

Quality System Implementation Process for Sustainable Success Development in Romanian SMEs

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Abstract: *SMEs trend, in the current economic context is moving undeniably towards sustainable development and performance. Sustainable performance of an organization is achieved by its ability to meet the needs and expectations of customers and other stakeholders, on a long term and in a balanced way. Markets globalization, greater proportion of services or significant changes in information technology, lead companies more than ever to an processes-oriented approach. Organizations ability to plan processes filmmakers value to a higher quality, especially, to adapt, to develop and to improve, independent of objectives, size and types of products or services of the company, is an essential advantage compared with competitors in the market. The aim of this paper is to identify the impact of implementing a quality management system on sustainable development of the organization. The work is based on a research conducted by authors done on the interview, using a questionnaire developed for this purpose, during 2010 –2011, on a sample of 75 external auditors of quality management systems, the first five certification bodies on Romanian market.*

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Introduction

Quality management systems (QMS) help companies develop and maintain a proper and stable level of quality of their products by controlling the production process and other business processes supporting it [1, 756-778].

Currently, the process of implementing a quality management system is based on the ISO 9000 series standards.

The ISO 9000 family of international quality management standards and guidelines has earned a global reputation as a basis for establishing effective and efficient quality management systems. According to the International Organization for Standardization ISO 9000 family has the following structure:

ISO 9000:2005 standard provides the fundamentals and vocabulary used in the entire ISO 9000 family of standards. It sets the stage for understanding the basic elements of quality management as described in the ISO standards. ISO 9000 introduces users to the eight Quality Management Principles as well as the use of the process approach to achieve continual improvement.

ISO 9001:2008 specifies requirements for a quality management system where an organization needs to demonstrate its ability to consistently provide product that meets customer and applicable statutory and regulatory requirements, and aims to enhance customer satisfaction through the effective application of the system, including processes for continual improvement of the system and the assurance of conformity to customer and applicable statutory and regulatory requirements [2].

ISO 9004:2009 is used to extend the benefits obtained from ISO 9001 to all parties that are interested in or affected by your operations. Interested parties include your employees, owners, suppliers and partners.

ISO 19011:2002 covers the area of auditing of quality management systems and environmental management systems. It provides guidance on the audit programmes, the conduct of internal or external audits, and information on auditor competence and society in general.

Figure 1 describes the relationship between ISO 9000 family and the field where it can be applied when we are implementing a quality management system [3, 6].

Since their origin in 1987, ISO standards have undergone modifications, first in 1994 and then in 2000, the latter being the modification that produced the greatest changes. Recently in 2008, another version of ISO standards requirements has been developed [4, 577-601].

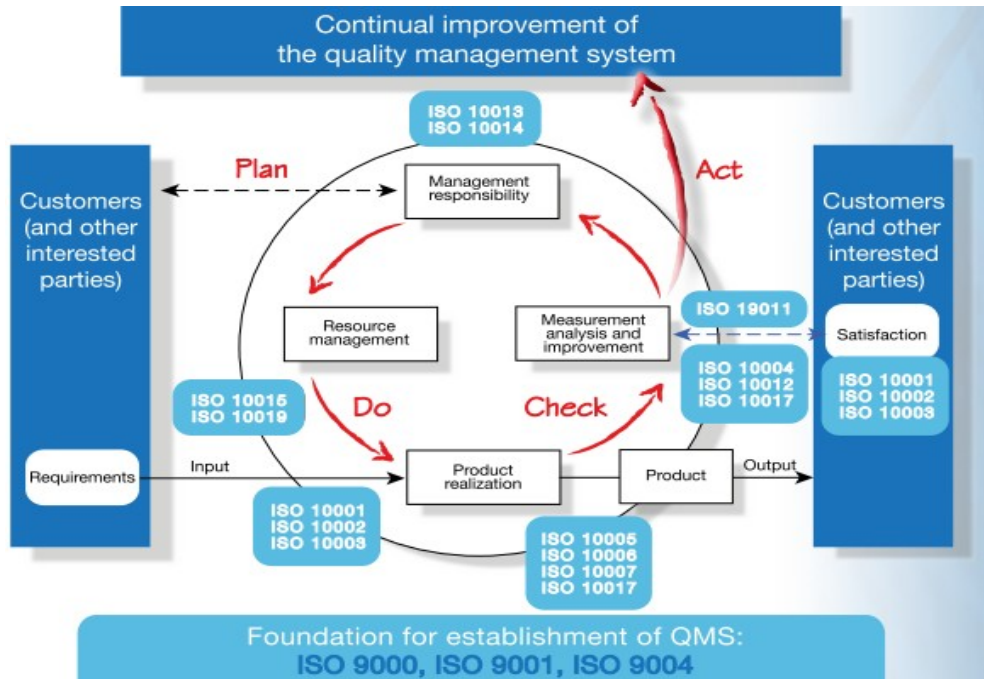


Figure 1 The ISO 9000 process approach

The last version of ISO is based on the following eight QM elements: (1) organisation focused on the client; (2) leadership; (3) involvement; (4) process management; (5) focus of the system towards management; (6) continuous improvement; (7) realistic focus towards decision-making; and (8) mutually beneficial relations with the supplier.

