ANALYSIS OF THE EXISTING QUALITY MANAGEMENT WITHIN THE ENTERPRISE AND DEVELOPMENT OF PROPOSALS FOR ITS IMPROVEMENT

ANALIZA SISTEMULUI EXISTENT DE MANAGEMENT AL CALITĂŢII LA ÎNTREPRINDERE ŞI ELABORAREA DE PROPUNERI PENTRU PERFECŢIONAREA ACESTUIA

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Abstract*: Managementul calităţii joacă un rol important în cadrul unei întreprinderi, deoarece conduce la o mai mare satisfacţie a clienţilor, la un avantaj competitiv, la reducerea costurilor, la îmbunătăţirea proceselor, la respectarea standardelor şi reglementărilor şi la o mai mare implicare a angajaţilor. Întreprinderile care acordă prioritate managementului calităţii au mai multe şanse de a reuşi şi de a prospera în mediul de afaceri actual. O reputaţie solidă în ceea ce priveşte calitatea este un factor de diferenţiere important pe piaţa actuală. Prin urmare, o organizaţie trebuie să dispună de procese şi instrumente de management al calităţii de ultimă generaţie, care să sprijine întreaga organizaţie. Cu toate acestea, pentru a avea un sistem de management al calităţii de succes, principiile de management al calităţii trebuie să fie stabilite şi revizuite în mod constant. Astfel, scopul acestui articol este de a prezenta rezultatele studiilor privind impactul sistemului de management al calităţii asupra îmbunătăţirii proceselor de management în cadrul întreprinderelor. Obiectivul principal fiind analizarea impactului implementării cerinţelor ISO 9001 pentru îmbunătăţirea relaţiilor cu clienţii, îmbunătăţirea proceselor de management şi a obiectivelor în domeniul calităţii. De asemenea, studiul evidenţiază propuneri de perfecţionare a sistemul de management al calităţii.*

Key words*: Quality Management, ISO 9001:2015 standard, quality improvement, management processes*

JEL Classification: M10, M11

INTRODUCTION

Quality management refers to the systematic and continuous approach an enterprise takes to ensure that its products or services consistently meet or exceed customer expectations. It is a critical aspect of business management that helps enterprises improve their products, services, and processes to deliver high-quality results to their customers. A robust quality management system within an enterprise includes a series of processes, policies, and procedures designed to manage and improve quality across all areas of the organization. This system involves setting quality standards, measuring performance, identifying areas for improvement, and implementing corrective actions to ensure that quality is maintained or improved over time. [1]

The topicality of the theme is reflected in the fact that quality management is essential for the success and sustainability of any enterprise. By implementing a quality management system, an enterprise can achieve benefits such as increased customer satisfaction, cost reduction, improved processes, compliance with standards and regulations, and employee engagement. These benefits can lead to a competitive advantage for the enterprise, helping it stand out in the marketplace.

The purpose of this article is to provide an analysis of the existing quality management system within an enterprise and to develop proposals for its improvement. The article will identify the strengths and weaknesses of the current quality management system, and propose recommendations for improvement to enhance the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the system.

The subject of research for this article is the existing quality management system within an enterprise. Based on an analysis of the current quality management, the article will propose recommendations for improvement to enhance the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the quality management system.

The aim of this research is to help enterprises optimize their quality management processes and achieve better outcomes. By identifying areas for improvement and proposing recommendations, this research aims to assist enterprises in enhancing their quality management systems to deliver high-quality products or services consistently, increase customer satisfaction, and achieve long-term success.

CONTENT
Description of the research methods used
The research methodology is based on a theoretical approach to the problem, thus, during the research, several methods were used, including: analytical method (legislative and normative acts, literature), webographic analysis (search engines, websites), comparison method, synthesis method (research of different approaches and generalization of identified information), argumentation, induction, and deduction method. By using this combination of these research methods, a comprehensive analysis of the existing quality management system within the enterprise was conducted, and proposals for its improvement were developed.

Literature overview
Quality management ensures that an organization, product or service consistently functions well. It has four main components: quality planning, quality assurance, quality control and quality improvement.[1] Quality management is focused not only on product and service quality, but also on the means to achieve it. Quality management, therefore, uses quality assurance and control of processes as well as products to achieve more consistent quality. Quality control is also part of quality management. What a customer wants and is willing to pay for it, determines quality. It is a written or unwritten commitment to a known or unknown consumer in the market. Quality can be defined as how well the product performs its intended function.

