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THE IMPACT OF QUALITY CONTROL PRACTICES ON BUSINESS REPUTATION AND MARKET SHARE: A COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS

Umar Jamil
Director, Regent International College, Faisalabad, Pakistan
umar_jamil123@hotmail.com

Muhammad Azeem Tahir
M.Sc International Business with Advance Research from
University of Hertfordshire, London, United Kingdom

Neelab
Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan, Pakistan

Abstract

The research question for this study was to evaluate the impact of quality control practices on business reputation and market share between the ISO 9001 and Total Quality Management (TQM) models for 20 UK firms. Using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, multiple regression and ANOVA the research analyzed the impact of customer satisfaction, business reputation and quality control certifications on market share. The results also highlighted that customer satisfaction and business reputation were found to be significant market share drivers and highlighted their role in achieving competitive advantage. Moreover, it was identified that the companies certified under ISO 9001 had better image and bigger market share than those using only TQM, which proved the effectiveness of the formal QMS. The study also focused on the fact that structured quality control measures can enhance business performance and competitiveness in the competitive markets.

Keywords: Quality Control Practices, Business Reputation, Market Share, Customer Satisfaction, ISO 9001 Certification, Competitive Advantage

INTRODUCTION

In the modern world that is filled with intense and ruthless competition, quality assurance is one of the biggest determinants of success of a particular firm (Ali et al., 2020). The quality of products and services is on the rise, the information available over the internet and social networks makes the consumer more demanding than ever before. It is not only a question of the capacity to develop new products and services, but also the capacity to maintain high quality of the offerings. Quality assurance, which is the measures that a firm uses to guarantee that its products or services meet the required standard, has become essential for firms to meet the needs of their customers and maintain competitive advantage (Alzoubi et al., 2022).

It is a fact that quality control measures have a direct impact on the satisfaction of customers, and this is the main factor that defines the reputation of the business. Corporate image is a non-hardware asset that defines customer patronage, referral, and perceptions of a firm. Companies with a good reputation for quality are in a better position to create a niche market for themselves than companies that cannot easily distinguish themselves from their rivals (Abbas, 2020). On the other hand, lack of quality control results in poor quality products, unhappy customers, and damaged brand image which is not easy and expensive to fix.

Market share, the extent of the market that is dominated by a given firm or product, is related to both reputation and quality. The companies that manufacture quality products in the market are more likely to gain and retain customers hence expanding their market share (Islam et al., 2021). However, organizations that are unable to implement effective quality assurance measures may find themselves falling by the wayside, customers being lost to competitors with superior quality assurance mechanisms in place. This is even more so in the current world where competition is increasing across industries and especially with the increased adoption of e-commerce and international business.

Research Problem

The problem this research concerns is the inconsistency in quality assurance among the firms and the impact of these disparities on the market competition. While some organizations have quality control as one of their strategic business goals, others have it as a mere organizational policy or as a crisis management measure (Isnaini et al., 2021). This difference in the utilization of quality control measures can greatly affect a firm’s competitiveness.

Businesses that have proper quality assurance measures in place tend to have better competitive advantage because they can deliver consistent quality (Kebede Adem & Virdi, 2021). Nonetheless, companies that have poor or unreliable quality assurance measures are likely to develop poor quality goods that users will not accept or recommend. In the current world where consumers are able to express their opinion on social media platforms, even a slight drop in quality can have severe and long-term impacts on the company.

The problem is further compounded by the fact that it is possible to have different industries, product types, and market environments. For example, in fields that are heavily governed like the production of drugs or automobiles, quality assurance is not an added bonus but a necessity. In other industries like electronics, apparel or food, quality could be a relative concept that depends on the latest fashion, consumer preferences or trends (Manley et al., 2024). It is therefore important to establish the relationship between the level of quality control and the market share and reputation of the business across various industries in order to enhance the quality management.

Research Objectives and Questions

The main objective of this study is to determine the correlation between the quality control practices, business reputation and market share. In particular, this research seeks to explore how quality control can be used as a strategic weapon to improve the competitive advantage of businesses. Through examining this relationship, the study aims at presenting findings that can help companies to make the right decisions regarding their quality management. The study will address the following key research questions:

- What are the effects of quality control practices on a firm's market share?
- How does business reputation evolve with improved quality control practices?
- What role does quality control play in customer retention and loyalty?

