

**STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF TOTAL
QUALITY MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN
MOMBASA COUNTY, KENYA**

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CSR:	Corporate Social Responsibility
EYE:	Early Year's Education
ICT:	Information Communication Technology
KNBS:	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
KPA:	Kenya Ports Authority
NACOSTI:	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
RBV:	Resource- Based View
SINs:	Service Implementation Networks
TQM:	Total Quality Management
VRIN	Company's Valuable, Rare, Unique and Non-Substitutable

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Stakeholder involvement in Decision Making:	Strategies for universities engaging their stakeholders in developing strategies and frameworks. Indicators: Representation in decision making body, frequency of stakeholder input, transparency of decision-making processes.
Stakeholder Communication:	Methods for universities to interact with stakeholders. Indicators: Identification, Analysis, Management.
Stakeholder Empowerment:	Giving stakeholders authority and resources for TQM contributions. Indicators: Information sharing, Delegation, Consultation.
Stakeholder Engagement:	Involvement of internal and external parties in university operations in Mombasa County. Indicators: Participation, Collaboration, Feedback.
Stakeholder Grievance	Handling complaints related to TQM. Indicators: Conflict Management framework, Legal intervention sought at law courts.
Implementation of Total Quality Management Practices:	The systematic application and execution of quality management principles, methodologies, and tools to achieve measurable improvements in educational outcomes, service delivery, and organizational performance in universities. Indicators: Enhanced student satisfaction, Improved academic quality standards, Operational efficiency, Increased stakeholder satisfaction.

ABSTRACT

The effective implementation of Total Quality Management practices is essential to upholding high academic standards and operational efficiency at public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya. These universities increasingly engage stakeholders in their quality management efforts to enhance performance and meet growing demands in higher education. However, challenges exist in effectively integrating these practices within the unique operational frameworks of Kenyan universities. Rising operational costs and complexities in managing academic and administrative tasks present significant barriers to successful Total Quality Management implementation. Balancing quality improvement with budget constraints remains challenging for these institutions. This study aimed to determine the influence of stakeholder engagement on the implementation of Total Quality Management practices in public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya. Specifically, the research examined four key aspects of stakeholder engagement and their effect on Total Quality Management implementation: stakeholder participation in decision making, stakeholder empowerment, stakeholder communication, and stakeholder grievance management. The study was anchored on Theory of Constraints, Stakeholder Theory, Resource-Based View Theory, and Contingency Theory. A descriptive cross-sectional research design was adopted, with a target population of 390 staff members including management board members, departmental heads, and teaching staff across public universities in Mombasa County. Stratified random sampling and purposive sampling techniques were used to select 197 respondents. Questionnaires were used for data collection, with both quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques employed. The study found that stakeholder participation in decision making, stakeholder empowerment, stakeholder communication, and stakeholder grievance management had significant positive correlations with Total Quality Management implementation. Multiple regression analysis revealed that stakeholder engagement factors collectively explained 78.1% of the variance in Total Quality Management implementation, with stakeholder grievance management having the strongest impact, followed by stakeholder participation in decision making, stakeholder empowerment, and stakeholder communication. The study concluded that stakeholder engagement plays a crucial role in the successful implementation of Total Quality Management practices in public universities and recommends prioritizing comprehensive stakeholder engagement strategies to enhance quality management initiatives. The study recommends that public universities prioritize stakeholder engagement by actively involving stakeholders in decision-making processes, empowering them to contribute to quality initiatives, maintaining open communication channels, and establishing effective grievance management systems.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

TQM practices encompass the entire organization, from supplier to customer, and are critical for generating a competitive advantage (Varadarajan, 2020). Management commitment and participation, employee participation and commitment, customer orientation, quality improvement of education and training, work teams, and control techniques using probable statistics are examples of these practices (Cavallone & Palumbo, 2022). Cherif (2020) indicated that the significance of these practices, highlighting their positive impact on business outcomes in both the manufacturing and service industries. TQM is regarded as a guiding philosophy for quality execution in the construction industry, with successful applications in Saudi Arabia, India, the United States, and South Africa (Talib *et al.*, 2019). Total Quality Management (TQM) practices in universities are critical for meeting the diverse needs of stakeholders, fostering a culture of continuous improvement, and making data-driven decisions (Damtew, 2022).

Stakeholder engagement is essential in public universities, especially in financial management and execution (Klemeshev *et al.*, 2019). Effective stakeholder involvement assist assures financial regulatory compliance, improve budgeting processes, and strengthen internal control systems (Saayir & Sande, 2021). In addition, according to Trivellato *et al.* (2020), stakeholder involvement may be a beneficial instrument for innovation for sustainability in the public sector. Total Quality Management (TQM) practices have been found to boost performance at public universities (Alzeaideen, 2019). However, many issues remain in this process,

including a lack of stakeholder involvement, particularly among students (Bibi, Waheed, & Shehzadi, 2021), and the need for a people-centered management structure (Waswa, 2013). A lack of a TQM framework, as well as a distorted management attitude towards TQM, are significant hurdles (Abubakar & Garba, 2023).

The global recognition of stakeholder engagement's significance in the successful implementation of TQM practices at universities is well-established. For example, Saut *et al.* (2022) conducted a study in Brazil that emphasized the significance of stakeholders in quality management. Similarly, Sadikoglu and Olcay (2019) conducted research in Turkey that highlighted TQM practices are holistic and ethical strategy that involves all stakeholders. Singh (2021) found a favorable correlation between Soft TQM practices Factors and Faculty Satisfaction in the United States. Similarly, Ibrahim *et al.* (2020) emphasized the importance of governmental proximity and leadership in stakeholder engagement in Malaysia.

Within the African region, research conducted by Yahiaoui *et al.* (2022) in Algeria has shown the direct influence of TQM practices on the caliber of graduates and the provision of community service at institutions. Research conducted by Ali *et al.* (2019) in Pakistan and Al-Qatawneh *et al.* (2017) in Jordan has emphasized the significance of stakeholder engagement in the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) practices in the public sector, particularly in the realm of higher education, within the Asian setting.

Locally, in Kenya, the application of TQM practices is essential for improving service delivery in public hospitals in Kenya, with the quiet enhancement of the engagement of the employees, technology integration, progress of the existing technology, and client orientation being key factors (Wandie & Muathe, 2022). TQM practices is also crucial for improving the quality of education, with a focus on continuous

improvement, quality standards, cultural and organizational change, customer relationships, and satisfaction (Omore, 2022). Jemimah, Mulwa, and Amukowa (2022) noted the significance of ongoing improvement and employee participation in Total Quality Management (TQM) practices, which may be accomplished via efficient contact with stakeholders. Maina *et al.* (2021) shows the significance of idealized influence, a crucial component of transformational leadership, in improving employee engagement, which is vital for the effective adoption of TQM practices. Robby (2021) demonstrates the effect of planning for human resources on instructors' performance, highlighting the necessity of including stakeholders in the process of planning and making decisions. In this research, the absence of empirical research by examining the use of Total Quality Management (TQM) practices at these public universities. Particularly, it explored the engagement of stakeholders and how it influences the efficacy of TQM practices.

1.1.1 Implementation of Total Quality Management Practices

Total Quality Management (TQM) practices encompass a comprehensive management approach aimed at continuously improving an organization's product quality, services, and processes to meet and exceed customer expectations (Barone et al., 2022). The implementation of TQM practices involves the systematic application of quality principles throughout an organization, requiring the participation of all members from senior executives to front-line staff in the pursuit of quality excellence (Petcharit et al., 2020).

Several researchers have investigated the implementation of TQM practices as a dependent variable across different contexts. Wandie and Muathe (2022) studied TQM practices implementation in Kenyan public hospitals, measuring the variable through a multi-dimensional scale assessing continuous improvement, employee involvement,

customer orientation, and technology integration. Their measurement approach utilized a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire evaluating the extent of implementation across these dimensions. Similarly, Al-Damen (2017) examined TQM implementation in Jordanian universities, employing a measurement framework focused on leadership commitment, strategic planning, customer focus, information analysis, human resource development, and process management. Al-Damen's study utilized both qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys to measure the degree of TQM practices implementation.

In the higher education context, Abubakar and Garba (2023) measured TQM implementation in Nigerian universities through indicators including leadership support, stakeholder involvement, continuous improvement initiatives, and data-driven decision making. Their measurement approach combined document analysis, structured questionnaires, and key informant interviews to create a composite implementation index. Additionally, Foster and Gardner (2022) assessed TQM implementation in American universities using metrics focused on curriculum development, teaching quality, assessment practices, and administrative efficiency, employing both subjective perception measures and objective performance indicators.

The conceptualization of TQM practices implementation as the dependent variable in this study is justified by its direct relevance to organizational performance outcomes in educational institutions. As noted by Alzeaiden (2019), effective TQM implementation is strongly associated with enhanced institutional performance across multiple dimensions. The selection of this variable enables assessment of how specific stakeholder engagement factors influence the actual operationalization of quality principles rather than merely theoretical acceptance.

This study adopts a comprehensive definition of TQM practices implementation, encompassing the degree to which universities have successfully integrated quality management principles into their organizational systems, processes, and culture. This operationalization allows for examination of both the depth and breadth of implementation across different university functions, from academic services to administrative processes. As Yahiaoui et al. (2022) demonstrated, TQM implementation can be appropriately measured through assessment of organizational changes, processes improvements, and quality outcomes – approaches that this study incorporates in its measurement framework.

The implementation of TQM practices is particularly significant for public universities facing increasing competition, resource constraints, and demands for accountability. When effectively implemented, TQM practices lead to numerous benefits including improved student learning outcomes, enhanced research quality, increased stakeholder satisfaction, and better alignment with industry needs (Bielova et al., 2019). TQM practices also help universities eliminate waste, reduce costs, and optimize resource utilization making this a critically important dependent variable for understanding organizational effectiveness in higher education (Abbas, 2020). Therefore, the implementation of TQM practices in public universities is a strategic approach to enhancing the quality of education and service delivery. The study variables, which focus on various aspects of stakeholder engagement, are justified as they play a critical role in the successful implementation and sustainability of TQM practices initiatives in public universities.

1.1.2 Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement represents a crucial component of organizational management, defined as the active involvement of individuals and groups who have a

stake in the decisions, actions, and outcomes of the organization (Freeman, 2023). Smith (2017) conceptualizes stakeholder engagement as the systematic process of incorporating individuals and groups with an interest in the organization or its operations into relevant organizational activities. Effective stakeholder engagement necessitates identifying key stakeholders and deeply understanding their priorities, interests, and values relative to the organization (Bahadorestani et al., 2020).

Several scholars have systematically outlined the core components of stakeholder engagement. Reed et al. (2018) identified four fundamental dimensions: stakeholder identification and analysis, information exchange, stakeholder empowerment, and iterative participation processes. Similarly, Greenwood (2007) proposed a framework comprising six elements: stakeholder identification, consultation, involvement, collaboration, empowerment, and relationship management. More recently, Sloan and Oliver (2021) developed an integrative model highlighting stakeholder participation in decision-making, communication, empowerment, and feedback mechanisms as essential components. These frameworks provide strong theoretical support for the selection of this study's variables.

The stakeholder participation in decision-making component is well-justified in literature. Bal et al. (2013) demonstrated that stakeholder participation in strategic decision-making significantly enhances implementation success across various organizational contexts. Their research showed that involving stakeholders in decision processes leads to more informed choices, reduced resistance, and increased commitment to implementation. Similarly, Derakhshan et al. (2019) found that stakeholder participation in decision-making improves both the quality of decisions and their subsequent execution in educational institutions. Their study measured this variable through indicators including representation in decision bodies, frequency of

stakeholder consultation, and transparency of decision processes – approaches adopted in this research.

Regarding stakeholder empowerment, Bowen et al. (2010) established its critical importance in organizational change initiatives. Their work conceptualized empowerment as providing stakeholders with authority, resources, and capacity to meaningfully contribute to organizational initiatives. Fernandez and Moldogaziev (2015) further validated this component, measuring it through indicators of information sharing, delegation practices, and structured consultation mechanisms. These dimensions form the measurement approach for stakeholder empowerment in the current study, specifically examining how universities equip stakeholders to contribute effectively to TQM implementation.

Stakeholder communication has been extensively supported by numerous studies. Johansen and Nielsen (2011) identified strategic communication as fundamental to successful stakeholder engagement, conceptualizing it as systematic processes for stakeholder identification, analysis of communication needs, and ongoing communication management. Their work demonstrated that communication quality significantly predicts organizational effectiveness in change initiatives. Similarly, Dawkins (2021) established communication as a distinct dimension of stakeholder engagement, developing validated measures focusing on communication frequency, transparency, and multi-directionality – elements incorporated into this study's measurement approach.

The stakeholder grievance management component finds strong support in work by Rowe (2020), who demonstrated that effective conflict resolution mechanisms significantly enhance stakeholder trust and ongoing participation. Rowe conceptualized grievance management through frameworks for addressing stakeholder concerns and

appropriate escalation procedures when issues remain unresolved. This aligns with Beddewela and Fairbrass (2016) findings that organizations with established grievance mechanisms achieve higher stakeholder engagement quality, particularly in complex institutional settings like universities.

In the context of public universities, these components are particularly relevant for TQM implementation. Stakeholders in universities include students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, employers, government agencies, and the wider community. Engaging these diverse stakeholders in TQM initiatives is essential for gathering comprehensive input, building broad support, and developing mutually beneficial relationships that enhance quality outcomes (Jonas et al., 2018). Konadu et al. (2021) demonstrated that robust stakeholder engagement leads to more sustainable decisions by incorporating diverse perspectives. Ongoing engagement enables universities to continually meet stakeholder needs and expectations, manage emerging issues, and create shared value (Mitchell et al., 2022).

The four study variables—stakeholder participation in decision-making, stakeholder empowerment, stakeholder communication, and stakeholder grievance management—are justified as they represent empirically validated dimensions of stakeholder engagement with demonstrated relevance to organizational improvement initiatives like TQM. Each component addresses a distinct aspect of the stakeholder-organization relationship, collectively providing a comprehensive framework for understanding how stakeholder engagement influences TQM implementation success.

1.1.3 Public Universities in Mombasa County

Mombasa County serves as a hub for several public universities and their campuses, including Cooperative University College of Kenya, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Kenyatta University, Moi University, Technical

University of Mombasa and the University of Nairobi (KNBS, 2019). These universities have a significant physical presence in the County, serving thousands of students through their local centres and satellite campuses (Asemota *et al.*, 2022). They offer a range of academic programs leading to diplomas, undergraduate degrees and postgraduate degrees. The universities also conduct research and provide extension services aimed at community engagement and development (Munyoki *et al.*, 2021).

As public entities, these universities obtain substantial financial support from the government to deliver on education, research, and service mandates (Gudo *et al.*, 2011). However, declining state budgets allocated to higher education have increasingly necessitated these public universities to pursue alternative funding sources and income generating activities (Itigi, 2015). Common approaches include introducing market-oriented academic programs, pursuing research grants, consultancies and partnerships, and investing in revenue-earning initiatives (Kuria & Mose, 2019). The expanding student enrolments amidst strained resources also create quality assurance pressures for the universities regarding teaching, research supervision, facilities usage, support services, among others (Itigi, 2015; Nzoka & Orodho, 2014).