Olaru [5, 552], [6, 3-10] considered that we are seeing more clearly the oriented models of quality management systems ISO 9000 international standards promoted by the re-organization processes in terms of meeting customer requirements, but also other stakeholders, so as to ensure sustainable business development.

According to the International Organization for Standardization, the organizations depend on their customers and therefore, should understand them current and future need, they will meet these requirements, while taking care to exceed customer expectations [7]. On the other hand, emphasizes that "the success of an organization is based on meeting current and future needs and expectations of current and potential customers and end users, and the consideration of other stakeholders" [8].

For an organization that wants to have lasting success in the market, order should not be getting the certificate, but the skill to propose objectives that follow them and to analyze their results to improve their performance [9, 580]

The reasons for pursuing ISO 9001:2000 in the majority of organisations appear threefold. First, it may be driven by a customer request to conform with their internal quality control and supplier/vendor quality assurance systems. Second, it can be driven by the adopting organisation as a means or route to increasing home and overseas market share where ISO certification has a value that is somewhat

transferable to product quality. Third, it can be seen as a means of improving internal processes and product or service quality [10, 273-283].

1. Definitions of Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs [11, 8]. The definition of sustainable development provided by the Brundtland Report renders the interpretation of sustainability subjective, for it does not specify whose needs will be met nor how sustainable development will be achieved; as a result this has led to a plethora of definitions of sustainability which are inherently different [12, 840-60].

Furthermore the Brundtland Report [13, 86-108] identifies the root cause of these limits can be found in technological inadequacies and inequitable societal practices and therefore any discussion of sustainable development must include a process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development, and institutional change are made consistent with future as well as present needs [14]. The Brundtland Report presents sustainable development as the pursuit of an ideal, a constantly evolving concept that is intimately linked to laws and customary practices [15, 86-108]. By Robert W. Kates et al. sustainable development is defined through goals, indicators, values, and practice [16, 8-21]:

- **sustainable development by goal:** To illustrate, it is helpful to examine three sets of goals that use different time-horizons: the short-term (2015) goals of the Millennium Declaration of the United Nations; the two-generation goals (2050) of the Sustainability Transition of the Board on Sustainable Development; and the long-term (beyond 2050) goals of the Great Transition of the Global Scenario Group.

- **sustainable development by indicators** Combining global, national, and local initiatives, there are literally hundreds of efforts to define appropriate indicators and to measure them. Recently, a dozen such efforts were reviewed.

- **sustainable development by value** –But values have many meanings [17]. In general, values are expressions of, or beliefs in, the worth of objects, qualities, or behaviors. They are typically expressed in terms of goodness or desirability or, conversely, in terms of badness or avoidance. They often invoke feelings, define or direct us to goals, frame our attitudes, and provide standards against which the behaviors of individuals and societies can be judged.

- **sustainable development by practice** - most importantly—sustainable development is The practice includes the many efforts at defining the concept, establishing goals, creating indicators, and asserting values. It includes developing social movements, organizing institutions, crafting sustainability science and technology, and negotiating the grand compromise among those who are principally concerned with nature and environment.

Modern attitudes to the sustainable development, to the concept of sustainable development as well as to the understanding and salvation of the problems of sustainable development can be characterized by extremely wide variety [18, 516-540]. After Borisas Melnikas, such variety determines the fact that the phenomena, problems and topicalities can be analyzed by:

- including spaces of different extent (various regions, countries or their groups, the world), as well as including different systems (various organizations, their groups, other systems),
- involving different combinations of processes, phenomena, factors and circumstances of social, economical, political development, and progress of science and technologies into the unit of developmental processes,
- giving preference to different social, economic, ecological, technological, political as well as other manifestations, consequences or circumstances of the sustainable development,
- regarding the management features of various processes of development and progress as well as the multiplicity of different subjects and their interests that take place in management process.

2. The Relationship of Iso Standards and Sustainable Development

ISO standards are crucial to sustainable development, as they are a key source of technological know-how, especially for developing countries and economies in transition. They are invaluable in helping countries develop their economies and build capacities to compete on global markets. Producers and consumers everywhere benefit from your efforts [19].