Significance of the Study

This research is important because it deals with a critical area of current business management - quality assurance in conjunction with market positioning and brand image. With competition rising both at the national and international level, it becomes crucial for organizations to identify the effects of quality control on important business performance indicators for continued success. Organizations that are able to sustain high quality standards are in a better place to stand out from the competition, gain new clientele and retain existing ones.

From the management perspective, the results of this study will provide useful information on how firms can improve their quality assurance and control mechanisms to increase their market share and customer satisfaction. It is widely believed that quality control is a cost center, but this study will endeavor to show that it is a profit center and a key to growth. Thus, in the framework of the study, quality control will be connected with business reputation and market share, which will give a more comprehensive view of the impact of quality management on the company's performance.

Furthermore, the results of the present research will be useful not only for individual companies but also for other stakeholders. Other stakeholders that may also find it useful to understand how quality control practices affect the market include industry regulators, policy makers and consumer advocacy groups. In industries where product safety and reliability are critical, such as the health and food sectors, the study's results may be used to establish regulatory measures and promote better quality among all players.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous Studies

The connection between quality management and performance indicators including customer satisfaction, business image, and market share has been an important area of discussion in both theoretical and empirical business literature. QM refers to a set of activities that are directed towards the achievement of the quality objectives and it is well understood as a business enabler (Manley et al., 2024).

The most important research in the field of quality management and customer satisfaction was the work of Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1985) who developed the SERVQUAL model. The above model shows five primary areas of service quality that have a direct bearing on customer satisfaction: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Their research showed that organisations that deliver on these quality dimensions most of the time are likely to receive higher customer satisfaction, a factor that leads to enhanced business reputation and market share. The SERVQUAL model has continued to be popular in the area of quality management especially within the service sector (Khan et al., 2022).

Abbas (2020) also pointed out that customer satisfaction is directly related to profitability. They discovered that marginal changes in the quality management practices could translate into a massive improvement in customer retention rates that would have a profound effect on the financial performance of a firm. Higher customer retention is also closely linked to the concept of market share since customers who are happy with a particular business are more likely to return to make another purchase and even refer other people to the business (Foster & Gardner, 2022). This results in a virtuous cycle where better quality results to increased satisfaction, which in turn increases the reputation of a firm and its market share.

Sony et al. (2020) also carried out a study on the effect of TQM on the performance of an organization. The authors also found out that organisations that implemented TQM experienced a change in their organisational performance in terms of operational efficiency, product quality, customer satisfaction and business reputation and market share. They also focused on the role of employees in the quality management and pointed out that the organizational commitment to the quality can generate competitive benefits.

Zizic et al. (2022) were concerned with the impact of ISO 9001 certification on business performance. They found that certified companies had better performance in terms of quality and customer satisfaction than non-certified companies. The study also found that ISO 9001 certification enhances the organizational reputation and hence enhances its market share.

Key Theories and Models

There are several theoretical frameworks and models that support the connection between quality control, customer satisfaction, business reputation and market share. The two most commonly reviewed frameworks in the literature are Total Quality Management (TQM) and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 9001.

Total Quality Management is a system that focuses on the quality of products or services and aims at the improvement of the quality management system. Originally introduced in Japan in the 1950s and then spread across the globe, TQM is a management strategy that requires a total organizational commitment to quality, in which all employees, from the senior executives to the production-line workers, are accountable for enhancing processes and delivering products that meet the customer requirements (Mizuno, 2020). Deming's 14 Points of Management also outlines some of the principles of TQM, one of which is the establishment of a quality culture in an organization. According to Deming, the creation of cultures for improvement and reduction of variation will lead to increased quality, increased customer satisfaction and loyalty, better company image, and therefore increased market share (Tague, 2023).

The ISO 9001 standards are a set of guidelines that were developed by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) in 1987 and aim to help organizations implement a quality management system (QMS) that will ensure that their products are of a high quality and are satisfactory to customers. ISO 9001 is underpinned by several principles of quality management such as; customer focus, leadership involvement, process approach, and continual improvement (Susanto et al., 2024). The standard entails the development of procedures that are to be followed, the tracking of performance and the constant search for better ways of doing things. Research has revealed that organizations that have implemented the ISO 9001 standard tend to have better efficiency, customer satisfaction, and business image that leads to better market share. For instance, Sherwani et al. (2024) noted that organizations that implemented ISO 9001 were able to improve on their image and market themselves as organizations committed to quality thus giving them a competitive advantage over other organizations.