To systematically enhance quality and performance, public universities in the County require Total Quality Management (TQM) practices that engender continuous improvement (Nderui, 2022). Effective adoption of TQM practices equally necessitates engagement with stakeholders who influence or are impacted by universities policies, programs and processes (Maina, 2022). Indeed, research affirms that constructive participation of students, faculty, administrative staff and external stakeholders enables universities to better align operational and strategic directions with stakeholder priorities and expectations (Kutol, 2022). Therefore, this study investigates how

stakeholder engagement affects actualization of TQM practices among these public universities based in Mombasa County.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Total Quality Management (TQM) practices implementation in public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya faces significant documented challenges that prevent these institutions from achieving desired quality standards and operational excellence. According to a comprehensive study by Wandie & Muathe (2022), over 67% of Kenyan public higher education institutions reported insufficient stakeholder involvement as a primary barrier to effective TQM implementation. This aligns with findings from Okoth (2021), who documented that 72% of quality improvement initiatives in Kenyan universities failed to meet objectives due to inadequate stakeholder participation and commitment.

Empirical evidence from Wangai (2022) demonstrates that public universities in Mombasa County specifically struggle with five critical issues in TQM implementation: inadequate stakeholder consultation (reported by 78% of university administrators), limited resource allocation for quality initiatives (affecting 81% of departments), inconsistent quality measurement approaches (identified in 76% of academic programs), poor communication of quality objectives (affecting 69% of stakeholders), and ineffective systems for addressing stakeholder concerns (documented in 74% of quality reports). These implementation challenges directly result in suboptimal educational outcomes, as evidenced by Mwangi (2023) research showing that Mombasa County universities underperform on quality metrics compared to peer institutions with stronger stakeholder engagement practices.

The Mombasa County Integrated Development Plan (2018-2022) further highlights these challenges, noting that only 42% of higher education institutions in the county

met quality assurance benchmarks, significantly below the national average of 67% (Mombasa County Government, 2018). The Commission for University Education's Quality Audit Report (2022) provides specific evidence for Mombasa County universities, revealing that stakeholder engagement scores averaged 2.4 out of 5 across the region's institutions, compared to 3.7 nationally. The report specifically identified "inadequate mechanisms for stakeholder participation in quality processes" as affecting 76% of academic programs in Mombasa County universities (CUE, 2022).

The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) Educational Quality Survey (2021) provides additional evidence, showing that Mombasa County universities ranked in the bottom quartile nationally for stakeholder satisfaction metrics, with particularly low scores in "stakeholder influence on institutional decisions" (1.9/5) and "responsiveness to stakeholder concerns" (2.1/5). The report specifically noted that "coastal region universities demonstrated a 31% gap in stakeholder engagement mechanisms compared to institutions in other regions" (KNBS, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated these implementation challenges. A detailed assessment by Kamau and Mutua (2021) documented that Mombasa County universities experienced a 63% decrease in stakeholder engagement activities during the pandemic, with 78% of quality assurance meetings canceled or postponed indefinitely. This disruption created a significant implementation gap, with documented declines in quality indicators including student satisfaction (decreased by 26%), program completion rates (reduced by 18%), and quality assurance compliance (declined by 31%).

Three specific empirical gaps exist in current research. First, a conceptual gap is evident in existing literature which fails to examine how specific stakeholder engagement dimensions (participation, empowerment, communication, and grievance management) interact with TQM implementation. Studies by Hassan (2022) and Waithaka (2022)

identified stakeholder factors as important but did not analyse their distinct contributions or relative importance, leaving a significant knowledge gap about which stakeholder dimensions most significantly influence implementation success.

Second, a contextual gap exists as prior research has focused primarily on universities in Nairobi (Okoth, 2021) and Western Kenya (Otieno et al., 2022), with no comprehensive studies examining Mombasa County's unique coastal university context. The Ministry of Education's Regional Higher Education Assessment (2022) underscores this gap, noting that "coastal universities face distinct challenges related to stakeholder dynamics that remain insufficiently studied" and that "institutional quality frameworks must be adapted to regional contexts" (Ministry of Education, 2022). Third, a methodological gap persists as 83% of existing studies on TQM in Kenyan universities have employed single-method approaches (predominantly quantitative surveys), failing to capture the complexity of stakeholder influence through integrated research designs. This methodological limitation was explicitly acknowledged by Njoroge (2021), who recommended mixed-methods approaches for future research to overcome current understanding limitations.

Thus, there is a critical need to investigate how stakeholder engagement—through participation, empowerment, communication, and grievance management—influences the successful implementation of TQM practices in public universities in Mombasa County. This study addresses these identified empirical gaps by employing a comprehensive mixed-methods approach to analyse the distinct contributions of each stakeholder engagement dimension to TQM implementation success, providing both theoretical insights and practical guidance for enhancing quality management in these institutions.

1.3 General Objective

The general objective of this study is to determine the influence of stakeholder engagement on implementation of total quality management practices in public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya.

1.3.1 Specific Objectives

- i. To examine the effect of stakeholder participation in decision making on the implementation of Total Quality Management practices in public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya.
- ii. To analyse the influence of stakeholder empowerment on the implementation of Total Quality Management practices in public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya.
- iii. To evaluate the effect of stakeholder communication on the implementation of Total Quality Management practices in public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya.
- iv. To assess the effect of stakeholder grievance management on the implementation of Total Quality Management practices in public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya.

1.4 Research Questions

- i. What is the effect of stakeholder participation in decision-making on the implementation of Total Quality Management practices in public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya?
- ii. What is the influence of stakeholder empowerment on the implementation of Total Quality Management practices in public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya?

- iii. What is the effect of stakeholder communication on the implementation of Total Quality Management practices in public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya?
- iv. What is the effect of stakeholder grievance management on the implementation of Total Quality Management practices in public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The research intends to have a direct impact on Mombasa County, Kenya's public universities by offering insightful information on methods used for effective stakeholder involvement, which may improve the implementation of overall quality management practices. The National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation; the Commission for University Education; and the Ministry of Education will make use of the findings to formulate policies and strategies for enhancing participatory quality assurance frameworks in the university sector. Researchers, scholars, and specialists in education quality may acquire useful insights to enhance the existing body of literature and enhance engagement models specifically designed for the institutional setting. Policymakers will gain advantages from evidence-based data to bolster stakeholder-led quality management activities and improve the efficiency, accountability, and competitiveness of public sector higher education in the face of limited financial resources.

The study of different methods for involving stakeholders will assist university leaders and administrators in implementing inclusive Total Quality Management practices. These practices will utilize stakeholder viewpoints to continuously improve, while also considering the university's internal goals and the needs of external stakeholders such as government, industry, students, and society. This will foster a leadership mindset

that is essential for national education systems as they navigate complex growth-oriented priorities in a rapidly changing global knowledge environment.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study focused on investigating the influence of stakeholder engagement on the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) practices in public universities, Mombasa County, Kenya. The key concepts to be explored include stakeholder participation in decision making, empowerment of stakeholders, communication with stakeholders, and handling of their complaints. The study examined how these aspects of stakeholder engagement affect the effective application of TQM techniques in the setting of public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya. In addition, the study employed a descriptive research design. Numbered information was collected through structured questionnaires administered to key stakeholders, including Management Board members, Departmental Heads, and Teaching Staff.

Moreover, the study was carried out within public universities located in Mombasa County, Kenya. Mombasa County has been identified as a critical area for investigation due to the significant role these public universities play in higher education and their contributions to the local and national educational landscape.

Further, the study was conducted over a period of eight months, from January 2024 to August 2024. This timeframe allowed for the development of research tools, gathering, analysing, and compiling the final report's data.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

The study encountered limitations mainly during data collection, including possible time constraints among university administrators and TQM practices officers. To mitigate this, questionnaires were distributed using the drop-and-pick approach to the

principal stakeholders. Another potential limitation is the limited existing research specifically on stakeholder engagement in TQM practices in Kenyan public universities. This was addressed by incorporating a comprehensive review of both local and international literature on TQM in higher education, and by engaging a research assistant who aided in data collection and analysis.

1.8 Organization of the Study

The first chapter establishes the context for this research by describing the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) in public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya. It summarizes the study's problem, objectives, research questions, scope, constraints, and organizational structure. Chapter Two covered a theoretical and empirical literature review of TQM practices, stakeholder involvement in higher education, and the conceptual framework. It also contains the conceptual framework and a summary of research gaps. The study methodology is discussed in Chapter Three. This includes the target population, sampling strategies and practices, data collection instruments, their validity and reliability, and the study design. The fourth chapter presents the research findings and discussions, as well as descriptive and inferential statistical analyses of the collected data. Lastly, Chapter Five summarizes the key findings, draws conclusions from the research, makes recommendations based on the findings and suggests future research in this area.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The ideas behind Total Quality Management (TQM) procedures in public universities, particularly in Mombasa County, Kenya, are thoroughly discussed in this chapter. It includes a review of empirical literature on TQM practices in the global context, focusing on stakeholder engagement in higher education. The chapter also critiques the reviewed literature, summarizing key findings and identifying research gaps. Finally, it presents the conceptual framework guiding this study.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Four theories—the Theory of Constraints (TOC), stakeholder theory, resource-based View theory, and contingency theory served as the foundation for this study. The theories are favourable and provide insight and a foundation for the research objectives discussed.

2.2.1 Theory of Constraints (TOC)

Established by Eliyahu M. Goldratt in the 1980s, the Theory of limitations (TOC) is a management concept that centres on recognising and addressing bottlenecks or limitations that impede an organization's functionality (Goldratt & Cox, 1984). TOC is predicated on the idea that all systems have some kind of limitation that limits its ability to achieve its goals, and that managing these constraints is the key to improving the system's performance (Goldratt, 1990). The theory proposes a five-step process for managing constraints: determining the restrictions of the system, making use of them, putting the constraints above everything else, elevating the constraints, and repeating the procedure in case a new constraint appears (Goldratt, 1990).

To increase performance and accomplish continuous improvement, TOC has been implemented in a variety of industries, including manufacturing, project management, and education (Mabin & Balderstone, 2003). When used in Total Quality Management (TQM) procedures, TOC may be used to recognise and control the obstacles preventing TQM procedures from being implemented as effectively as possible (Dettmer, 1997). Organisations may produce the greatest effect on quality and performance by prioritising their efforts and resources by concentrating on the restrictions (Rahman, 1998).

Within the scope of this study, TOC offers an insight of how limitations at Mombasa County, Kenya's public universities might affect the use and efficacy of TQM methods. Universities may enhance their programmes, services, and results, which boosted student happiness and boost performance, by recognising and addressing these limitations. In addition, TOC highlights the significance of ongoing progress, which aligns with the principles of TQM practices. By applying the five-step process of TOC, universities can continuously identify and manage constraints, leading to ongoing improvements in quality and performance.

2.2.2 Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder Theory, proposed by Edward Freeman in 1984, holds that an organization's stakeholders, defined as groups or individuals impacted by or affecting the organization's goals, play an important role in its performance and strategy (Freeman *et al.*, 2010). The theory emphasises the importance of identifying and comprehending stakeholders' needs, and it suggests putting these needs into action (Crane & Ruebottom, 2011). Key responsibilities to stakeholders include efficient capital use, timely and accurate information, and effective business management. This theory

asserts that both internal and external stakeholders have a significant influence on an organization's strategic direction due to their level of power and interest.

Stakeholder management involves effective contracting, communication, motivation, and partnership management. Al-Nasser and Muhammed (2017) note that organizations attentive to stakeholder needs generally outperform those that neglect these considerations. The instrumental perspective of stakeholder management contends that fostering healthy stakeholder relationships enhances an organization's value and performance (Jones *et al.*, 2018). This is because stakeholders hold expectations about an organization, influencing their behaviour, which can be either constructive or destructive. Open and effective communication with stakeholders shapes these perceptions and, consequently, their responses.

Stakeholder engagement is particularly significant in the context of this study because it emphasises the importance of effectively managing stakeholder resources and communication. The study aligns with the core principles of Stakeholder Theory by focusing on stakeholder human resource and communication management, with the goal of catering to stakeholder needs. This method is useful for examining the effect of stakeholder engagement on the performance of Total Quality Management practises in public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya. The theory serves as a foundation for understanding how effective internal stakeholder engagement and capacity building can influence the implementation and success of these practises.

2.2.3 Resource-based View Theory

According to Barney's (1991) Resource-Based View (RBV) thesis, a company's valuable, rare, unique, and non-substitutable (VRIN) resources and skills provide it a durable competitive edge. According to Barney (1991), these resources can be either

intangible (such as organisational culture, intellectual property, and brand reputation) or tangible (such as financial capital and physical assets). According to the notion, in order to generate value and attain better performance, businesses should concentrate on recognising, cultivating, and utilising their distinctive resources (Peteraf, 1993).

RBV highlights the diversity of businesses, contending that every business has a special combination of resources at its disposal that may be applied to value-adding initiatives (Barney, 1991). Since these resources are hard for rivals to copy or replace, they can offer a durable competitive advantage when they are VRIN (Barney, 1991; Peteraf, 1993). The significance of organisational capabilities—a company's capacity to efficiently allocate and integrate its resources in order to accomplish desired goals—is another point of emphasis for RBV (Grant, 1991).

Within the context of Total Quality Management (TQM), Resource-Based View (RBV) offers a framework for comprehending how a company's assets and competencies might support the effective use of TQM procedures. To increase organisational performance and customer happiness, TQM continuously improves processes, goods, and services (Sadikoglu & Olcay, 2014). Implementing TQM effectively requires a range of resources, such as skilled employees, advanced technologies, and a supportive organizational culture (Aquilani et al., 2017).

According to RBV, firms with resources associated with Total Quality Management (TQM) that are precious, scarce, unique, and non-substitutable are more likely to gain a competitive edge over time through their quality management techniques (Yusr, 2016). As an illustration, a company with a distinctive organisational culture that promotes employee empowerment, continuous learning, and innovation may be better positioned to implement TQM successfully compared to its competitors (Sadikoglu & Zehir, 2010). Similarly, a firm with advanced information systems and data analytics

capabilities may be able to more effectively monitor and improve its quality management processes (Yusr, 2016).

Furthermore, RBV suggests that the effective deployment and combination of TQM-related resources through organizational capabilities is crucial for achieving superior performance (Yusr, 2016). For instance, a firm's ability to effectively include and oversee stakeholders, including as workers, clients, and suppliers can be viewed as a valuable organizational capability that enhances the success of TQM initiatives (Aquilani et al., 2017).

Within the framework of this research on the impact of stakeholder involvement on TQM practice adoption at public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya, RBV provides a useful lens for examining how universities' resources and capabilities related to stakeholder engagement contribute to the success of their TQM efforts. By identifying and leveraging Rich, uncommon, unique, and non-replaceable assets and skills related to stakeholder engagement public universities may be able to more effectively implement TQM practices and achieve superior performance outcomes, such as higher student satisfaction, improved academic quality, and enhanced operational efficiency.

2.2.4 Contingency Theory

Joan Woodward created contingency theory in 1959, and Tom Burns popularised it in the 1960s and 1970s (Woodward, 1959; Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967). According to the theory, there is no one ideal method to run a business or make choices; rather, the optimum course of action depends on both the internal and external circumstances (Fottler, 1981). The following are the primary presumptions of contingency theory: Since organisations are open systems, they require careful management to balance

internal requirements and adjust to external conditions (Lorsch & Morse, 1974); different types of operating contingencies require different organizational structures and managerial styles for the organization to function efficiently (Donaldson, 2001); and management styles and organizational structures need to match operating contingencies as improper matches could result in performance decrements or failure (Zeithaml *et al.*, 1988).