Analyzing sustainable development in a procedural perspective [20], in opinion of the authors (Garvare, R. and Isaksson) the fundamental values are:

- Achieving and maintaining a sustainable balance between the various stakeholders;
- Assimilate the concept of excellence in learning and ability to adapt to change. Acquisition of such value that results in: individualization of products according to customer needs and developing products with a low consumption of resources;
- Reaching a level of excellence based on procedural performance. This means managing processes effectively and efficiently, achieving a result that maximizes the integrated value supported by an interested party in the long run, maintaining also a balance between the demands and expectations of other stakeholders. Based on procedural performance excellence creates the conditions improvements and coordination of learning in the system components;
- Treatment of stakeholders starting from democratic principles, as integrity and respect, accountability and leadership approach is, to some extent, preserve all;
- Transparency so that the open communication will inform all stakeholders on performance standards to be able to reach a fair and predictable competitive environment.

3. Research Methodology

In these circumstances, the aim of the conducted research was to analyze the processes behind implementing a quality management system under ISO 9001 international standards and determining the impact of implementing a quality management system, it has on sustainable development organizations. The research involved the following steps: documentation of the literature, identifying steps in implementing a quality management system, creating a questionnaire for evaluating process by the respondents, data collection, analysis of the responses, highlighting the impact of implementing a quality management system on sustainable development organizations. For conducting the research and to obtain answers to reveal as well the industry was used as analysis tool, a questionnaire applied external auditors belonging among the top 5 companies in the country certification. The questionnaire was designed for quantitative and qualitative evaluation of key processes underlying the implementation of a quality management system and impact on sustainable development organization.

The questionnaire had as a starting point to structure the ISO recommendation to implement a quality management system in seven steps:

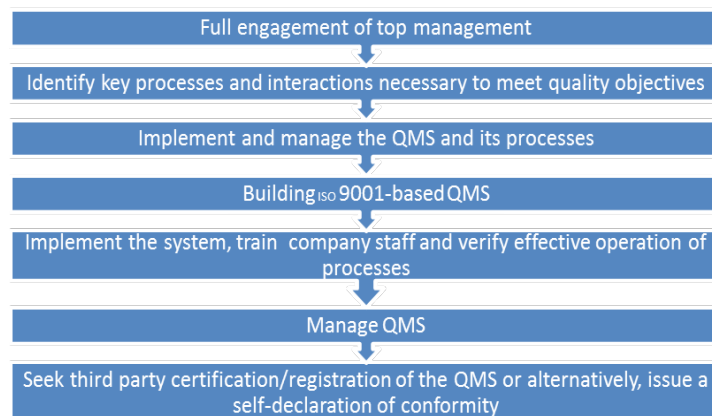


Figure 2 Steps followed in research

4. Research Results

According to research conducted over 55% of auditors surveyed considered the most important steps in supporting sustainable development are full engagement of top management, implement and manage the QMS and ITS Processes, Building ISO 9001-based QMS and QMS Manage. In their opinion the least important is getting management system certification.

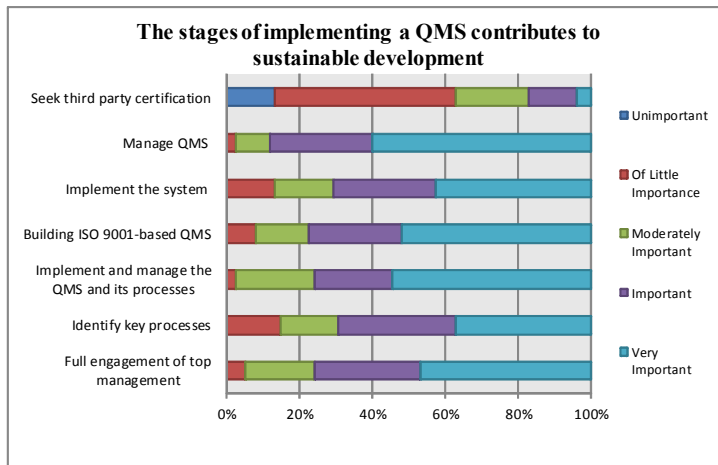


Figure 3 Stages of implementing QMS

The research has shown that to support sustainable development, organizations must focus on customer satisfaction (75%) and monitor the operation of your QMS MEASURE (65%), Strive for continual Improvement (80%) think Implementing business excellence models in the company Operations (58%), Organizational self-Assessment and performances (63%).