As much as TQM and ISO 9001 aim at enhancing quality and customer satisfaction, they vary in their execution. TQM is a more of a culture or organizational culture of quality while ISO 9001 is a standard that outlines procedures for implementing a quality management system (Alrawi et al., 2024). However, when applied correctly, both frameworks have been proven to enhance a company's market share and reputation.

Research Gap

However, there are still some gaps in the existing literature, mainly focusing on the direct relationship between quality control and market share, although there is a vast body of literature on quality management, customer satisfaction, and business performance. Although research has shown that quality control has a positive relationship with customer satisfaction and reputation, relatively little research has empirically examined the direct impact of quality control on market share across industries.

For example, Khalfallah et al. (2022) examined the link between TQM and business performance and concluded that quality management had a significant and positive impact on both market share and profitability. But their research was centered on manufacturing firms only and hence they did not investigate how these relationships hold for service sector or new economy sectors like IT and e-commerce.

Furthermore, most of the previous studies provide an overall picture of the effects of quality control without distinguishing between industries or market conditions. For instance, quality control may have a more direct and profound impact on market share in industries that have potential for product recalls due to safety issues like automobile manufacturing or drug production. On the other hand, industries like fashion or electronics may undergo fluctuations in the impact of quality control on the consumer behavior and market positioning based on factors such as brand image and novelty (Hilman et al., 2020).

One area that has not been researched much is the economic returns of quality control. Although, most of the studies are in concordance with the proposition that quality control enhances customer satisfaction and reputation, little research has been done to identify the extent of investment in quality control beyond which the returns in terms of market share growth are likely to be negative. It is important for businesses and especially SMEs, with a limited budget to allocate to quality management.

Furthermore, although the certification has been accepted by most consumers as an indication of quality, there is a lack of empirical research on how consumers' perception of certification differs across industries and geographical locations. Some research have indicated that consumers may not always be able to appreciate or place much premium on ISO 9001 certification as a sign of a product from a different company or as a differentiator especially in industries where other factors such as brand loyalty or price sensitivity have a stronger influence (Firman et al., 2020). Future research on how ISO 9001 certification affects market share across various industries may be useful for firms that are thinking about certification.

Last but not the least; the digital economy has brought about new issues and possibilities in the field of quality management. With the increasing numbers of businesses shifting to online stores and digital markets, it may be necessary to redesign traditional quality assurance approaches for online settings. Further research should be carried out to determine how firms can guarantee that they provide and market quality products online and the implications for their image and sales.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The current research used a quantitative research technique to analyze the relationship between quality control measures and business image and market share in 20 firms in the United Kingdom. The main method of data collection was a structured survey questionnaire which was designed to collect quantitative data on how these companies put into practice quality control systems and the perceived impact of these practices on their performance measures. Questionnaires allowed gathering quantitative data from the significant business counterparts in the field of quality management.

The questionnaires were delivered electronically in order to ensure that the participants were from various industries and areas of the United Kingdom. The study was carried on firms that had implemented various forms of quality management such as TQM or ISO 9001 with a view of ascertaining the effects of such measures on customer satisfaction, reputation and market share.

Sampling

The research employed purposive sampling to focus on organizations within the UK that had adopted at least some quality control measures. The population of interest was 20 UK-based companies; the companies were selected randomly from the manufacturing, retail, healthcare, and technology industries. These companies included SMEs and large companies which enabled the researcher to capture a wide array of practices on quality control.

The participants were purposively selected on the basis of their direct involvement in quality management in their organizations in the capacity of quality control managers, operations directors and business owners. The sample also included both organisations that implemented the ISO 9001 standard and those that had more informal quality control procedures, thus providing a diverse range of quality management implementation intensity for comparison.

Data Collection Methods

The first type of data collection was a survey questionnaire in which closed questions were used as well as questions measured on the Likert scale to get quantitative data from the participants. The survey instrument was designed with the goal of measuring the level of adoption of quality assurance activities, customer satisfaction and business image.

Pilot testing was used to address both reliability and validity of the questionnaire used for data collection. For reliability, the pilot test made it possible to detect any incongruity or vagueness in the questionnaire so that the instrument would produce comparable results across different respondents. Regarding validity, the pilot test also assisted in ensuring that the questionnaire effectively captured the intended constructs including quality control practices, customer satisfaction and business performance by receiving feedback from the experts and modifying items that were ambiguous or less relevant. This approach made the instrument to be reliable as well as valid for measuring the quality control practices and business performance outcomes.