Therefore, Quality Management represents a complex process to ensure that products or services meet or exceed customer expectations. It involves a series of activities and strategies designed to improve quality, reduce defects and errors and increase customer satisfaction. The aim of quality management is to create a culture of continuous improvement, where processes and products are regularly evaluated and optimized to meet changing customer needs and preferences. [2]

Quality management is a multidisciplinary field that draws on a wide range of literature. Some key areas of literature in quality management include:

- *Quality Management Principles*: The ISO 9000 family of standards provides a framework for quality management. The standards outline a set of quality management principles, including customer focus, leadership, involvement of people, process approach, continuous improvement, evidence-based decision-making, and relationship management. Understanding these principles can provide a foundation for analyzing the existing quality management system and developing proposals for improvement. [3]
- *Best Practices in Quality Management*: There are numerous best practices in quality management that can be applied to improve the quality management system. These practices include lean manufacturing, Six Sigma, total quality management (TQM), Deming's 14 Points, and Kaizen. A review of these best practices can provide insights into ways to improve the existing quality management system.
- *Quality Metrics*: Measuring and monitoring quality is essential for managing quality effectively. Quality metrics can be used to track performance and identify areas for improvement. Examples of quality metrics include defect rates, customer complaints, and process efficiency.

Understanding the different types of quality metrics and how they can be used can help inform proposals for improvement.

- *Quality Culture:* Creating a quality culture within the organization is important for ensuring that quality is a priority at all levels. A strong quality culture is characterized by a shared commitment to quality, continuous improvement, and customer satisfaction. Understanding how to create a quality culture can inform proposals for improvement, such as employee training and development programs.

- *Quality Management Systems Implementation*: Implementing a quality management system requires careful planning and execution. A review of the literature on quality management system implementation can provide insights into the best practices and potential challenges associated with implementing a new system.

Results obtained

A quality management system (QMS) involves a collection of business processes that consistently meet customer requirements and enhance customer satisfaction. It is aligned with an organisation's purpose and strategic direction. These systems are designed to help organizations improve management processes, raise awareness of the importance of customer service, manufacturing of products on the accepted quality standards, and more active involve employees and executives in pro-quality activities [3]. Thus, the ISO 9001 with its requirements gives a company a guidance on the definition of the quality management system architecture, based on the process approach and the indications for its continuous improvement. The ISO 9001 with its guidelines governs such areas in a company as: the development of system documentation, management responsibility, employees' rights, methods of communication, maintenance management, acquisition and management, comprehensive implementation of the product or measurement, analysis and improvement. Decision-making in the formation of current quality management systems for compliance with the requirements of the international standard ISO 9001:2015 should be an area of activity of strategic importance for enterprises in the service sector and should be based on the use of effective quality management methods, measures, methodologies and other tools. [4]