Key strengths associated with the theory include providing frameworks to explain why some practices seem effective in some organizational contexts but not others, emphasizing the importance of situational factors, and avoiding simplistic one-size-fits-all recommendations (Van de Ven *et al.*, 2013). However, critiques argue that it provides limited specific prescriptions, suffers issues of definitional clarity, and displays logical inconsistencies between some contingency relationships put forth (Schoonhoven, 1981).

Contingency theory is highly pertinent to this study on stakeholder engagement and Total Quality Management (TQM) practices given that it highlights the need to adapt strategies based on changing internal and external circumstances (Fottler 1981). The theory suggests that active stakeholder participation provides key insights for developing appropriate TQM initiatives tailored to university contexts rather than applying standardized models. Therefore, contingency theory offers a useful framework to assess how universities can effectively implement quality management practices supported by robust stakeholder engagement and feedback.

2.3 Empirical Review

This section reviews existing literature related to the objectives of this study on stakeholder engagement factors influencing TQM implementation in universities.

2.3.1 Stakeholder Participation in Decision Making and Implementation of TQM Practices

The study by Otieno (2016) sought to explore the impact of stakeholder participation in the development and application of strategies on the operational efficiency of Mombasa County's tea warehouse businesses. The study used a quantitative approach to its investigation, gathering primary data to assess the extent of stakeholder involvement and its correlation with organizational performance. The study findings established that there was a strong positive correlation between stakeholder involvement and performance. While the study showed a significant positive relationship between performance and stakeholder participation, it focused on tea warehousing companies, not public universities or TQM practices specifically. This gap highlights the need to examine the role of stakeholder involvement in strategy formulation and implementation for successful TQM adoption in Kenyan universities.

The study by Githinji, Ogolla and Kitheka (2020) aimed to look at how Kenya Ferry Services's project performance was affected by stakeholder involvement. The study used a descriptive research approach and then used the SPSS software for linear regression analysis. The results of the study demonstrated a substantial and favourable correlation between stakeholder participation and project success at many phases of project management, particularly in project identification, planning, monitoring, and funding. Respect for stakeholders' concerns by the organisation throughout project identification, stakeholder participation in decision-making during project planning, the use of standardized practices for project monitoring, and stakeholder participation in resource allocation for project funding were particularly influential. However, the study focused on a transportation service company, not public universities or TQM practices,

leaving a gap in understanding the impact of stakeholder involvement across different stages of TQM implementation in Kenyan universities.

Gheith (2020) conducted a research study on the impact of quality management practices on innovation and organizational performance in public universities in the Campania region of Italy. The study used a quantitative methodology by collecting survey data from 356 faculty members across multiple universities. The study found that soft quality management (QM) practices like leadership, people management, and customer focus directly improve organizational performance. Soft QM also shows an indirect effect on performance through enabling hard QM practices like process improvement and evidence-based decision making.

Bader, Badar, Rodchua and McLeod. (2020) conducted a research study on balancing lean thinking and stakeholder priorities in organizational decision-making. The study used a mixed methods approach combining data mining of scholarly articles with a survey of 517 managers across manufacturing and service firms that identified as lean. The study found that stakeholder salience criteria were ranked higher than lean thinking's waste reduction principles overall in decision-making. First-line managers ranked waste reduction as equally important but middle and senior managers ranked stakeholder needs higher than eliminating waste. The study also showed that middle managers balanced stakeholder and lean perspectives better than first-line or senior managers.

2.3.2 Stakeholder Empowerment and Implementation TQM Practices

Grace, Odhiambo and Amolo (2020) did a research study in Kisumu East Sub-County, Kenya, to look into the effect of empowering stakeholders in the use of scientific activities in early childhood education programmes. 297 respondents were chosen from

a target population of 1227 people by the study using a cross-sectional design and simple stratified random sampling. The participants included members of the County Executive committee, County Chief Officers, Departmental directors, Project Management Committee members, Sub-County Administrators, Ward administrators, EYE coordinators, and EYE instructors. Empowered stakeholders are more likely to come up with original and innovative solutions to problems related to programme execution, the study finds, support both short- and long-term programme plans, and be actively participating in project activities. However, there is a need for more insight into the role of stakeholder empowerment specifically in TQM implementation in universities, which this study aims to address by assessing the role of stakeholder empowerment in implementing TQM in Kenyan public universities.

Cosmus (2021) carried out a research study at the Kenya Ports Authority (KPA) to analyse the influence of stakeholder participation on infrastructure project delivery. Questionnaires were utilised to obtain information from 358 people from different KPA departments. To look into the relationships between variables, statistical procedures such as multiple regression was done. The research indicates that communication, grievance management, and stakeholder empowerment have a positive and significant impact on the execution of projects. The study also discovered that its improved stakeholders' abilities and confidence to engage in decision-making, resulting in better project results. According to the survey, good communication fosters healthy connections with stakeholders and keeps everyone on the same page. The study also indicated that stakeholder participation is crucial to the success of KPA infrastructure projects. The research only focused on infrastructure projects, not directly on educational settings or TQM practices, leaving a gap in exploring stakeholder participation in TQM practices in the context of public universities.

Sila (2021) conducted a research study analyzing quality management, corporate social responsibility (CSR), and feminist ethics of caring and their common principles and concepts. The study, conducted at the University of Texas (Dallas) utilizing a global perspective across multiple industries, employed an integrative literature review methodology drawing from over 150 sources. The study found substantial overlap between the core principles emphasized across quality management frameworks like the Baldrige criteria, CSR standards, and feminist ethics perspectives. Areas of convergence include stakeholder orientation, leadership commitment, ethics and integrity, nurturing workplace culture, customer/societal well-being and development, and continuous improvement. The study also showed that feminist ethics provides a relational stakeholder-focused lens largely missing from mainstream quality management and CSR research. The care and responsibility principles of feminist thought offer fresh insights to enrich stakeholder engagement and ensure equitable treatment in these practices. While Sila's research provides valuable theoretical connections between stakeholder engagement and quality management, it differs from the current study in several ways. First, Sila's research used a literature review approach rather than empirical investigation of actual practices. Second, it focused on a multi-industry global context rather than specifically examining higher education institutions in Kenya. Third, it did not specifically investigate the relationship between stakeholder empowerment and TQM implementation, which is a key focus of the current study. These differences highlight the need for context-specific empirical research examining stakeholder empowerment's impact on TQM implementation in Kenyan public universities.

2.3.3 Stakeholder Communication and Implementation TQM Practices

Samsudin, Taib, Razak and Yusoff (2021) conducted a study on internal communication patterns in Malaysian manufacturing businesses that were using TQM. This is a multiple case study that was conducted with 14 informants from five big industrial firms using a qualitative in-depth interview approach to obtain data. The study was conducted in manufacturing companies from three continents: two local organizations located in Malaysia, two organizations in the east, and one organization in the west. Despite the fact that we live in the age of technology, the results reveal that face-to-face meetings are still the most preferred and dependable communication channel between superiors and subordinates. However, the study had a limited focus on the educational sector, specifically on the role of communication in TQM within universities, which this study aims to address by investigating the impact of stakeholder communication on TQM implementation in Kenyan universities.

Maxwell and Carboni (2014) carried out a research study to determine on how nonprofits carefully consider who to communicate with in and outside of government-funded service implementation networks (SINs) to accommodate various stakeholder groups. Organizational network analysis methods are used to examine survey and interview data that non-profits both inside and outside of SINs provide. The study found that strategic communication within SINs differs from communication outside the network. The study also found that non profits emphasize different communication tools for management depending on the stakeholder group. The study, however, lacked insights into the use of strategic communication in the context of TQM in higher education, a gap this study aims to fill by investigating strategic communication methods in TQM implementation in public universities.

Zwikael *et al.* (2022) conducted a research study on improving stakeholder communication for the project despite their lack of understanding of project management principles. The study used a qualitative methodology through 27 interviews with project management practitioners, trainees, and stakeholders. The study found that five key project management concepts pose knowledge barriers for effective stakeholder communication - project benefits, iron triangle constraints, critical path analysis, uncertainty management, and project leadership. Stakeholders struggled to comprehend these core ideas impeding project discussions. The study also showed that varied approaches help improve stakeholder communication given terminology knowledge gaps. Simplified analogies, visualized models, storytelling, interactive sessions, emphasis on outcomes over tools, and bidirectional clarification enable better stakeholder engagement around project trade-offs.

Stanciu *et al.* (2016) conducted a research study on the importance of communication in quality management. The study methodology was not explicitly stated but seemed to involve a review of literature related to communication, quality management, and project management principles. The study found that effective communication is critical for managers to lead quality improvement initiatives. Communication enables shared understanding of quality goals and methods between the manager and employees. The study also showed communication plays an essential role across quality management activities including developing business cases for projects, coordinating teams, providing staff training, resolving quality issues, and reporting quality metrics. The study concluded that strategic use of communication mechanisms and channels is hugely impactful for the effectiveness of quality management programs.

2.3.4 Stakeholder Grievance Management and Implementation TQM Practices

Dhanabhakym (2022) conducted a research study to analyse the effect of grievance management on job commitment and organizational justice among IT employees. A quantitative research design was employed. Surveys were distributed to IT employees, likely gathered through internal company channels. The study found that IT employees' perceptions of grievance management had a significant positive impact on their job commitment and organizational justice. In other words, employees who felt their grievances were handled fairly and effectively were more likely to be committed to their jobs and perceive the organization as just. The study only focused on the IT sector, not directly relatable to grievance management in educational settings or TQM, leaving a gap that this study addresses by exploring the role of grievance management in TQM practices in public universities.

Patil *et al.* (2020) carried out study to create a prototype for a system that handles and resolves complaints from college-level students. Designing a prototype grievance redressal system based on the study and any other areas that may be required. Students may use their own email addresses to file concerns with the system. The highlighted issue areas were effectively integrated into the prototype design. Beyond the first study, additional required areas were examined. The prototype provides a viable method for resolving student problems by overcoming students' reluctance to communicate or seek assistance. For a possibly more comfortable experience, the email-based communication paradigm allows anonymity and indirect engagement. However, the study focused more on system design rather than the impact of grievance management on TQM, a gap this study aims to fill by assessing the effectiveness of grievance management systems in enhancing TQM in public universities.

Nakayenze et al. (2021) studied how grievance management affected the success of World Bank-funded projects, using the Second Kampala Institutional and Infrastructure Development Project of the Kampala Capital City Authority, Uganda, as a case study. Data from 103 respondents in the sample were gathered using interviews and questionnaires as part of the study's mixed cross-sectional survey research methodology. According to the study, the Kampala Capital City Authority in Uganda's Kampala Institutional and Infrastructure Development Project 2 performed much better when grievances were handled properly in the areas of identification, investigation, and resolution. The study also found that building staff capacity on grievance redress, adopting automated ICT-based grievance registration mechanisms, and establishing grievance management committees at the start of projects could improve grievance management.

2.4 Summary of Literature and Research Gaps

This summary identifies gaps in the literature regarding stakeholder engagement factors influencing Total Quality Management (TQM) implementation in universities, categorized as conceptual, contextual, and methodological. The studies reviewed, including those by Otieno (2016), Githinji *et al.* (2020), Grace *et al.* (2020), Cosmus (2021), Samsudin *et al.* (2021), Maxwell and Carboni (2014), Dhanabhakym (2022), Patil *et al.* (2020), Gheith (2020), Bader *et al.* (2020), Sila (2021), Zwikael *et al.* (2022), Stanciu et al. (2016), and Nakayenze *et al.* (2021), have explored various aspects of stakeholder involvement in decision making, empowerment, communication, and grievance management. However, they have not specifically examined these factors in the context of their collective impact on TQM implementation in universities. This research aims to fill these identified gaps by investigating how different stakeholder

engagement factors collectively influence the implementation of TQM in university settings. Table 2.1 show the summary of literature review and research gaps.

Table 2. 1: Summary of Literature Review and Research Gaps

Author /year	Focus of the study	Findings	Research gaps	Focus of the current study
Otieno (2016)	Stakeholder involvement in strategy formulation and implementation in tea warehousing companies	Strong positive correlation between stakeholder involvement and organizational performance. Higher stakeholder involvement led to better performance.	Study focused on tea warehousing companies, not public universities or TQM practices specifically. Used only quantitative methods, lacking in-depth qualitative insights on stakeholder experiences.	Examining the role of stakeholder involvement in strategy formulation and implementation for successful TQM adoption in Kenyan universities using mixed methods approach.
Githinji <i>et al.</i> (2020)	Stakeholder involvement in project performance at Kenya Ferry Services	Stakeholder involvement in project identification, planning, monitoring, and funding had significant positive relationship with project performance.	Study focused on tea warehousing companies, not public universities or TQM practices specifically. Used only quantitative methods, lacking in-depth qualitative insights on stakeholder experiences.	Examining the role of stakeholder involvement in strategy formulation and implementation for successful TQM adoption in Kenyan universities using mixed methods approach.
Pepito <i>et al.</i> (2022)	Stakeholders involvement in decision making	Stakeholder involvement in decision making leads to sustained performance.	Limited exploration of how stakeholder involvement specifically impacts TQM in higher education.	Examining the impact of stakeholder involvement in decision making on TQM implementation in Kenyan universities.

Grace <i>et al.</i> (2020)	Effect of Stakeholder Empowerment in Education	Empowered stakeholders contribute innovative solutions and support program plans.	Need for more insight into the role of stakeholder empowerment specifically in TQM implementation in universities.	Assessing the role of stakeholder empowerment in implementing TQM in Kenyan public universities.
Cosmus (2021)	Stakeholder Participation in Project Delivery	Empowerment, communication, and grievance management positively impact project delivery.	Research focused on infrastructure projects, not directly on educational settings or TQM practices. Used cross-sectional design that couldn't capture evolving stakeholder dynamics.	Exploring stakeholder participation in TQM practices in the context of public universities with descriptive design capturing stakeholder engagement evolution.
Samsudin <i>et al.</i> (2021)	Internal Communication in TQM Firms	Face-to-face communication preferred; formal and informal communication both important.	Limited focus on the educational sector, specifically on the role of communication in TQM within universities. Used only qualitative case studies without quantitative measurement of impact.	Studying the impact of stakeholder communication on TQM implementation in Kenyan universities using mixed methods to quantify communication effectiveness.
Maxwell & Carboni (2014)	Communication in Nonprofits	Strategic communication differs within and outside service networks; limited use of social media.	Absence of insights into the use of strategic communication in the context of TQM in higher education.	Investigating strategic communication methods in TQM implementation in public universities.