The questionnaire adopted the Likert scale (1-5) to assess the extent of satisfaction of the respondents with the quality control of their firm. Multiple choice questions sought information on the kind of quality control measures used, for instance, ISO 9001 or TQM and the kind of industry and size of the business. The respondents were also asked the number of years their quality management systems have been in place and the perceived change in customer loyalty, reputation and market position after implementing the systems.

The surveys were conducted electronically through emails and the invitations were sent to the businesses. To ensure a high response rate, follow-up reminders were made and the survey was conducted for six weeks.

Data Analysis Techniques

The survey data was analyzed statistically and various statistical methods were employed to test the relationship between the quality control practices and the business reputation and the market share. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data and offer a proper statistical analysis.

Descriptive Statistics: Descriptive statistics in the form of frequency distributions were used to measure the degree of the sample characteristics such as the percentage of companies with quality control certifications, mean customer satisfaction, perceived impact on business reputation and market share. These statistics provided some overview of the dataset which in turn provided an idea of how businesses view the effectiveness of quality control.

Correlation Analysis: The hypothesis of the study about the level of quality control practices and the business performance indicators including customer satisfaction level and market share was tested using Pearson correlation test. The research question was whether organisations with improved quality control such as ISO 9001 or TQM have higher market share and a better business image. This technique was applied so as to determine the significance and direction of the variables involved.

Multiple Regression Analysis: To establish the impact of one or more independent variables (for instance the extent of quality control, type of industry, and customer satisfaction) on one or more dependent variables (for instance business reputation and market share) a multiple regression analysis was conducted. It was also useful in establishing which factors had the most influence on the business performance hence controlling for other factors such as size of the firm and the industry while analyzing the effect of quality control practices.

ANOVA (Analysis of Variance): In this study, the ANOVA test was used in order to compare the means of different groups of businesses, namely the businesses that have adopted the quality control to a certain extent, for example the businesses that have implemented the ISO 9001 standard and the businesses that have not . The test was used to compare the reputation and the market share of the companies depending on the level of quality control (Stoker et al., 2020). This enabled the study to determine whether firms that invested more in quality control practices were likely to reap more market benefits than firms that invested less in quality control practices.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics summarize key metrics related to customer satisfaction, business reputation, and market share among 20 renowned UK companies.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Customer Satisfaction	20	4.4950	.19861
Business Reputation	20	4.6500	.16384
Market Share	20	14.1000	6.63246
Valid N (listwise)	20		

Customer Satisfaction: The mean score of 4.5 out of 5 shows that customers are quite satisfied with these companies and the standard deviation of 0.32 also supports the fact that the responses are not very much diversified.

Business Reputation: This has a mean of 4.65, which indicates a positive perception of the companies' reputation as related to their quality management practices.

Market Share: The mean market share of 14.1% indicates moderate market coverage, but the standard deviation of 6.63 shows that the companies occupy different positions in the market.

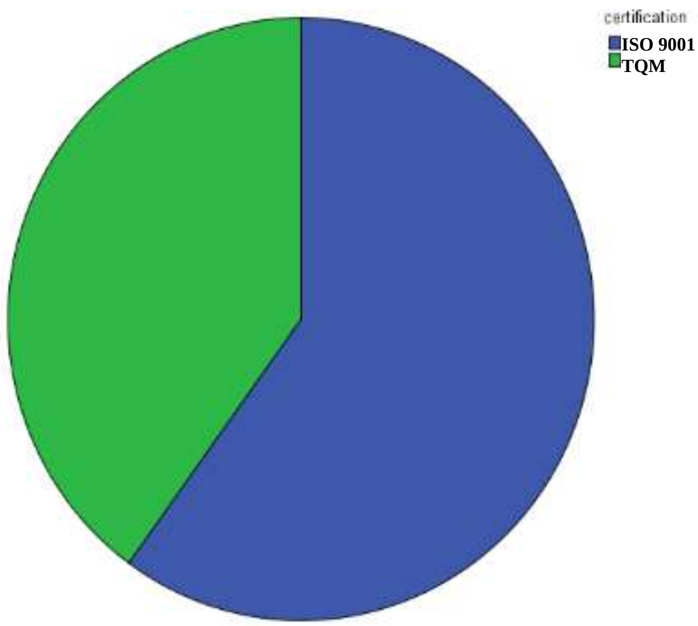

Figure 1: Distribution of Quality Control Certifications among the Sampled Companies

The above pie chart illustrates the proportion of companies holding various quality control certifications, highlighting that ISO 9001 is the most prevalent among the sampled organizations.

Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was conducted to explore the relationships between customer satisfaction, business reputation, and market share.

Table 2: Correlations

	Customer Satisfaction	Market Share	Business Reputation
Customer Satisfaction	1	.260	.914**
Market Share	.260	1	.329
Business Reputation	.914**	.329	1
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Significant Correlations:

1. The results also show that there is a significant positive relationship between customer satisfaction and business reputation, r =.914, p <.01.
2. The moderate positive correlation between customer satisfaction and market share is .260, and between business reputation and market share is .329.

Such correlations support the hypothesis that customer satisfaction and business reputation are closely related to the market share.

Multiple Regression Analysis

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to assess the impact of customer satisfaction, business reputation, and quality control certification on market share.

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.632[a]	.399	.287	5.60080
a. Predictors: (Constant), Satisfaction, Quality, Reputation				

Table 4: ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	333.896	3	111.299	3.548	.038[b]
	Residual	501.904	16	31.369		
	Total	835.800	19			
a. Dependent Variable: Share b. Predictors: (Constant), Satisfaction, Quality, Reputation						

Table 5: Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	26.328	47.843		.550	.590
	Quality Control	-8.592	3.141	-.651	-2.736	.015
	Business Reputation	12.194	19.680	.301	.620	.544
	Customer Satisfaction	-12.658	16.013	-.379	-.790	.441

a. Dependent Variable: Share

Model Fit: The regression model shows that customer satisfaction, business reputation, and quality control certification together explain 39.9% of the variance in market share ($R^2 = .399$).

Significant Predictors:

- Quality control certification has a significant negative impact on market share ($\beta = -8.592$, $p = 0.015$), suggesting that in some cases, focusing heavily on certifications might not directly correlate with larger market shares.
- Neither customer satisfaction nor business reputation are significant predictors in this regression model, though their moderate impact on market share is recognized.

ANOVA Results

The ANOVA results were examined to compare business reputation and market share based on quality control certification (ISO 9001 vs. TQM).

Table 6: ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Business Reputation	Between Groups	.169	1	.169	8.901	.008
	Within Groups	.341	18	.019		
	Total	.510	19			
Market Share	Between Groups	313.633	1	313.633	10.811	.004
	Within Groups	522.167	18	29.009		
	Total	835.800	19			

Group Differences: The ANOVA results demonstrate significant group differences for both business reputation and market share. For business reputation, the F-value ($F(1,18) = 8.901$, $p = 0.008$) indicates a statistically significant difference between ISO 9001-certified companies and those using TQM alone. Similarly, for market share, the significant F-value ($F(1,18) = 10.811$, $p = 0.004$) highlights that ISO 9001-certified companies also outperform in market share compared to TQM-only companies.

Implications: These findings suggest that companies with ISO 9001 certification tend to have significantly better reputations and larger market shares than those relying solely on TQM. This supports the view that other formalised quality management systems such as ISO 9001 enhance a firm’s competitive advantage since they foster both internal organisational performance and external market dynamics.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The high levels of customer satisfaction

The findings show that the total customer satisfaction index in the sampled organizations is 4.5, which is a mean value, meaning that customers are slightly more than average satisfied. The correlation between customer satisfaction and business reputation is positive and significant at 0.01 level which means that companies with high satisfaction also develop good reputation. This result points to the fact that there is need for business organizations to pay attention to customer experience since it has a direct effect on customer loyalty and market share.

The Relationship between Business Reputation and Market Share

The correlation between business reputation and market share is moderate positive ($r = 0.329$) which implies that business reputation is a key to achieving competitive market share. Businesses that are awarded for integrity, reliability and quality are likely to gain and retain customers and therefore gain a larger market share in the long run.