Recently, worldwide enterprises have been actively involved in the implementation and certification of quality management systems (QMS) in accordance with the international standards of the ISO 9000 series. The main reason is to improve the quality of enterprise management and ensure its more efficient development in domestic and international markets. After receiving its certificate, a company must maintain QMS in working order. Various inspections, evaluations, and analyses are needed to ensure its proper functioning and continuous improvement. According to the ISO survey (The ISO Survey of Certifications – 2021) [5] at the end of 2021, there were 1 077 884 certificates and 1 447 080 certified production sites in the world. *Figure 1* shows the survey data on the number of ISO 9001 certificates issued in the world 1993-2021. According to the chart, there is an obvious tendency to increase the number of certified enterprises in different countries of the world. *Table 1* shows the Top 10 countries that are certified according to ISO 9001:2015 in 2021.
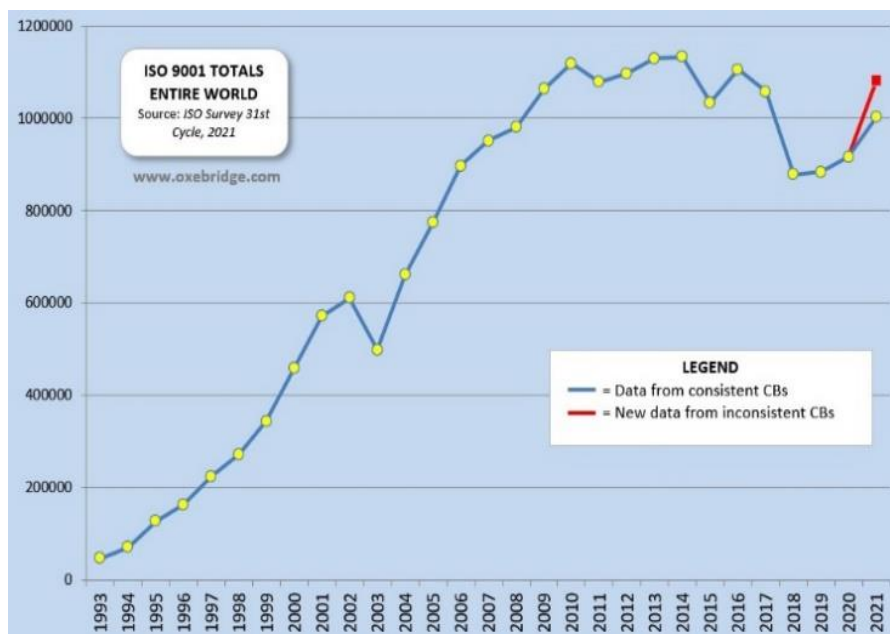
Figure 1. Number of ISO 9001 certificates issued in the world from 1999 to 2021
Source: *compiled according to "The ISO Survey of Certifications – 2021"*

Table 1. Top 10 countries that are certified according to ISO 9001:2015 in 2021

Country	certificates	sites
China	426716	430065
Italy	92664	135550
Germany	49298	81550
Japan	40834	96808
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland*	39682	55622
India	36505	45255
Spain	31318	61813
United States of America	25561	42498
France	21918	60539
Brazil	16268	25386

Source: *compiled according to "The ISO Survey of Certifications – 2021"*

Ways to improve the existing quality management in an enterprise:

− ***Continuous Improvement***: Implementing a culture of continuous improvement where employees are encouraged to identify areas for improvement and provide feedback on how to enhance quality management.

− ***Employee Training:*** Providing regular training and education programs to employees on quality management principles and practices to ensure that they have the necessary skills and knowledge to implement and maintain quality standards.

− ***Process Standardization:*** Standardization of processes across the organization to ensure consistency in quality management practices and to eliminate variations that can lead to defects or errors.

− ***Customer Feedback:*** Collecting and analyzing customer feedback to identify areas where improvements can be made to enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty.

− ***Supplier Management***: Establish a system to monitor and evaluate supplier performance to ensure that they meet the organization's quality standards.

− ***Technology Adoption:*** Investing in new technologies such as automation and data analytics to improve quality management processes and to gain insights into areas for improvement.

– *Metrics and Reporting:* Establish key performance indicators (KPIs) and reporting systems to track progress towards quality goals and to identify areas where improvements can be made.

– *Leadership Commitment:* Ensure that senior management is committed to quality management and provides the necessary resources and support to implement and maintain quality standards across the organization.

Overall, improving quality management requires a sustained effort and a focus on continuous improvement, employee engagement and a commitment to meeting customer needs and expectations.

CONCLUSIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, quality management is certainly a critical component of modern business management. An effective quality management system ensures that an enterprise can deliver high-quality products or services to its customers consistently. It helps to identify areas for improvement, reduce costs, increase customer satisfaction, and create a culture of continuous improvement. By prioritizing quality management, an enterprise can achieve a competitive edge and long-term success in today's business environment.

Therefore, to analyze the existing quality management system within an enterprise, it is important to identify the objectives of the system, assess the current system, identify strengths and weaknesses, analyze data and metrics, and develop proposals for improvement. The proposals should focus on building on the strengths of the current system and addressing the identified weaknesses to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the quality management system.

It should be emphasized that Quality management is essential for the success and sustainability of any enterprise. The implementation of the requirements of ISO 9001 has a positive impact on reducing the risk of produce a product that does not meet adopted by the company quality requirements. Compliance with the requirements of ISO 9001 reduces the risk of producing a product not in accordance with customer requirements or standards adopted by the organization. Compliance with the requirements of ISO 9001 in the production and monitoring of the production process has a significant impact on increasing the technical quality of the product.

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