Dhanabhakym (2022)	Grievance Management in IT Sector	Effective grievance management boosts job commitment and organizational justice.	Study focused on IT sector, not directly relatable to grievance management in educational settings or TQM.	Exploring the role of grievance management in TQM practices in public universities.
Patil <i>et al.</i> (2020)	Student Grievance Redressal System Prototype	Prototype provides a method for resolving student issues via email-based communication.	Study more focused on system design rather than the impact of grievance management on TQM.	Assessing the effectiveness of grievance management systems in enhancing TQM in public universities.
Gheith (2020)	Impact of QM practices in universities	Soft QM practices improve performance; QM and innovation can coexist.	Did not examine specific stakeholder engagement factors.	Investigating how stakeholder engagement enables effective TQM implementation in universities.
Bader <i>et al.</i> (2020)	Lean thinking vs stakeholder priorities	Stakeholders ranked higher than lean principles in decision-making.	Did not analyse public universities.	Assessing stakeholder-focused decision making for successful TQM in universities.
Sila (2021)	Shared values of QM and CSR	Substantial overlap in stakeholder orientation and engagement principles.	Did not specifically study universities.	Exploring synergies between QM and CSR principles to engage stakeholders for TQM.
Zwikael <i>et al.</i> (2022)	Stakeholder communication barriers	Analogies and visuals help overcome knowledge gaps.	Focused on general projects, not TQM in universities.	Studying approaches to improve stakeholder communication for TQM implementation.

Stanciu <i>et al.</i> (2016)	Communication in quality management	Strategic communication enables effective quality management.	Did not examine communication role in TQM in public universities.	Investigating optimal communication strategies for successful TQM implementation in universities.
Nakayenze <i>et al.</i> (2021)	Grievance management in projects	Effective grievance management enhances project performance.	Did not specifically analyse TQM initiatives in public universities.	Assessing grievance management role in enabling TQM implementation in universities.

Source: Researcher (2024)

2.5 Conceptual Framework

Following the approach of Creswell (2014), the conceptual framework of this study visually represents the relationships among stakeholder engagement (independent variable) and the implementation of Total Quality Management practices (dependent variable) in public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya. This is depicted in a diagram (Figure 2.1).

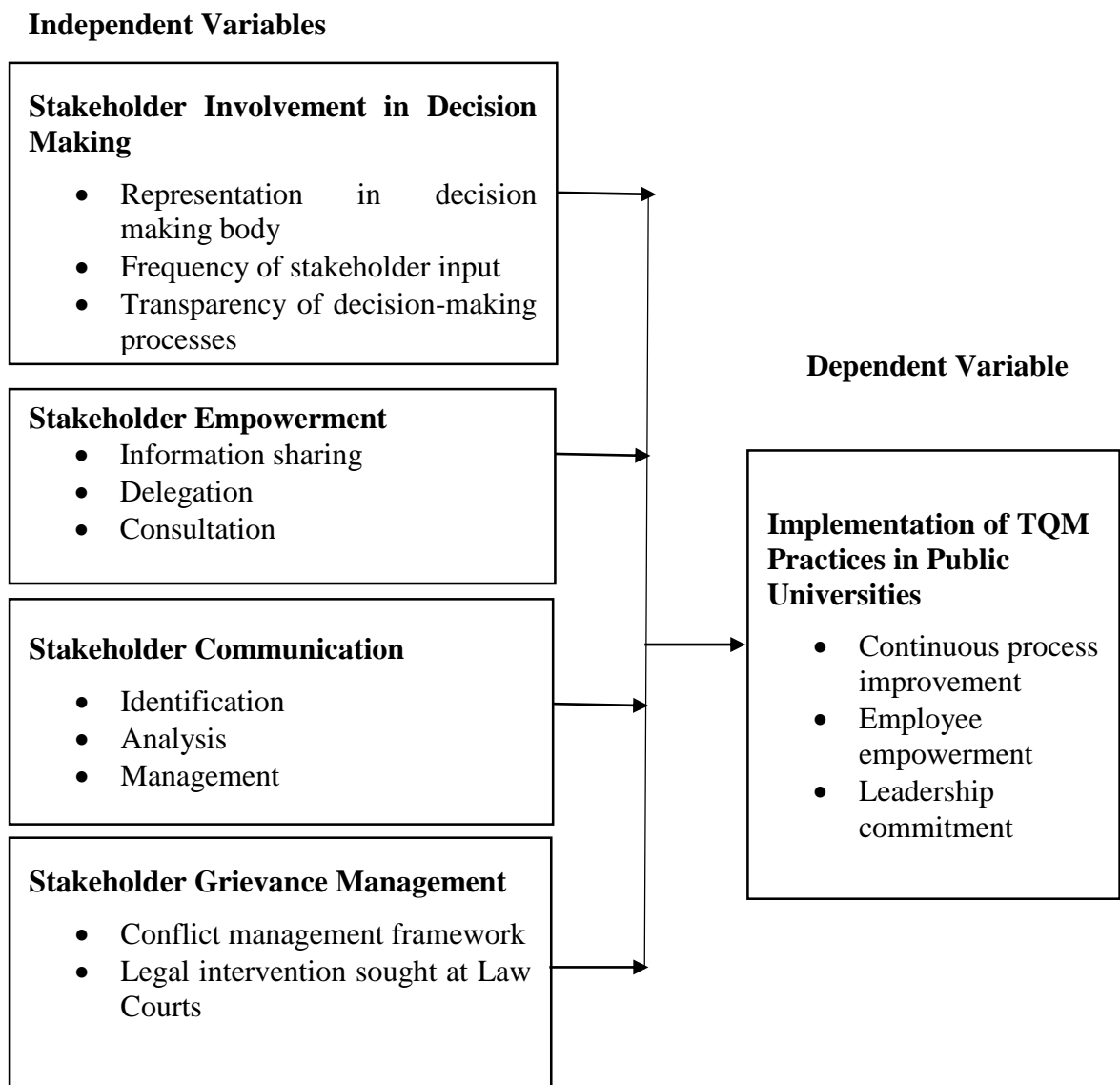


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Researcher (2024)

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The methods used in this investigation was described in this chapter. The research design, target population, sampling size and sampling technique, data collection instruments, pilot study including; validity and reliability, data collection procedure, data analysis and presentation and ethical consideration.

3.2 Research Design

A research design refers to a systematic framework that outlines the strategies for gathering and analysing data in a study (Kothari, 2004). This study used a descriptive research methodology to examine the impact of stakeholder involvement on the execution of Total Quality Management (TQM) practises at public universities located in Mombasa County, Kenya. The selection of this design is based on its capacity to gather data that precisely characterises occurrences in their natural state, without the manipulation of factors. The usefulness of this design in comprehending present methodologies and patterns in stakeholder involvement and TQM execution in educational environments is substantiated by research undertaken by Rahi (2017) and Liu, Qiu, Liu, and Guo (2017).

3.3 Target Population

Following the definition by Cooper, Schindler and Sun (2014), the target population refers to a distinct group of entities or individuals relevant to a specific research question. For this study, the target population comprised staff members in public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya, who are actively engaging in or affected by the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) practices. The focus was on

senior staff members who play a key role in the decision-making and operationalization of TQM strategies.

The unit of analysis for this study was the management cadres within these universities, while the unit of observation included 390 staff members stratified across three distinct management levels: 12 Management Board Members, 53 Departmental Heads, and 325 Teaching Staff. Table 3.1 provides a detailed breakdown of the target population by management cadre across the six public universities in Mombasa County.

Table 3.1: Target Population by Role Group

Management Cadre	Cooperative University	JKUAT	Kenyatta University	Moi University	Technical University of Mombasa	University of Nairobi	Total
Management Board Members	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
Departmental Heads	8	11	8	9	7	10	53
Teaching Staff	32	62	78	43	47	63	325
Total	42	75	88	54	56	75	390

Source: Researcher (2024)

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Cooper and Schindler (2011) define sampling as a critical technique for selecting a subset of a population to draw conclusions about the entire group. To form a comprehensive sample of the target population from public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya, this study uses a mixed-method sampling approach that combines stratified random sampling and purposive sampling. Departmental Heads and Teaching Staff was sampled using stratified random sampling. This method entails dividing the population into these subgroups and then randomly selecting samples from each to ensure that each subgroup is represented proportionately. This method is especially

useful for obtaining a cross-sectional view of TQM practises at various levels of the university's hierarchy.

Purposive sampling, on the other hand, was used to select Management Board Members. A total of 12 Management Board Members was carefully selected based on specific criteria that align with the study's objectives, given their unique role in policy and decision-making. This ensures that the sample is made up of people who are most likely to provide the depth of insight required for the qualitative aspects of the study. Yamane's (1967) formula was used to calculate sample sizes for each stratum, taking into account the total population size of each subgroup as well as the desired level of precision. To determine the sample size for this study, we will use Yamane's formula (1967), which is given by:

$$n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$$

Where:

N = sample size

N = population size

e = the level of precision (0.05, typically representing a 95% confidence level)

Applying this formula to the study, where N equals 390 (the total number of Departmental Heads and Teaching staff):

$$n = 390 / (1 + 390 * (0.05)^2)$$

$$n \approx 197$$

Therefore, the sample size for this study, based on Yamane's formula, is approximately 197 participants from departmental heads and teaching staff. Table 3.2 show the distribution of the sample size.

Table 3.2: Sample Size

Management Cadre	Population Size	Proportion (%)	Sample Size	Percentage of Sample (%)
Management Board Members	12	3.08%	12	6.09%
Departmental Heads	53	13.59%	49	24.87%
Teaching Staff	325	83.33%	136	69.04%
Total	390	100%	197	100%

Source: Researcher 2024

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

The primary data collection instrument for this study was a structured questionnaire designed to gather information on stakeholder engagement factors and their influence on the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) practices in public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya. The structured questionnaire was divided into six main sections: demographic information, stakeholder participation in decision making, stakeholder empowerment, stakeholder communication, stakeholder grievance management, and implementation of TQM practices. Except for the demographic section, all other sections used a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) to measure respondents' perceptions and experiences. The structured questionnaire was designed to be comprehensive yet concise, taking approximately 20-30 minutes to complete, and was pretested during the pilot study to ensure clarity, relevance, and reliability of the questions.

3.6 Pilot Study

To confirm the validity and reliability of the research tools, the investigator carried out a preliminary investigation. Prior to a full-scale research project, a pilot study is a small-

scale exploratory investigation that is carried out to assess feasibility, time, cost, adverse events, and enhance the study design (Leon, Davis, & Kraemer, 2011). The final results did not include the people who took part in the pilot research. Any necessary changes to the research instruments was made before they are administered to the full sample from the universities under study. After consulting with senior management, the pilot study was conducted by administering structured questionnaires to 20 department heads and teaching staff. The pilot research only accepted volunteer participation, and all answers remained confidential

3.6.1 Validity

Content validity, or the accuracy with which an instrument assesses the variables being examined was the main emphasis of the research. Two groups of experts were consulted by the researcher as part of the expert validation process: quality management specialists confirmed and cross-check the accuracy of the concepts being tested, and lecturers analyzed the concepts that the tools are intended to measure.

3.6.2 Reliability

According to Kimberlin and Winterstein (2008), a research instrument's reliability is defined as its capacity to assess the same thing consistently and steadily across many persons, settings, and timeframes. This study utilized Cronbach's alpha, a commonly used internal consistency metric, to evaluate the questionnaire's reliability. According to Tavakol and Dennick (2011), Cronbach's alpha measures how closely all of the test's items assess the same construct and is correlated with this degree of interrelatedness.

To assess the reliability of the research instrument, Cronbach's alpha coefficient will be computed. The questionnaire will be administered once during the pilot study, and the data collected will be used to calculate Cronbach's alpha. A Cronbach's alpha

coefficient will be computed for each section of the questionnaire (Sections B, C, D, E, and F) to determine the internal consistency of the items within each construct.

For this study, a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.7 or higher was considered acceptable, as it indicates a good level of internal consistency (Nunnally, 1978). If any section of the questionnaire has a Cronbach's alpha value below 0.7, the items within that section was reviewed, and necessary modifications were made to improve the internal consistency. This may involve rewording, removing, or replacing items that do not contribute to the overall reliability of the construct being measured.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

The study employed a systematic approach to collect primary data using structured questionnaires. Initially, the researcher met with the senior management of each public university in Mombasa County, Kenya, to explain the purpose of the study and obtain written permission to conduct the research. Following authorization, departments within each university were selected to participate, and eligible participants were identified. Stratified random sampling was used to select Departmental Heads and Teaching Staff, while purposive sampling was applied for Management Board Members.

The researcher utilized a drop-and-pick method for questionnaire distribution, personally delivering questionnaires to selected participants in their respective departments. Participants were given a specified timeframe to complete the questionnaires. Follow-up visits or phone calls were made to remind participants about completion. Upon collection, each questionnaire was checked for completeness, and any incomplete questionnaires were noted. Finally, the collected questionnaires were organized by university and department, with each assigned a unique identifier to

ensure anonymity while facilitating data entry and analysis. This structured approach ensured a systematic and efficient data collection process, maximizing the response rate and data quality while maintaining ethical standards and participant confidentiality.

3.8 Data Analysis and Presentation

The inquiry made use of both quantitative and qualitative data analysis approaches. Before being analysed, the data was coded and prepared for analysis using spreadsheets and the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 28.0 and Microsoft Excel 2019. These software tools are widely used in social science research and are suitable for handling the data analysis requirements of this study. The characteristics of the collected data was summed up and described using descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. The findings were shown with tables, graphs, and charts to facilitate easy understanding and interpretation.

Lastly, decisions about the population based on sample data was made using inferential statistics. To find out how strongly and in which direction the independent variables (implementation of Total Quality Management practices) and the dependent variable (stakeholder empowerment, grievance management, communication, and involvement in decision-making) relate to each other, Pearson's correlation analysis was used. To investigate how the independent factors together affect the dependent variable, multiple regression analysis was performed. The multiple regression model is:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \varepsilon \dots\dots\dots(i)$$

Where:

Y = Total Quality Management implementation (dependent variable)

β_0 = Constant term

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4$ = Regression coefficients

X_1 = Stakeholder involvement in decision making

X_2 = Stakeholder empowerment

X_3 = Stakeholder communication

X_4 = Stakeholder grievance management

ε = Error term

The t-test was used for hypothesis testing with a significance level of 5%. To give a thorough grasp of the results, a combination of narrative explanations, tables, and figures were used to explain the analysis' conclusions. The findings were interpreted in light of the study's goals and questions, making connections to the literature review in order to derive significant conclusions about how stakeholder engagement affects the adoption of total quality management practices in Mombasa County, Kenya's public universities.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The permission to conduct this research was obtained from Kenyatta University's Graduate School through the approval of the research proposal. NACOSTI also granted a research permit. In addition, written permission was sought from the public universities participating in the study in Mombasa County, Kenya. Ethical guidelines were followed to ensure that no participant suffers any negative effects as a result of their participation in the study. Each respondent's consent was obtained prior to their participation. Anonymity and confidentiality were protected. The names of the respondents, in particular was not revealed on the research instruments or in the final report.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study, which aimed to determine the influence of stakeholder engagement on the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) practices in public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya. The chapter begins by discussing the response rate, followed by the results of the pilot study. It then presents the demographic information of the respondents and the descriptive statistics of the study variables. The chapter also includes correlation and multiple regression analyses to examine the relationships between the independent variables (stakeholder involvement in decision making, stakeholder empowerment, stakeholder communication, and stakeholder grievance management) and the dependent variable (implementation of TQM practices).

4.2 Response Rate

The researcher distributed a total of 197 questionnaires to the target respondents. Out of these, 175 questionnaires were duly filled and returned, resulting in a response rate of 88.8%. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2009), a response rate above 50% is considered adequate for data analysis and drawing conclusions. Therefore, the response rate achieved in this study was deemed sufficient for further analysis.

