minimum compliance to business excellence through a strategic framework, tailored specifically to
235 suit the organization in terms of scope, scale and core competencies.

236 It is concluded that beyond this study, there is a scope for developing a strategic framework to reach business
excellence through developing a strategic management system. ^{1 2 3}



Figure 1:

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? McAdam and Canning (2001) argued the importance of ISO registration in enhancing firm's chances of gaining work.

? Magd and Curry (2003) analyzed twelve motivations for ISO 9001 certification. A summary of the main reasons of why companies adopt ISO 9001 can be framed as follows: 1. Pressure from existing customers (Johannes, 1996; Buttle, 1997). 2. Pressure from parent organization (Johannes, 1996). 3. Promotional benefit (Johannes, 1996). 4. Competitors Registration (McAdam and Canning, 2001). 5. To improve internal efficiency (McAdam and Canning, 2001). 6. To maintain/increase market share (Magd and Curry, 2003). 7. To help improve customer service (Douglas et al., 2003). ? Many researches studied the ability of ISO 9001 in achieving its main objectives of adding value to organization's implementing it in different economies in general or by different sectors in particular. For example, Pan (2003) discussed ISO 9001 & ISO 14001 implementation in Far East Countries, namely in Taiwan, Japan, Hong Kong and Korea. The study involved investigating firms' motivation for certification, their implementation experiences and the benefits received. The main conclusion for implementing ISO 9001 in these countries was positive in general with some differences in motivation for and benefits gained after implementing ISO 9001. He concluded that there are common factors between these countries to go for ISO 9001 certification, namely, external pressure, gaining competitive edge, internal and external portions and improvement of public relations. The common benefits of ISO 9000 certification among these countries are improved competitive edge, and improved public relations. ? ? While in Canada, Bhuiyan and Alam (2004) studied implementing ISO 9001:2000 and they concluded that there were some difficulties faced by Canadian companies in implementing the new standard and these difficulties are varying based on different companies characteristics like size, and years of operation. ? In a study for evaluating implementation of ISO 9000 for 104 UK certified companies performed by Douglas et al. (2003). They concluded after considering the views of quality professionals participating in the survey that ISO 9001:2000 is very positive and it is less disputing the criticisms of the old revision. They concluded also that the main reason within UK organizations to seek ISO 9001 certification was to allow them to tender for work that otherwise unattainable. ? Magd and Curry (2003) studied ISO 9001 in Egypt and they concluded that the most common reasons for seeking certification in Egypt were to improve the efficiency of the quality system and pressures from competitors/foreign partners. ? Also identifying the impact of the certification, Tzelepis et al. (2006) concluded that the overall ISO's effects on managerial inefficiency are negative indicating that the adoption of ISO reduces managerial inefficiency. ? Quazi and Jacobs (2004) studied the impact of ISO 9000 certification on training and development activities in a sample size from Singapore and they reach to the conclusion of gaining significant improvements in training needs analysis, training design, training delivery, training evaluation, and human resource development activities were reported after implementing ISO 9000 by these organizations.

Figure 2:

2

	hypothesis testing			
	YES	NO	NEUTRAL	TOTAL
YES	32	-	-	32
NO	02	22	36	60
NEUTRAL	02	02	04	08
TOTAL	36	24	40	100

Figure 3: Table 2 :

3

Observed	Expected	$(O - E)^2 / E$
32	11.52	36.4
2	21.6	17.42
22	14.4	4
36	24	6
2	2.88	0.26
2	1.92	0.003
4	3.2	0.2
Calculated value total =		64.28

Figure 4: Table 3 :

paperwork)
? Society
Responsibility,
&Sustainability)

oriented
Environmental
gaps (Corporate
Social
Management

Figure 5: ?

15 CONCLUSION A) SUMMARY OF CONCLUSION:

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15 CONCLUSION A) SUMMARY OF CONCLUSION:

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