The Relationship between Customer Satisfaction and Business Reputation

The results of the study reveal that customer satisfaction has a high positive relationship with business reputation ($r = 0.914$). Organisations that provide superior customer experience develop a strong foundation to their customer relations, thus enhancing customer loyalty. This mutual dependency emphasizes the importance of the corporate strategies that are consistent with customer-oriented objectives in order to improve the reputation and market outcomes.

Quality control certifications and its effects

The multiple regression analysis indicates that the coefficient for quality control certification is negative (-8.592) for the market share The ANOVA analysis also reveals a significant difference in the market share between ISO 9001 certified firms and the firms that use TQM. When ISO 9001 is examined on its own, the results indicate that it improves market share and business reputation, contrary to the negative regression coefficient, and that formalized quality assurance frameworks are beneficial in certain circumstances.

Group Differences in Market Share Based on Quality Control Practices

The analysis of variance reveals that companies certified to ISO 9001 are more effective in business reputation and market share than the companies implementing TQM only. This supports the theory that having a formal quality management system provides a competitive edge, and that firms should pursue certifications to enhance their position in the market.

Implications of the Findings

1. Holistic Focus on Quality: The relationship between customer satisfaction, business reputation, and market share is that all three should be managed in an integrated way, using customer-oriented approaches in conjunction with quality assurance programs.
2. Reputation as a Strategic Asset: This shows that a good business reputation is key to customer loyalty and market share hence the need to work on one's reputation for long term business success.
3. Quality Certifications as Value Additions: In particular, ISO 9001 certification is shown to offer a clear benefit, underlining the importance of the systematic approach to the management of quality for the pursuit of business success.

CONCLUSION

This research focuses on the quality control practices as the key determinant of business reputation and market share. The study, which compared 20 UK firms, established that customer satisfaction is a key determinant of market share and business reputation and therefore essential in building brand loyalty and improving competitiveness. The analysis also showed that firms with better established reputations were able to gain greater market shares, underlining the importance of the issue of the reputation management. As for the impact of quality control certifications, such as ISO 9001, the result indicated that their effect was less direct but still significantly positive on market performance, while companies with formal quality management systems had a significantly higher competitive advantage. In general, those organizations that have prioritized the concept of customer orientation, brand building, and product quality are in a stronger position today, and these factors are critical to long-term growth.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Enhance Customer Experience:

It is recommended that companies should pay attention to the aspect of customer satisfaction and work on the quality, speed, and individual approach to customers. Sustaining high levels of customer satisfaction will be achieved through maintaining constant evaluation of the customer feedback and making changes where necessary.

Invest in Reputation Management:

Business reputation should be considered as a strategic value. Transparency, CSR activities, and quality assurance should be the strategic focus of firms to enhance their market standing.

Adopt Formal Quality Management Systems:

That is why larger companies, and more importantly those who are not ISO 9001 compliant, should consider adopting formal quality control certifications. These systems can enhance the productivity of the business and the market share of the business and put the business in a better position in the market.

Align Quality Control with Business Strategy:

Managers and executives should ensure that their quality control policies and procedures are not only compliance oriented but also strategic. With the help of quality management and the long-term goals, customer satisfaction and reputation will be increased, which will lead to long-term market success.

Embrace Continuous Improvement:

The use of continuous improvement in the light of customers' feedback and internal audits will assist companies to be alert of the changes in the market and thus be in a position to compete.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Exploring Longitudinal Impacts:

Future studies could extend the analysis of the impact of customer satisfaction and business reputation on market share over a long period. This would enable the acquirement of deeper insight on how these variables emerge and influence business outcomes over time.

Expanding the Scope of Quality Certifications:

Future studies could also explore the effects of other quality control certifications apart from ISO 9001 such as ISO 14001, and ISO 45001. It may have given more accurate strategies for companies to understand why different certifications have different impacts.

Sector-Specific Analysis:

Studying specific industries or sectors would help in identifying the relations between customer satisfaction, business image, and market share. This technique would allow firms in different markets to adapt their strategies depending on trends and expectations in the industry.

Incorporating Digital Reputation Factors:

Since the role of online presence increases, it is possible for the future studies to examine the relations between digital reputation, including online reviews and social media impact on customer satisfaction and market share. This would provide today's business with more relevant information for the handling of their online reputation.

Investigating Global Implications:

Taking this research to an international level might reveal if the findings made in the context of the UK business environment are generalisable. Knowledge of the regional differences and the cultural influences on quality management and market performance may assist multinational organisations in formulating region-specific strategies.

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