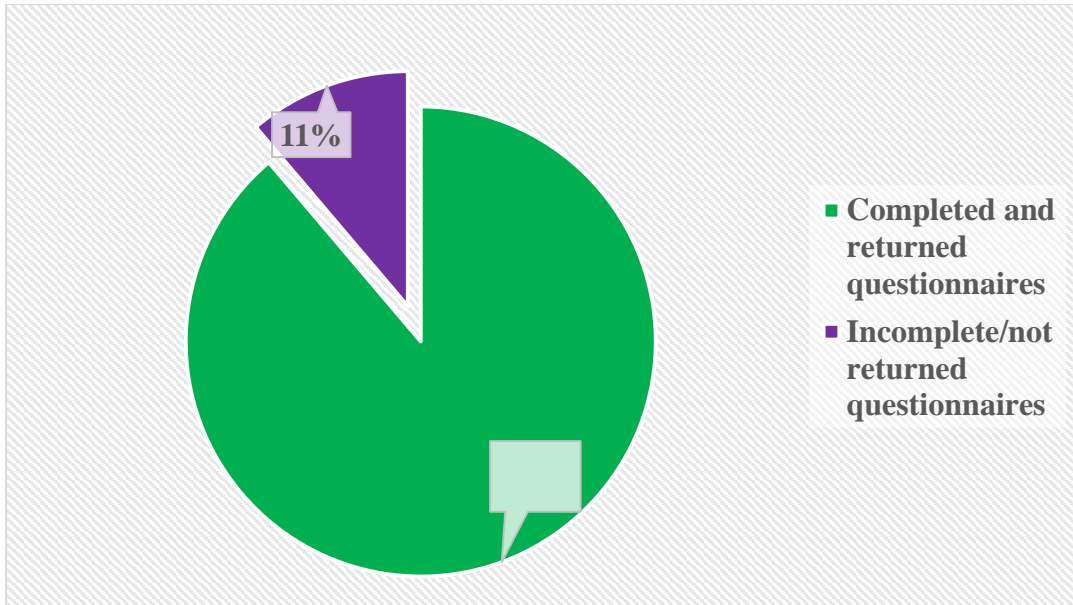


Figure 4.1: Response Rate

Source: Field Data, 2024

The results presented in Figure 4.1 show that out of the 197 questionnaires distributed, 175 were successfully completed and returned, representing an 89% response rate. On the other hand, 22 questionnaires were not returned or were incomplete, accounting for 11% of the total sample size. The high response rate can be attributed to the researcher's efforts in following up with the respondents and ensuring that they understood the importance of their participation in the study.

4.3 Pilot Results

A pilot study was conducted to assess the reliability of the research instrument prior to the main study. The researcher distributed questionnaires to 20 respondents, out of which 17 were returned. The data collected from these 17 respondents was then analysed using Cronbach's alpha to determine the internal consistency of the questionnaire items.

Table 4.1: Reliability Test Results

Variable	Alpha Value	Remarks
Stakeholder involvement in decision making	0.812	Reliable
Stakeholder empowerment	0.795	Reliable
Stakeholder communication	0.836	Reliable
Stakeholder grievance management	0.784	Reliable
Implementation of Total Quality Management practices	0.827	Reliable
Aggregate score	0.811	Reliable

Source: Pilot Study (2024)

The results of the reliability test, as shown in Table 4.1, indicate that all variables have Cronbach's alpha values above the recommended threshold of 0.7 (Nunnally, 1978). The alpha values range from 0.784 for stakeholder grievance management to 0.836 for stakeholder communication. The aggregate score of 0.811 further confirmed the overall reliability of the research instrument. These findings suggested that the questionnaire was reliable and suitable for use in the main study.

4.4 Demographic Information

This section presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents who participated in the study. The demographic information collected includes gender, age, highest level of education, designation within the university, years of experience in academia, and duration of TQM implementation. These factors are essential in understanding the background and context of the respondents, which may influence their perceptions and experiences related to stakeholder engagement and the implementation of TQM practices in public universities.

4.4.1 Gender of the Respondents

Figure 4.2 shows the gender distribution of the respondents. The pie chart illustrates the proportion of male and female participants in the study.

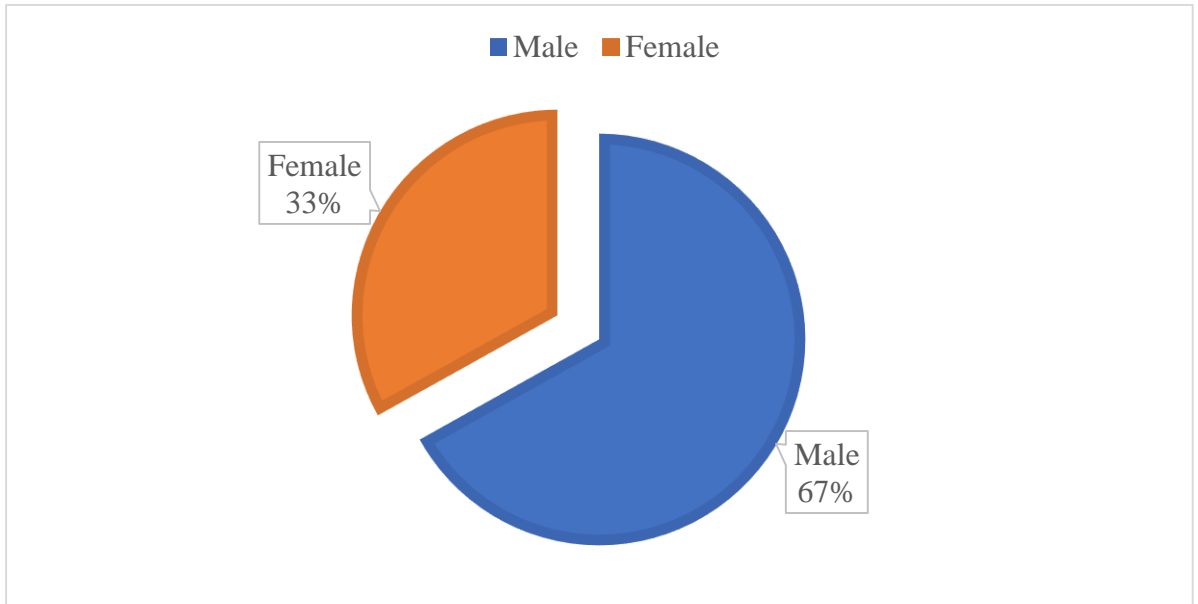


Figure 4.2: Gender of the Respondents

The results indicate that the majority of the respondents were male, accounting for 67% (117) of the total sample, while females constituted 33% (58) of the respondents. This gender distribution suggests that there may be a higher representation of men in universities and in positions related to TQM implementation in the public universities studied. The implication of this finding is that gender diversity in decision-making processes and stakeholder engagement initiatives may be an area for improvement to ensure a more balanced perspective in the implementation of TQM practices.

4.4.2 Age of the Respondents

The age distribution of the respondents is presented in Figure 4.3. The bar graph displays the percentage of participants in each age category, ranging from under 30 years to over 60 years.

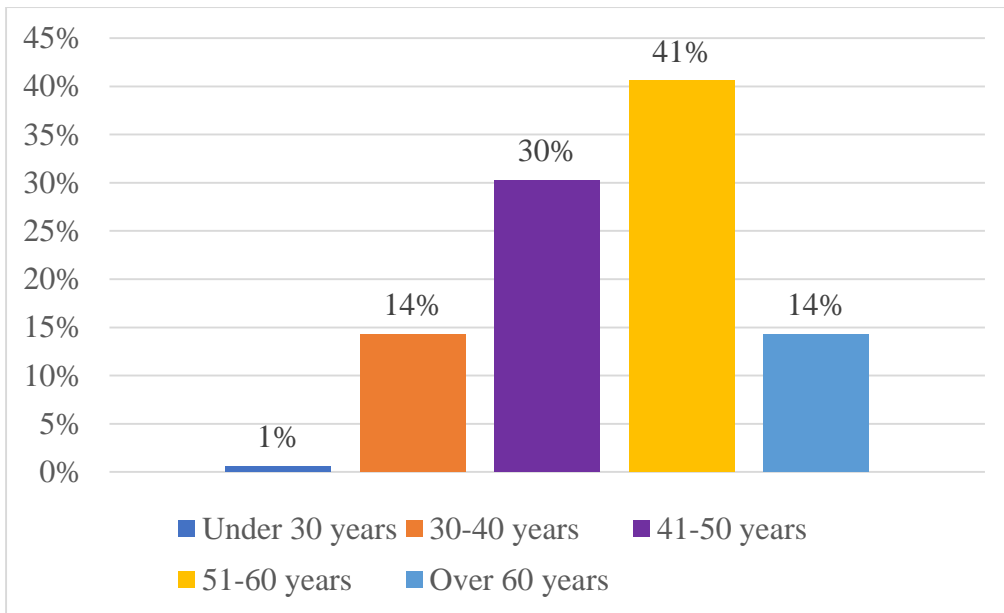


Figure 4.3: Age of the Respondents

The findings revealed that the largest age group among the respondents was 51-60 years, representing 41% (71) of the total sample. This was followed by the 41-50 years age group, which accounted for 30% (53) of the respondents. The 30-40 years and over 60 years age groups each constituted 14% (25) of the sample, while only 1% (1) of the respondents were under 30 years old. The age distribution suggests that the majority of the respondents are experienced professionals in their fields, with a significant proportion being in the later stages of their careers. This age profile indicate that the respondents have substantial knowledge and expertise in universities and TQM practices, which provide valuable insights into the implementation of quality management initiatives in public universities

4.4.3 Highest Level of Education of the Respondents

Table 4.2 presents the highest level of education attained by the respondents. The data is categorized into five levels: PhD, Master's Degree, Bachelor's Degree, Diploma, and Certificate.

Table 4.2: Highest Level of Education of the Respondents

Education Level	Frequency	Percent
PhD	74	42%
Master's Degree	75	43%
Bachelor's Degree	22	13%
Diploma	3	2%
Certificate	1	1%
Total	175	100%

The results show that the majority of the respondents held advanced degrees, with 42% (74) having a PhD and 43% (75) possessing a Master's degree. Together, these two categories accounted for 85% of the total sample. Bachelor's degree holders constituted 13% (22) of the respondents, while those with diplomas and certificates represented 2% (3) and 1% (1), respectively. The high proportion of respondents with advanced degrees aligns with the expectations for academic staff in public universities. As Saunders and Sin (2015) note, the majority of academic staff in universities are expected to hold postgraduate qualifications, particularly in research-intensive universities. The prevalence of PhD and Master's degree holders in the sample suggests that the respondents are well-equipped to engage in academic and research activities related to TQM implementation in their respective universities.

4.4.4 Designation within the University

Figure 4.4 illustrates the distribution of respondents based on their designation within the university. The respondents are categorized into three groups: Management Board Member, Head of Department, and Teaching Staff.

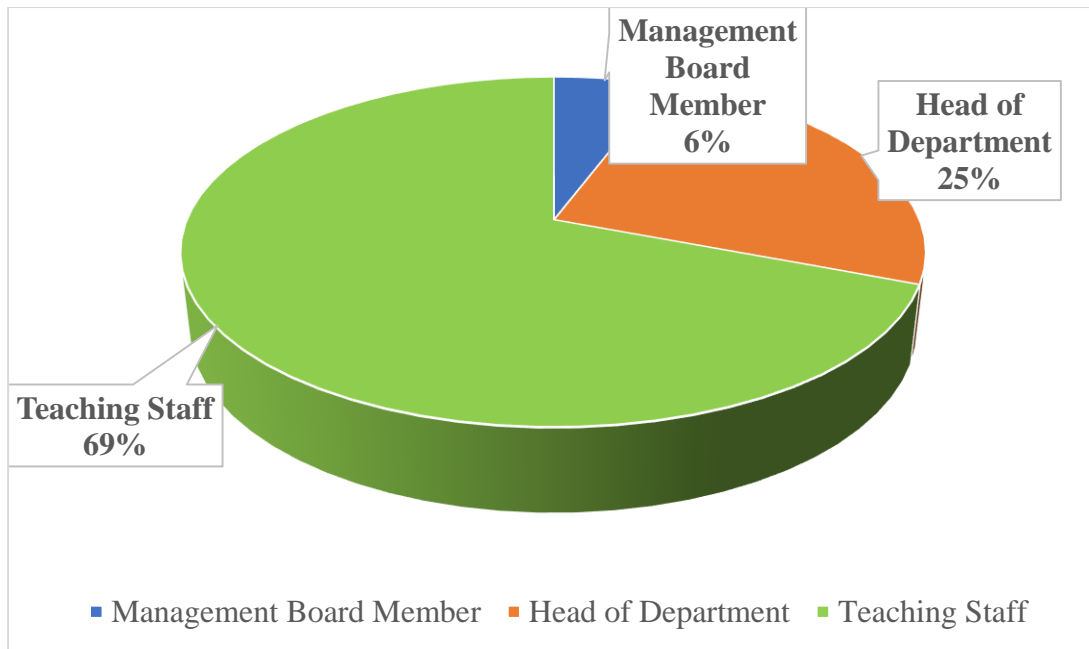


Figure 4.4: Designation within the University

The results indicate that the majority of the respondents, 69% (121), were teaching staff. Heads of departments constituted 25% (44) of the sample, while management board members accounted for 6% (10) of the respondents. The distribution of respondents across different designations provides insights into the representation of various stakeholder groups in the study. The higher proportion of teaching staff aligns with the typical structure of universities, where academic staff comprise a significant portion of the workforce (Boulton & Lucas, 2011).

The inclusion of heads of departments and management board members ensures that the perspectives of those in leadership positions are also captured, as they play a crucial role in the implementation of TQM practices (Moonsamy & Singh, 2014). The diversity of designations represented in the sample is essential for understanding the experiences and perceptions of different stakeholder groups regarding TQM implementation in public universities. It allows for a more comprehensive analysis of the factors

influencing the effective adoption of quality management practices across various levels of the universities.

4.4.5 Years of Experience in University

Table 4.3 presents the respondents' years of experience in university. The data is divided into five categories: less than 5 years, 5-10 years, 11-20 years, 21-30 years and over 30 years.

Table 4.3: Years of Experience in University

	Frequency	Percent
Less than 5 years	5	3%
5-10 years	39	22%
11-20 years	66	38%
21-30 years	39	22%
Over 30 years	26	15%
Total	175	100%

The findings show that the largest group of respondents, 38% (66), had 11-20 years of experience in universities. Those with 5-10 years and 21-30 years of experience each accounted for 22% (39) of the sample. Respondents with over 30 years of experience constituted 15% (26) of the total, while those with less than 5 years of experience represented the smallest group at 3% (5). The results indicate that the majority of the respondents had a significant amount of experience in universities, with 75% (130) having more than 10 years of experience. This finding is consistent with the expectation that academic staff in universities tend to have extensive experience in their field (Bentley et al., 2013). The presence of experienced respondents in the sample is beneficial for the study, as they are likely to have a deeper understanding of the

challenges and opportunities associated with implementing TQM practices in public universities.

4.4.6 Duration of TQM Implementation

Figure 4.5 displays the duration of TQM implementation in the respondents' universities. The data is categorized into four time periods: less than 5 years, 5-10 years, 11-15 years and over 15 years.