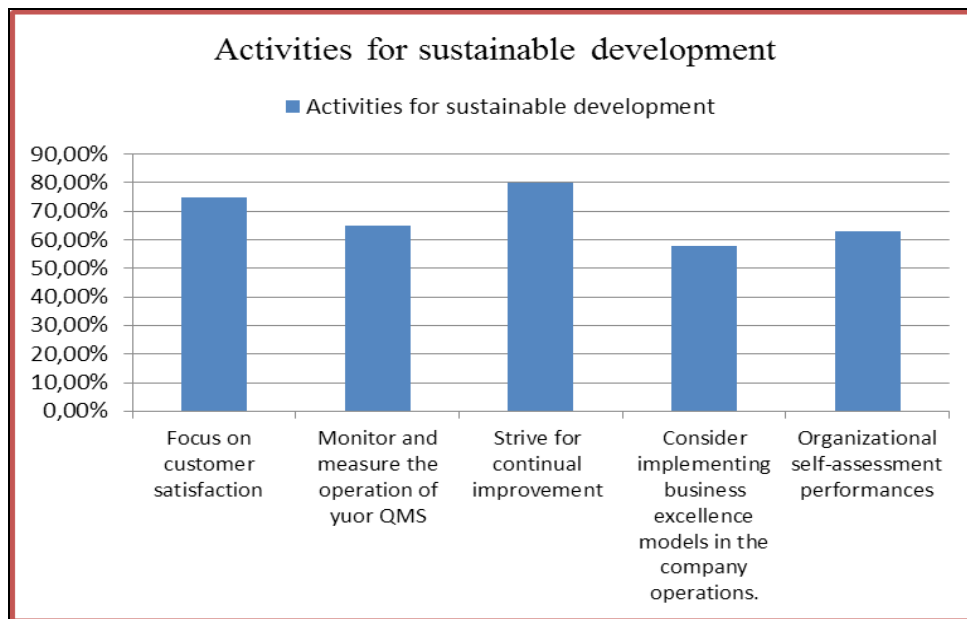


Figure 4 Activities for sustainable development

ISO 9004 is recommended as a guide for organizations whose top management wishes to extend the benefits of ISO 9001 in pursuit of systematic and continual improvement of the organization's overall performance. However, it is not intended for certification or contractual purposes. Starting from this, 27% of specialists answered that organizations that have implemented a system of quality we manage are not using this standardized and only 9% is used as a guide to self-organization in view of performance giving you a lasting success.

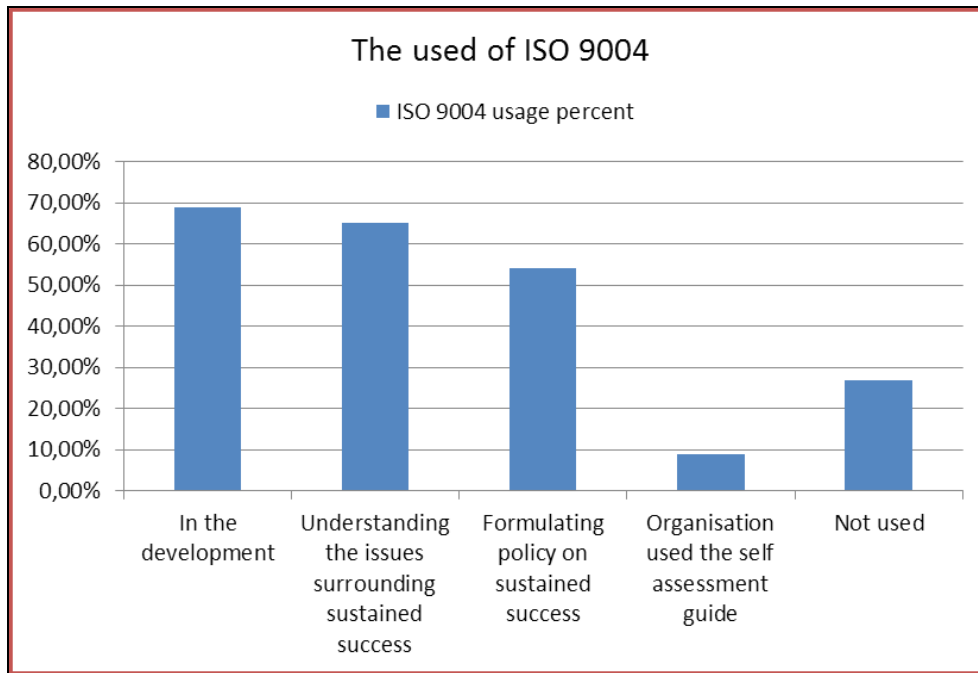


Figure 5 The used of ISO 9004

Conclusions

Questionnaire-based survey conducted by the authors allowed the determination of the impact that a implementing a quality management system has on sustainable development organizations.

Taking into account the results of the conducted research, it can be concluded that implementing a quality management system can support sustainable development in Romanian SMEs.

Findings can be a starting point for future research aimed to identify the best ways for the sustainable development of Romanian SMEs, from the perspective of implementation of a quality management system.

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