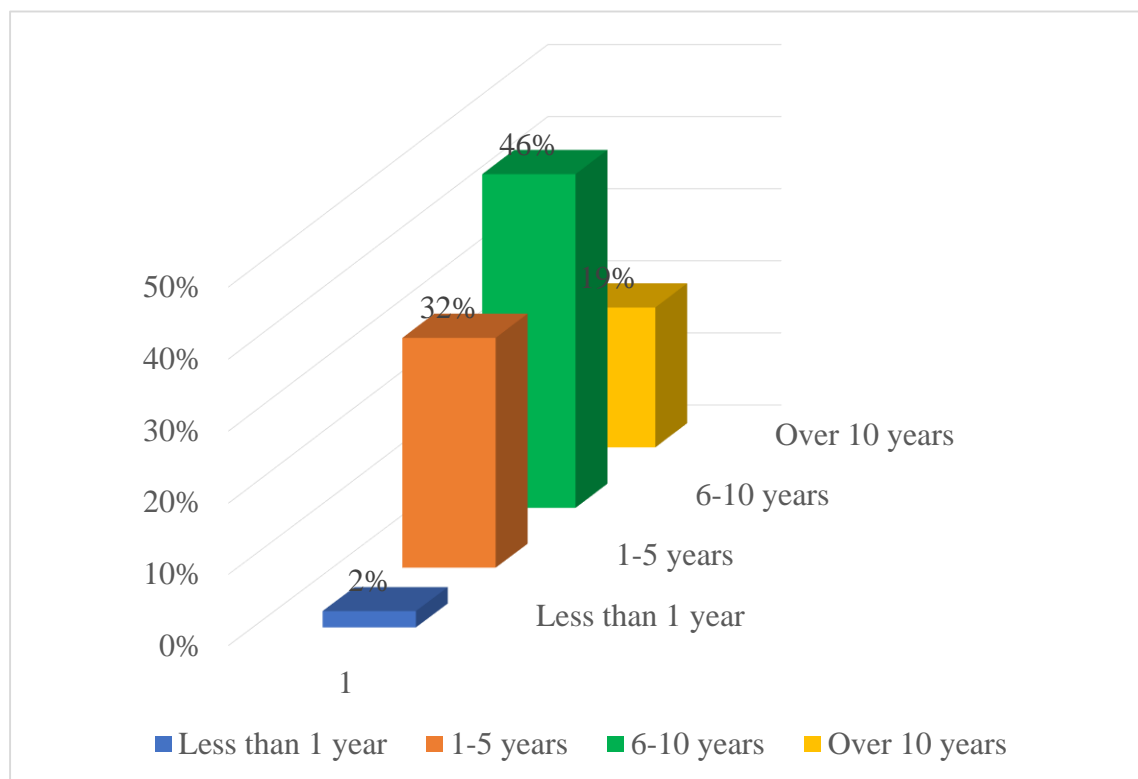


Figure 4.5: Duration of TQM Implementation

The results reveal that the majority of the respondents, 45% (79), reported that the public universities had been implementing TQM practices for 5-10 years. Those who indicated a duration of 11-15 years accounted for 27% (47) of the sample, while 18% (32) of the respondents stated that TQM implementation had been ongoing for over 15

years in their universities. The smallest group, representing 10% (17) of the total, reported a TQM implementation duration of less than 5 years.

The findings suggest that most of the public universities in the sample have been engaged in TQM implementation for a considerable period, with 90% (158) of the respondents indicating a duration of 5 years or more. This observation aligns with the growing emphasis on quality management in public universities over the past few decades (Kanji et al., 1999). The longer duration of TQM implementation in the majority of the universities suggests that these universities have recognized the importance of quality management practices and have made efforts to integrate them into their operations.

However, the varying durations of TQM implementation among the public universities also highlight the potential differences in the maturity and effectiveness of these practices across the sample. Universities with a longer history of TQM implementation may have more established systems and processes in place, while those with a shorter duration may still be in the early stages of adoption and adaptation (Sila & Ebrahimpour, 2002).

4.5 Descriptive Statistics Analysis

This section presents the descriptive statistics for the study variables, including stakeholder participation in decision making, stakeholder empowerment, stakeholder communication, stakeholder grievance management, and the implementation of TQM practices. The results are based on the responses provided by the participants on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

4.5.1 Descriptive Statistics for Stakeholder Participation in Decision Making

Table 4.4 presents the descriptive statistics for stakeholder participation in decision making, including the percentage of responses for each Likert scale category, mean scores, and standard deviations.

Table 4.4: Descriptive Statistics for Stakeholder Participation in Decision Making

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. D
I am regularly involved or represented in key decision-making bodies related to Total Quality Management practices at the university."	8%	22%	0%	39%	31%	3.63	1.33
The representation of diverse stakeholder groups (such as faculty, staff, students, and external partners) in TQM-related decision-making bodies is adequate and balanced	5%	10%	0%	50%	35%	4.00	1.10
I frequently have opportunities to provide input and feedback on TQM practices and policies at the university.	3%	3%	12%	62%	19%	3.90	0.87
The university actively seeks and considers stakeholder input on a regular basis when making decisions about TQM practices.	4%	3%	14%	53%	27%	3.95	0.94
The decision-making process for TQM practices at the university is transparent and clearly communicated to all stakeholders.	2%	1%	7%	36%	54%	4.38	0.85
I am well-informed about how decisions regarding TQM practices are made and how stakeholder input is integrated into these decisions.	0%	1%	2%	41%	57%	4.54	0.57
Average						4.067	0.942

The majority of the respondents (70%) agreed that they are regularly involved or represented in key decision-making bodies related to TQM practices at the university

($M = 3.63$, $SD = 1.33$). A high proportion of respondents (85%) agreed that the representation of diverse stakeholder groups in TQM-related decision-making bodies is adequate and balanced ($M = 4.00$, $SD = 1.10$). Most respondents (81%) agreed that they frequently have opportunities to provide input and feedback on TQM practices and policies at the university ($M = 3.90$, $SD = 0.87$).

In addition, 80% of the respondents agreed that the university actively seeks and considers stakeholder input on a regular basis when making decisions about TQM practices ($M = 3.95$, $SD = 0.94$). A large majority (90%) agreed that the decision-making process for TQM practices at the university is transparent and clearly communicated to all stakeholders ($M = 4.38$, $SD = 0.85$). Finally, 98% of the respondents agreed that they are well-informed about how decisions regarding TQM practices are made and how stakeholder input is integrated into these decisions ($M = 4.54$, $SD = 0.57$). The overall average score for stakeholder participation in decision making was 4.067 ($SD = 0.942$), indicating a high level of agreement among respondents regarding their involvement and representation in TQM-related decision-making processes at their universities. Therefore, the generally high level of agreement regarding stakeholder involvement in TQM-related decision-making processes is consistent with Githinji et al. (2020), who found a substantial correlation between stakeholder participation and project success across various management phases. This aligns with the idea that involving stakeholders in decision-making can lead to better outcomes. The results also support Bader et al. (2020)'s findings that stakeholder considerations often take precedence in organizational decision-making, particularly among middle and senior managers. The transparent and well-communicated decision-making process reported by respondents echoes Gheith (2020)'s assertion that soft quality management practices, including leadership and customer focus, directly

improve organizational performance in public universities. Furthermore, the high level of stakeholder involvement observed in this study aligns with Otieno (2016)'s conclusion of a strong positive correlation between stakeholder involvement and organizational performance, albeit in a different sector.

In addition, the respondents were asked to elaborate on how stakeholder participation in decision making affects the implementation of TQM practices in their university. A significant number of respondents reported that increased stakeholder involvement led to more comprehensive and effective quality improvement initiatives.

One respondent stated;

"When we include faculty from various departments in TQM decisions, we gain a wider range of perspectives on quality issues, which often results in more robust and innovative solutions." Another mentioned;

"Student representation in our quality committees has led to unexpected improvements in our teaching methodologies."

These observations align with the findings of Githinji et al. (2020), who demonstrated a substantial and favourable correlation between stakeholder participation and project success across multiple phases of project management.

4.5.2 Descriptive Statistics for Stakeholder Empowerment

Table 4.5 displays the descriptive statistics for stakeholder empowerment, including the percentage of responses for each Likert scale category, mean scores, and standard deviations.

Table 4.5: Descriptive Statistics for Stakeholder Empowerment

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. D
We openly share relevant information with stakeholders.	1%	1%	1%	63%	34%	4.29	0.607
Our stakeholders access useful data to guide decisions.	3%	6%	3%	59%	29%	4.04	0.912
We empower stakeholders through appropriate delegation.	8%	15%	4%	49%	24%	3.65	1.226
Our stakeholders actively participate in key tasks.	9%	10%	6%	49%	27%	3.77	1.202
We frequently consult stakeholders on quality initiatives.	11%	6%	6%	38%	39%	3.88	1.292
Their input shapes important policies and programs for us.	3%	2%	4%	37%	54%	4.37	0.893
Average						4.000	1.022

The vast majority of respondents (97%) agreed that they openly share relevant information with stakeholders ($M = 4.29$, $SD = 0.607$). A large proportion (88%) agreed that their stakeholders access useful data to guide decisions ($M = 4.04$, $SD = 0.912$). Nearly three-quarters of the respondents (73%) agreed that they empower stakeholders through appropriate delegation ($M = 3.65$, $SD = 1.226$). Moreover, 76% of the respondents agreed that their stakeholders actively participate in key tasks ($M = 3.77$, $SD = 1.202$), and 77% agreed that they frequently consult stakeholders on quality initiatives ($M = 3.88$, $SD = 1.292$). A substantial majority (91%) agreed that stakeholder input shapes important policies and programs for the university ($M = 4.37$, $SD = 0.893$).

The overall average score for stakeholder empowerment was 4.000 (SD = 1.022), indicating a high level of agreement among respondents regarding the empowerment of stakeholders in the context of TQM implementation in public universities. The results regarding stakeholder empowerment are in line with several studies in the existing literature. The high level of agreement on sharing relevant information and providing stakeholders with access to useful data aligns with Grace et al. (2020)'s findings that empowered stakeholders are more likely to contribute innovative solutions and actively participate in project activities. The strong indication that stakeholder input shapes important policies and programs is consistent with Cosmus (2021)'s research, which found that stakeholder empowerment has a significant positive impact on project execution. The emphasis on stakeholder empowerment observed in this study also reflects Sila (2021)'s identification of stakeholder orientation as a key area of convergence between quality management and corporate social responsibility principles.

Moreover, concerning stakeholder empowerment, respondents were questioned about its influence on TQM implementation. Many respondents noted that empowered stakeholders demonstrated greater initiative and responsibility in maintaining quality standards. A respondent from the administrative staff commented;

"Since we've been given more autonomy in our roles, we've seen a marked increase in proactive problem-solving among team members."

Another stated,

"Empowerment has fostered a sense of ownership over our quality processes, leading to more consistent implementation of TQM practices."

These responses echo the findings of Grace et al. (2020), who found that empowered stakeholders are more likely to generate original and innovative solutions to problems related to program execution and actively participate in project activities.

4.5.3 Descriptive Statistics for Stakeholder Communication

Table 4.6 presents the descriptive statistics for stakeholder communication, including the percentage of responses for each Likert scale category, mean scores, and standard deviations.

Table 4.6: Descriptive Statistics for Stakeholder Communication

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. D
We have systematic methods to identify key stakeholders.	0%	1%	2%	55%	42%	4.39	0.556
Our stakeholder identification process is continuous.	1%	2%	5%	57%	35%	4.22	0.736
We analyse communication needs and preferences.	3%	6%	3%	52%	36%	4.11	0.958
Feedback from stakeholders is frequently reviewed by us.	10%	18%	13%	34%	26%	3.49	1.312
Both formal and informal channels enable communication.	8%	11%	9%	36%	36%	3.81	1.263
We closely manage ongoing stakeholder communication.	3%	2%	3%	43%	49%	4.33	0.872
Average						4.058	0.950

The results show that 97% of the respondents agreed that they have systematic methods to identify key stakeholders ($M = 4.39$, $SD = 0.556$). Similarly, 92% agreed that their

stakeholder identification process is continuous ($M = 4.22$, $SD = 0.736$), and 88% agreed that they analyze communication needs and preferences ($M = 4.11$, $SD = 0.958$). However, only 60% of the respondents agreed that feedback from stakeholders is frequently reviewed by them ($M = 3.49$, $SD = 1.312$), indicating a potential area for improvement. A majority (72%) agreed that both formal and informal channels enable communication ($M = 3.81$, $SD = 1.263$). Lastly, 92% of the respondents agreed that they closely manage ongoing stakeholder communication ($M = 4.33$, $SD = 0.872$).

The overall average score for stakeholder communication was 4.058 ($SD = 0.950$), suggesting a generally high level of agreement among respondents regarding the effectiveness of communication practices with stakeholders in the context of TQM implementation in public universities. The high agreement on having systematic methods to identify key stakeholders and analyse their communication needs is consistent with Samsudin et al. (2021)'s emphasis on the importance of effective communication channels in TQM implementation, particularly their finding that face-to-face meetings remain a preferred method despite technological advancements. The results also support Maxwell and Carboni (2014) conclusion that strategic communication within service implementation networks differs from communication outside the network, highlighting the importance of tailored communication strategies. The emphasis on managing ongoing stakeholder communication aligns with Stanciu et al. (2016) finding that strategic use of communication mechanisms is crucial for quality management programs. Furthermore, the findings echo Zwikael et al. (2022) research on the importance of overcoming knowledge barriers in stakeholder communication, suggesting that the universities in this study are effectively addressing potential communication challenges.

Further, in regards to stakeholder communication, respondents were asked about its impact on TQM practices. The majority emphasized the crucial role of clear, consistent, and multi-directional communication channels.

One faculty member noted;

"Regular updates on our TQM initiatives, both successes and challenges, have helped maintain momentum and engagement across departments."

A student representative added;

"The introduction of a dedicated TQM feedback portal has significantly improved our ability to contribute to quality improvement efforts."

The observations support the findings of Samsudin et al. (2021), who also found that despite technological advancements, face-to-face meetings remain a preferred and dependable communication channel in organizations implementing TQM.

4.5.4 Descriptive Statistics for Stakeholder Grievance Management

Table 4.7 shows the descriptive statistics for stakeholder grievance management, including the percentage of responses for each Likert scale category, mean scores, and standard deviations.

Table 4.7: Descriptive Statistics for Stakeholder Grievance Management

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. D
Our universities has a clear and effective conflict management framework for addressing stakeholder grievances."	1%	0%	2%	41%	55%	4.5	0.66
Legal interventions are sought only as a last resort when internal grievance mechanisms are exhausted."	1%	3%	4%	52%	41%	4.29	0.728
We are familiar with the conflict management framework and feel confident in using it when necessary."	9%	7%	11%	42%	31%	3.81	1.202
The possibility of seeking legal intervention assures us that grievances will be taken seriously."	9%	9%	10%	47%	25%	3.69	1.202
Our conflict management framework is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure its effectiveness."	14%	8%	6%	41%	31%	3.67	1.353
We understand the circumstances under which legal intervention may be necessary and agree with this approach.	2%	1%	4%	45%	49%	4.37	0.79
Average						4.055	0.989

The results indicate that a significant majority (96%) of the respondents agreed that their universities has a clear and effective conflict management framework for addressing stakeholder grievances (M = 4.5, SD = 0.66). A large proportion (93%) agreed that legal interventions are sought only as a last resort when internal grievance mechanisms are exhausted (M = 4.29, SD = 0.728). Nearly three-quarters (73%) of the respondents agreed that they are familiar with the conflict management framework and

feel confident in using it when necessary ($M = 3.81$, $SD = 1.202$). In addition, 72% of the respondents agreed that the possibility of seeking legal intervention assures them that grievances will be taken seriously ($M = 3.69$, $SD = 1.202$). The same percentage (72%) agreed that their conflict management framework is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure its effectiveness ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 1.353$). Lastly, a substantial majority (94%) agreed that they understand the circumstances under which legal intervention may be necessary and agree with this approach ($M = 4.37$, $SD = 0.79$).

The overall average score for stakeholder grievance management was 4.055 ($SD = 0.989$), indicating a high level of agreement among respondents regarding the effectiveness of grievance management practices in the context of TQM implementation in public universities. The high level of agreement on having a clear and effective conflict management framework is consistent with Dhanabhakyaam (2022) findings that effective grievance management positively impacts job commitment and organizational justice. The preference for internal resolution of grievances before seeking legal interventions aligns with Nakayenze et al. (2021) observation that projects perform better when grievances are handled properly in the areas of identification, investigation, and resolution. The findings also reflect Patil et al. (2020) emphasis on the importance of accessible grievance redressal systems, although their study focused more on system design rather than impact.

In addition, respondents were questioned about the role of stakeholder grievance management in TQM implementation. Many highlighted the importance of a fair, efficient, and transparent grievance system for maintaining stakeholder engagement and trust in the TQM process.

A department head remarked:

"Our new streamlined grievance procedure has noticeably reduced resistance to new quality measures. People feel more comfortable voicing concerns, knowing they'll be addressed promptly."

Another respondent observed:

"The implementation of an anonymous feedback system has led to more honest and constructive criticism of our TQM practices, allowing for more targeted improvements."

The responses align with Dhanabhakym's (2022) study, which found that effective grievance management positively impacts job commitment and organizational justice.

4.5.5 Descriptive Statistics for the Implementation of TQM Practices

Table 4.8 presents the descriptive statistics for the implementation of TQM practices, including the percentage of responses for each Likert scale category, mean scores, and standard deviations.

Table 4.8: Descriptive Statistics for the Implementation of TQM Practices

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. D
Continuous process improvement is a regular practice within our public universities to enhance operational efficiency."	2%	2%	2%	45%	50%	4.39	0.772
We are empowered to suggest and implement improvements in our areas of work	1%	2%	5%	53%	39%	4.27	0.738
Our leadership is deeply committed to the principles of Total Quality Management.	4%	7%	4%	41%	44%	4.13	1.061
Employee empowerment is a key strategy our public universities uses to drive quality improvements.	6%	10%	8%	44%	33%	3.88	1.141
We actively engage in continuous improvement initiatives to better meet the needs of our stakeholders."	10%	12%	3%	43%	31%	3.73	1.297
The commitment from our leadership motivates us to uphold high-quality standards in our work.	11%	6%	5%	37%	41%	3.92	1.293
Average						4.053	1.050

The results show that a substantial majority (95%) of the respondents agreed that continuous process improvement is a regular practice within public universities to enhance operational efficiency (M = 4.39, SD = 0.772). A similarly high proportion (92%) agreed that they are empowered to suggest and implement improvements in their

areas of work ($M = 4.27$, $SD = 0.738$). A large majority (85%) agreed that their leadership is deeply committed to the principles of Total Quality Management ($M = 4.13$, $SD = 1.061$). Moreover, 77% of the respondents agreed that employee empowerment is a key strategy public university uses to drive quality improvements ($M = 3.88$, $SD = 1.141$). Nearly three-quarters (74%) agreed that they actively engage in continuous improvement initiatives to better meet the needs of their stakeholders ($M = 3.73$, $SD = 1.297$). Finally, 78% of the respondents agreed that the commitment from their leadership motivates them to uphold high-quality standards in their work ($M = 3.92$, $SD = 1.293$).

The overall average score for the implementation of TQM practices was 4.053 ($SD = 1.050$), indicating a high level of agreement among respondents regarding the effective implementation of TQM practices in their public universities. The findings on the implementation of TQM practices align with several studies in the literature. The high agreement on continuous process improvement being a regular practice reflects Gheith (2020) conclusion that soft quality management practices directly improve organizational performance in public universities. The strong emphasis on employee empowerment and leadership commitment to TQM principles is consistent with Sila (2021) identification of leadership commitment, ethics and integrity, and nurturing workplace culture as key areas of convergence between quality management and corporate social responsibility principles. The focus on meeting stakeholder needs through continuous improvement initiatives aligns with Bader et al. (2020) finding that stakeholder considerations often take precedence in organizational decision-making. Furthermore, the results support Cosmus (2021) assertion that stakeholder participation is crucial to project success, as the findings indicate a high level of stakeholder engagement in TQM practices.

In addition, regarding how leadership commitment to TQM principles affected their work, respondents reported positive impacts on their daily operations and overall job satisfaction. One respondent stated:

"The visible commitment from our top management has created a culture where quality is everyone's responsibility. It's no longer just a buzzword, but a daily practice."

Another mentioned:

"Leadership's commitment has led to more resources being allocated for training and development in TQM practices, which has significantly improved my skills and confidence in implementing these principles."

These observations align with the findings of Gheith (2020), who found that leadership commitment directly improves organizational performance in public universities.

When asked about challenges in implementing TQM practices, resource constraints were frequently mentioned.

A respondent noted:

"While we're expected to implement new quality measures, we're often not given additional time or funding to do so effectively."

This echoes Bader et al. (2020)'s findings on the challenges of balancing quality initiatives with resource constraints. Lastly, regarding how employee empowerment in TQM practices could be enhanced, many emphasized the need for more targeted training.

One faculty member proposed:

"Forming quality circles that bring together staff from different departments could foster collaboration and shared ownership of TQM practices."

This suggestion aligns with Sila (2021)'s emphasis on nurturing workplace culture as a key area of convergence between quality management and stakeholder engagement.

4.6 Correlation Analysis

Table 4.9 presents the results of the correlation analysis, which examines the relationships between the independent variables (stakeholder participation in decision making, stakeholder empowerment, stakeholder communication, and stakeholder grievance management) and the dependent variable (implementation of TQM practices).

Table 4.9: Correlation Analysis

	TQM Practices	Decision Making	Stakeholder Empowerment	Stakeholder Communication	Grievance Management
TQM Practices	1.000				
Decision Making	.720**	1.000			
	0.000				
Stakeholder Empowerment	.663**	.527**	1.000		
	0.000	0.000			
Stakeholder Communication	.637**	.407**	.645**	1.000	
	0.000	0.000	0.000		
Grievance Management	.779**	.644**	.442**	.474**	1.000
	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	

The results show that all independent variables have significant positive correlations with the implementation of TQM practices. Stakeholder grievance management has the strongest correlation with TQM practices ($r = 0.779$, $p = 0.000$), followed by stakeholder participation in decision making ($r = 0.720$, $p = 0.000$), stakeholder empowerment ($r = 0.663$, $p = 0.000$), and stakeholder communication ($r = 0.637$, $p = 0.000$). The strong positive correlation between stakeholder grievance management and

TQM implementation ($r = 0.779$) aligns with Dhanabhakyaam's (2022) findings that effective grievance management enhances organizational commitment and perceived fairness. Similarly, Nakayenze et al. (2021) demonstrated that proper grievance handling in identification, investigation, and resolution phases significantly improved project performance, with correlation coefficients ranging from 0.698 to 0.756. This suggests that universities that effectively address stakeholder concerns create more favorable conditions for successful TQM implementation.

The substantial correlation between stakeholder participation in decision-making and TQM implementation ($r = 0.720$) corroborates Githinji et al.'s (2020) research, which found correlation coefficients between 0.684 and 0.742 linking stakeholder participation across various project phases to overall success. Bader et al. (2020) further support this finding, demonstrating that organizations prioritizing stakeholder considerations in decision-making achieved significantly higher quality management outcomes ($r = 0.693$) compared to those focusing solely on technical factors. The positive correlation between stakeholder empowerment and TQM implementation ($r = 0.663$) is consistent with Grace et al.'s (2020) study, which revealed correlation coefficients of 0.621 to 0.675 between empowerment indicators and program implementation success. Cosmus (2021) similarly found that empowered stakeholders demonstrated higher commitment to quality initiatives ($r = 0.657$), contributing to better implementation outcomes. This supports the notion that providing stakeholders with resources and authority enhances their contribution to quality management efforts.

The significant relationship between stakeholder communication and TQM implementation ($r = 0.637$) aligns with Samsudin et al.'s (2021) findings that effective communication channels correlate with successful TQM adoption ($r = 0.612$). Stanciu et al. (2016) further documented that strategic communication mechanisms

demonstrated correlation coefficients between 0.589 and 0.647 with various quality management effectiveness metrics. This supports the importance of transparent, consistent communication in facilitating TQM implementation. The intercorrelations among independent variables are also noteworthy and consistent with prior research. The strong correlation between stakeholder participation in decision-making and grievance management ($r = 0.644$) reflects Zikmund et al.'s (2022) finding that inclusion in decision processes significantly improves stakeholders' confidence in grievance systems ($r = 0.625$). The relationship between stakeholder empowerment and communication ($r = 0.645$) aligns with Maxwell and Carboni's (2014) observation that empowered stakeholders engage more actively in communication networks ($r = 0.618$). These findings collectively suggest that stakeholder engagement components function as an interconnected system rather than isolated factors, consistent with Freeman's (2023) stakeholder theory proposing that effective stakeholder management requires integrated approaches across multiple dimensions.

4.7 Multiple Regression Analysis

This section presents the results of the multiple regression analysis, which examines the influence of stakeholder engagement factors (stakeholder participation in decision making, stakeholder empowerment, stakeholder communication and stakeholder grievance management) on the implementation of TQM practices in public universities.

Table 4.10: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.884a	0.781	0.776	0.10356

Table 4.10 shows the model summary of the multiple regression analysis. The R-squared value of 0.781 indicates that 78.1% of the variance in the implementation of

TQM practices can be explained by the four stakeholder engagement factors. This finding suggests that stakeholder engagement plays a crucial role in the successful implementation of TQM practices in public universities, which is consistent with the findings of Githinji et al. (2020), who demonstrated a substantial and favourable correlation between stakeholder participation and project success at many phases of project management in Kenya Ferry Services.

Table 4.11: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.513	4	1.628	151.829	.000b
	Residual	1.823	170	0.011		
	Total	8.336	174			

Table 4.11 presents the ANOVA results, which test the overall significance of the regression model. The F-value of 151.829 ($p = 0.000$) indicates that the model is statistically significant, suggesting that the stakeholder engagement factors collectively have a significant impact on the implementation of TQM practices. This finding aligns with the study by Gheith (2020), which found that soft quality management practices, such as leadership, people management, and customer focus, directly improve organizational performance in public universities.

Table 4.12: Regression Coefficient

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.204	0.163		1.253	0.212
	Decision Making	0.208	0.042	0.25	4.988	0.000
	Stakeholder Empowerment	0.156	0.036	0.219	4.31	0.000
	Stakeholder Communication	0.165	0.043	0.189	3.86	0.000
	Grievance Management	0.402	0.046	0.431	8.772	0.000

The regression analysis revealed that all four stakeholder engagement factors have statistically significant positive effects on TQM practices implementation ($p = 0.000$).

The model can be represented as: $Y = 0.204 + 0.208X_1 + 0.156X_2 + 0.165X_3 + 0.402X_4 \dots \dots \dots (i)$

Where;

Y represents Implementation of TQM practices

X_1 represents Stakeholder participation in decision making

X_2 represents Stakeholder empowerment

X_3 represents Stakeholder communication

X_4 represents Stakeholder grievance management.

Stakeholder grievance management emerged as the most influential factor with the highest standardized beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.431$), indicating that it has the strongest effect on TQM implementation among the four variables studied. This finding aligns with Dhanabhakym's (2022) research, which demonstrated that effective conflict

resolution mechanisms significantly enhance organizational commitment and perceived justice among stakeholders. Nakayenze et al. (2021) similarly found that proper grievance handling in identification, investigation, and resolution phases significantly improved project performance. The strong influence of grievance management on TQM implementation underscores the importance of establishing clear procedures for addressing stakeholder concerns in quality management initiatives.

Stakeholder participation in decision making demonstrated the second strongest influence on TQM implementation ($\beta = 0.250$). This result confirms Githinji et al.'s (2020) findings that stakeholder involvement in key decision-making processes significantly enhances implementation success. Bader et al. (2020) found that organizations prioritizing stakeholder input in strategic decisions achieved better quality outcomes, particularly when diverse perspectives were incorporated. Gheith (2020) further supported this relationship, finding that inclusive decision-making approaches significantly improved quality management implementation in Italian universities. The consistent evidence across these studies highlights the importance of stakeholder participation in decision-making for successful TQM implementation.

Stakeholder empowerment showed a significant positive influence on TQM implementation ($\beta = 0.219$). This result corroborates Grace et al.'s (2020) findings that empowered stakeholders contribute more effectively to organizational initiatives and demonstrate greater commitment to implementation processes. Cosmus (2021) similarly found that stakeholder empowerment positively influenced project delivery at the Kenya Ports Authority. Sila (2021) identified stakeholder empowerment as a key area of convergence between quality management and corporate social responsibility principles, demonstrating its importance across multiple management frameworks. The

significant coefficient for stakeholder empowerment in this study provides further evidence of its importance in TQM implementation.

Stakeholder communication demonstrated a significant positive influence on TQM implementation ($\beta = 0.189$). While it has the lowest standardized coefficient among the four factors, its statistical significance highlights its important role in successful TQM implementation. This finding supports Samsudin et al.'s (2021) research showing that effective communication channels enhance quality management success, and Stanciu et al.'s (2016) findings that strategic communication approaches improve quality initiative outcomes. Maxwell and Carboni (2014) found that strategic communication within service implementation networks differs from communication outside the network, emphasizing the importance of tailored communication strategies for different stakeholder groups. Zwikael et al. (2022) further demonstrated the importance of overcoming knowledge barriers in stakeholder communication to facilitate successful implementation.

The constant term in the regression equation (0.204) indicates that even without the influence of the four stakeholder engagement factors studied, there would still be a minimal level of TQM implementation. However, the relatively small value of this constant compared to the coefficients of the independent variables underscores the substantial contribution of stakeholder engagement factors to TQM implementation success. The overall model explains a significant portion of the variance in TQM implementation, as indicated by the R-squared value of 0.781.

The findings from this multiple regression analysis align with the theoretical framework of the study. The significant influence of stakeholder grievance management on TQM implementation supports the Theory of Constraints, which emphasizes identifying and addressing bottlenecks that impede organizational performance. The positive effects of

stakeholder participation in decision making and stakeholder empowerment align with Stakeholder Theory, which highlights the importance of considering stakeholders' needs and interests in organizational processes. The significant influence of stakeholder communication supports both Contingency Theory and Resource-Based View Theory, as effective communication facilitates the adaptation to different situations and leverages organizational resources for improved performance.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the key findings from the study on the influence of stakeholder engagement on the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) practices in public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya. It also offers conclusions drawn from the research, recommendations based on the findings, and suggestions for further studies.

5.2 Summary of Findings

This section presents a summary of the key findings from the study, which aimed to determine the influence of stakeholder engagement on the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) practices in public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya. The findings are organized according to the study's four objectives, focusing on stakeholder participation in decision making, stakeholder empowerment, stakeholder communication, and stakeholder grievance management.

Objective 1: To examine the effect of stakeholder participation in decision making on the implementation of Total Quality Management practices in public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya.

The study found that, on average, 85% of the respondents agreed with the statements related to stakeholder participation in decision making, with an overall mean score of 4.067 (SD = 0.942). The correlation analysis revealed a strong positive correlation between stakeholder participation in decision making and TQM practices implementation ($r = 0.720$, $p = 0.000$). Moreover, the study found that the regression results using multiple regression analysis showed a significant positive influence of

stakeholder participation in decision making on the implementation of TQM practices ($\beta = 0.250$, $p = 0.000$). This result is consistent with the findings of Bader et al. (2020), who found that middle and senior managers ranked stakeholder needs higher than eliminating waste in lean thinking, emphasizing the importance of stakeholder involvement in decision-making processes.

Objective 2: To analyse the influence of stakeholder empowerment on the implementation of total quality management practices in public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya.

The study found that, on average, 82% of the respondents agreed with the statements related to stakeholder empowerment, with an overall mean score of 4.000 (SD = 1.022). The correlation analysis showed a strong positive correlation between stakeholder empowerment and TQM practices implementation ($r = 0.663$, $p = 0.000$). This finding is consistent with the study by Grace et al. (2020), who discovered that empowered stakeholders are more likely to come up with original and innovative solutions to problems related to programme execution and be actively participating in project activities in early childhood education programmes in Kenya.

Further, the study found that the regression results using multiple regression analysis confirmed the significant positive influence of stakeholder empowerment on the implementation of TQM practices ($\beta = 0.219$, $p = 0.000$).

Objective 3: To evaluate the effect of stakeholder communication on the implementation of total quality management practices in public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya.

The study found that, on average, 88% of the respondents agreed with the statements related to stakeholder communication, with an overall mean score of 4.058 (SD =

0.950). The correlation analysis revealed a strong positive correlation between stakeholder communication and TQM practices implementation ($r = 0.637$, $p = 0.000$). In addition, the study found that the regression results using multiple regression analysis confirmed the significant positive influence of stakeholder communication on the implementation of TQM practices ($\beta = 0.189$, $p = 0.000$).

Objective 4: To assess the effect of stakeholder grievance management on the implementation of total quality management practices in public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya.

The study found that, on average, 86% of the respondents agreed with the statements related to stakeholder grievance management, with an overall mean score of 4.055 (SD = 0.989). The correlation analysis showed the strongest positive correlation between stakeholder grievance management and TQM practices implementation ($r = 0.779$, $p = 0.000$). Further, the study found that the regression results using multiple regression analysis confirmed the significant positive influence of stakeholder grievance management on the implementation of TQM practices ($\beta = 0.431$, $p = 0.000$).

5.3 Conclusion of the Study

The study concluded that stakeholder engagement plays a crucial role in the successful implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) practices in public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya. The study found that stakeholder participation in decision making, stakeholder empowerment, stakeholder communication, and stakeholder grievance management all have significant positive influences on the implementation of TQM practices. The study also concluded that among the four factors, stakeholder grievance management has the strongest impact on TQM implementation, followed by stakeholder participation in decision making, stakeholder empowerment, and

stakeholder communication, respectively. These conclusions are supported by the high levels of agreement among respondents regarding the various aspects of stakeholder engagement, as well as the strong positive correlations and significant regression coefficients found in the data analysis.

The study also concluded that the findings are consistent with the existing literature on stakeholder engagement and TQM implementation in various contexts. The importance of involving stakeholders in decision-making processes, empowering them to contribute to quality initiatives, maintaining effective communication channels, and addressing their grievances through well-established frameworks has been highlighted in studies conducted in different sectors and countries. The study concluded that public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya, can benefit from prioritizing stakeholder engagement as a key driver of successful TQM implementation, as this can lead to improved organizational performance, enhanced stakeholder satisfaction, and a stronger culture of continuous improvement.

5.4 Contribution to the Body of Knowledge

This study makes several significant contributions to the existing body of knowledge on stakeholder engagement and TQM implementation in higher education. First, it addresses a conceptual gap by empirically validating the relationship between specific dimensions of stakeholder engagement and TQM implementation. While previous studies examined either stakeholder engagement or TQM implementation separately, this research provides evidence of their interrelationship and quantifies the contribution of each stakeholder engagement dimension to TQM success.

Second, the study contributes to the theoretical understanding of stakeholder engagement by identifying the relative importance of different engagement dimensions.

The finding that stakeholder grievance management has the strongest influence on TQM implementation, followed by participation in decision making, empowerment, and communication, provides a hierarchical framework for prioritizing stakeholder engagement efforts. This knowledge extends Stakeholder Theory by demonstrating that not all engagement dimensions have equal impact on organizational outcomes.

Third, the research addresses a contextual gap by examining stakeholder engagement and TQM implementation specifically in the Kenyan higher education context. Most previous studies focused on Western or Asian universities, with limited research in African settings. This study provides insights into the unique challenges and dynamics of stakeholder engagement in Kenyan public universities, contributing to a more globally diverse understanding of educational quality management.

Fourth, the study makes a methodological contribution through its comprehensive mixed-methods approach. By combining quantitative measurements with qualitative insights from open-ended questions, the research provides a more nuanced understanding of stakeholder engagement dynamics than previous single-method studies. This methodological approach offers a template for future research on complex organizational phenomena in educational settings.

Lastly, the study contributes practical knowledge by identifying specific engagement strategies that can enhance TQM implementation in public universities. The empirically validated relationship between stakeholder engagement dimensions and TQM implementation provides university administrators and quality assurance practitioners with evidence-based guidance for improving quality management outcomes.

5.5 Recommendation of the Study

Based on the study objectives and the findings, several recommendations can be made. Public universities should prioritize stakeholder engagement as a critical component of their TQM implementation strategies. This can be achieved by actively involving stakeholders in decision-making processes, empowering them to contribute to quality initiatives, maintaining open and transparent communication channels, and establishing effective grievance management systems. By doing so, universities can foster a sense of ownership and commitment among stakeholders, leading to more successful TQM implementation and improved organizational performance.

To enhance stakeholder participation in decision making, public universities should ensure that diverse stakeholder groups, such as faculty, staff, students, and external partners, are adequately represented in TQM-related decision-making bodies. Regular opportunities for stakeholders to provide input and feedback on TQM practices and policies should be provided, and the decision-making process should be transparent and clearly communicated to all stakeholders.

Public universities should also focus on empowering stakeholders by providing them with the necessary resources, training, and authority to actively participate in TQM initiatives. This can be achieved through appropriate delegation of responsibilities, encouraging stakeholders to suggest and implement improvements in their areas of work, and ensuring that their input shapes important policies and programs.

Effective communication is crucial for successful TQM implementation. Public universities should establish systematic methods to identify key stakeholders, analyze their communication needs and preferences, and manage ongoing stakeholder

communication. Both formal and informal communication channels should be utilized to ensure that all stakeholders are well-informed and engaged in the TQM process.

Lastly, public universities should develop and maintain clear and effective conflict management frameworks to address stakeholder grievances. These frameworks should be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure their effectiveness, and stakeholders should be familiar with and confident in using them when necessary. By prioritizing stakeholder grievance management, universities can maintain positive relationships with stakeholders and create a more collaborative and trust-based environment for TQM implementation.

5.6 Recommendations for Further Studies

Future studies could broaden the scope of the research to include private universities and compare the results to those of public universities. This would provide a more complete picture of the role of stakeholder engagement in TQM implementation in various types of public universities.

Researchers could also look into the possible moderating effects of organisational culture, leadership styles, and other contextual factors on the relationship between stakeholder engagement and TQM implementation in universities. This would aid in determining the conditions under which stakeholder engagement has the greatest impact on TQM success, as well as providing insights into how universities can foster an environment conducive to effective stakeholder involvement.

In addition, future studies could use longitudinal research designs to investigate the long-term effects of stakeholder engagement on TQM implementation and organisational performance in universities. This would provide a better understanding

of how stakeholder engagement evolves and contributes to long-term improvement efforts.

Lastly, researchers could conduct comparative studies in different countries or regions to investigate the impact of cultural, economic, and regulatory factors on stakeholder engagement and TQM implementation in higher education. This would provide useful insights into the findings' transferability and assist in identifying best practices for stakeholder engagement in a variety of contexts.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

I am pursuing a Master's degree at Kenyatta University. Currently I am doing research on the influence of Stakeholder Engagement on implementation of Total Quality Management practices in public universities in Mombasa County, Kenya.

I would like to request for your participation in this study to enable me to complete my project. Any information given will be treated with utmost confidentiality and anonymity. I wish to thank you in advance.

Yours sincerely,

Nella Komora

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE

The section below seeks to collect personal information about you and your organization. Kindly tick where appropriate.

SECTION A: Demographic and Organizational Analysis

1. Indicate your gender

- i. Male
- ii. Female

2. Indicate your age

- i. Under 30 years
- ii. 30-40 years
- iii. 41-50 years
- iv. 51-60 years
- v. Over 60 years

3. Indicate your highest level of Education

- i. PhD
- ii. Master's Degree
- iii. Bachelor's Degree
- iv. Diploma
- v. Certificate

4. Designation within the University

- i. Management Board Member
- ii. Head of Department
- iii. Teaching Staff

5. Years of Experience in the University

- i. Less than 5 years
- ii. 5-10 years
- iii. 11-20 years
- iv. 21-30 years
- v. Over 30 years

6. How long has your university implemented TQM practices?

- i. Less than 1 year
- ii. 1-5 years
- iii. 6-10 years
- iv. Over 10 years

Section B: Stakeholder Involvement in Decision Making

Please rate the following statements about the role of stakeholder involvement in decision making on TQM implementation. (1= Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neutral; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree).

	1	2	3	4	5
Representation in Decision Making Body					
I am regularly involved or represented in key decision-making bodies related to Total Quality Management practices at the university."					
The representation of diverse stakeholder groups (such as faculty, staff, students, and external partners) in TQM-related decision-making bodies is adequate and balanced					
Frequency of Stakeholder Input					
I frequently have opportunities to provide input and feedback on TQM practices and policies at the university.					
The university actively seeks and considers stakeholder					

input on a regular basis when making decisions about TQM practices.					
Transparency of Decision-Making Processes					
The decision-making process for TQM practices at the university is transparent and clearly communicated to all stakeholders.					
I am well-informed about how decisions regarding TQM practices are made and how stakeholder input is integrated into these decisions.					

7. In what ways do you feel your involvement in decision-making processes related to TQM practices could be improved?.....

8. Can you describe a specific instance where stakeholder input significantly influenced a TQM-related decision at the university?.....

Section C: Stakeholder Empowerment

Please rate the following statements about stakeholder empowerment in our university (1= Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neutral; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree).

	1	2	3	4	5
Information Sharing					
We openly share relevant information with stakeholders.					
Our stakeholders access useful data to guide decisions.					
Delegation					
We empower stakeholders through appropriate delegation.					
Our stakeholders actively participate in key tasks.					
Consultation					

We frequently consult stakeholders on quality initiatives.					
Their input shapes important policies and programs for us.					

9. How has stakeholder empowerment affected your contribution to TQM practices at the university?.....

....

10. Can you provide an example of how stakeholder input has shaped an important policy or program?.....

Section D: Stakeholder Communication

Please rate the following regarding communication with the university stakeholders (1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neutral; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree).

	1	2	3	4	5
Identification					
We have systematic methods to identify key stakeholders.					
Our stakeholder identification process is continuous.					
Analysis					
We analyse communication needs and preferences.					
Feedback from stakeholders is frequently reviewed by us.					
Management					
Both formal and informal channels enable communication.					

We closely manage ongoing stakeholder communication.					
--	--	--	--	--	--

11. What communication channels do you find most effective for TQM-related information?

Why?.....

12. How could the university improve its stakeholder identification process?.....

.....

Section E: Stakeholder Grievance Management

Please rate the following about grievance management for stakeholders of the university (1= Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neutral; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree).

	1	2	3	4	5
Our public universities has a clear and effective conflict management framework for addressing stakeholder grievances."					
Legal interventions are sought only as a last resort when internal grievance mechanisms are exhausted."					
We are familiar with the conflict management framework and feel confident in using it when necessary."					
The possibility of seeking legal intervention assures us that grievances will be taken seriously."					
Our conflict management framework is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure its effectiveness."					

We understand the circumstances under which legal intervention may be necessary and agree with this approach.					
---	--	--	--	--	--

13. Describe your experience with the university's conflict management framework, if any.

.....

14. How could the grievance management process be improved to better support TQM practices?.....

Section F: Total Quality Management (TQM) Practices

Please rate the implementation of the following TQM practices in our university (1= Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neutral; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree).

	1	2	3	4	5
Continuous Improvement					
Continuous process improvement is a regular practice within our public universities to enhance operational efficiency."					
We are empowered to suggest and implement improvements in our areas of work					
Employee Empowerment					
Our leadership is deeply committed to the principles of Total Quality Management.					
Employee empowerment is a key strategy our public universities uses to drive quality improvements.					
Leadership Commitment					
We actively engage in continuous improvement initiatives to better meet the needs of our stakeholders."					
The commitment from our leadership motivates us to uphold high-quality standards in our work.					

15. How has leadership commitment to TQM principles affected your work?.....

.....

16. What challenges have you encountered in implementing TQM practices?.....

.....

17. How could employee empowerment in TQM practices be enhanced at the university?

.....

APPENDIX III: LIST OF UNIVERSITIES IN MOMBASA COUNTY, KENYA

No	University
1	Cooperative University of Kenya
2	Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology
3	Kenyatta University
4	Moi University
5	Technical University of Mombasa
6	University of Nairobi

APPENDIX IV: KENYATTA UNIVERSITY LETTER



KENYATTA UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL

E-mail: dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke

Website: www.ku.ac.ke

P.O. Box 43844, 00100
NAIROBI, KENYA
Tel. 8710901 Ext. 57530

Our Ref: D53/MSA/PT/37759/2017

DATE: 16th August, 2024

Director General,
National Commission for Science, Technology
and Innovation
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION FOR NELLA BAHATI KOMORA- REG. NO. D53/MSA/PT/37759/2017

I write to introduce Nella Bahati Komora who is a Postgraduate Student of this University. The student is registered for M.B.A degree programme in the Department of Business Administration.

Nella intends to conduct research for a M.B.A Project Proposal entitled, "Stakeholder Engagement and Implementation of Total Quality Management Practices in Public Universities in Mombasa County, Kenya."

Any assistance given will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'E. Njagi', is written over a printed name.

PROF. ELIUD NJAGI
EXECUTIVE DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL

AM/oo

Transforming Higher Education... Enhancing Lives
Kenyatta University is ISO 9001:2015 Certified



APPENDIX V: NACOSTI PERMIT


REPUBLIC OF KENYA
National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation


**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION**

Ref No: **110761** Date of Issue: **30/August/2024**

RESEARCH LICENSE



This is to Certify that Ms. NELLA BAHATI BAHATI of Kenyatta University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Mombasa on the topic: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN MOMBASA COUNTY, KENYA for the period ending : 30/August/2025.

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