Factors Affecting the Adoption of Quality Management Systems in Zimbabwean Hotels

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Abstract

This paper aims at highlighting factors contributing to late adoption of quality management systems (QMS) in the Zimbabwe hotel industry. The research answered questions on: What are the internal factors affecting adoption of QMS in hotels; What are the external factors affecting adoption of QMS in the hotels. Hotel managers and key stakeholders in the hotel industry were interviewed to get data. Focus group discussions was used to get data from hotel staff members. Directed content analysis was used to analyse data. Some of the internal factors affecting adoption of QMS in the hotel industry in Zimbabwe identified are high staff and management turnover, absence of specialised quality function, poor remuneration of hotel employees and lack of financial resources. While some of the external factors identified are high taxes and licensing fees, industry over regulation, hyperinflation, and poor industry supporting infrastructure. The study recommended for creation of hotel industry stakeholder platform to enhance adoption of QMS in the hotel industry looking at how best to ease the identified factors. There is need for a review of hotel industry operating environment from regulator perspective so as to ease the operating environment which can improve the hotels sustainability.

Keywords: Quality management systems, factors, hotel industry, Zimbabwe

Introduction

Globally, inferior quality products have been synonymously associated with low to medium rated hotels in the hospitality and tourism industry from countries such as Nigeria, India, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Ghana and South Africa (Gorondutse & Hillman, 2014; Mmutle & Shonhe, 2017; Fernández-Robin, Celemín-Pedroche, Santander-Astorga & Alonso-Almeida, 2019; Masrurul, 2019). Research shows that the problem is more apparent in developing countries but findings by Sainidis and Robson (2016) have also indicated that 43.3% of hotels in the United Kingdom failed to maintain the quality of their services during the recession. Zimbabwean hotels are without exception. The country is lowly ranked at 114 out of 136 countries, according to the 2017 Global Competitiveness Report by World Economic Forum. Since 2007 the average occupancy rate per annum of hotels in Zimbabwe has never exceeded 53% in the past ten years from (2007-2017) according to Zimbabwe Tourism Authority (ZTA) reports. Zimbabwe has many tourist attractions and has natural wonders and sights that often get massive attention from both international and local tourists (ZTA, 2017). The country has vast business opportunities in tourism, mining, agriculture and manufacturing thus the hotels

business is expected to be high but the opposite is true. In 2017, one of the biggest hotel groups Rainbow Tourism Group (RTG) recorded 57% occupancy rate which is their highest since the year 2000 (Rainbow Towers Group, 2017). According to Nanda (2016) various quality managements systems exist and these include total quality management (TQM), ISO 9001:2008, ISO 9001, ISO 14001, Malcolm Baldridge National Quality Award, Deming 14 Points and six sigma quality improvement tools yet very little has been done to embrace quality systems by hotels in Zimbabwe so that they become more competitive.

Table 1: Zimbabwe hotel occupancy (2007-2017)

	Room Capacity in 2017	Room occupancy %										
		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Harare	2371	36	50	55	53	53	58	52	59	57	57	55
Bulawayo	785	34	48	48	49	47	51	52	44	42	37	46
Mutare/Vumba	537	42	46	47	57	57	44	42	40	38	40	41
Nyanga	244	24	22	22	33	33	35	42	41	37	42	37
Midlands	314	26	29	37	36	35	62	51	35	29	33	37
Masvingo	190	30	39	30	49	49	54	45	37	43	32	46
Kariba	447	29	40	23	40	40	46	43	45	38	49	43
Hwange	293	14	12	14	24	25	26	27	21	19	22	25
Victoria Falls	971	29	28	40	46	50	45	53	49	49	52	55
Beitbridge	176	49	73	61	63	62	61	42	32	14	23	18
National	6189	34	41	46	52	52	52	48	48	46	47	48

Source: Zimbabwe tourism authority annual reports (2007- 2017)

Zimbabwe is the second largest tourist destination in Southern Africa and the total contribution of tourism to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2016 was $USD0.5 billion which contributed 3.5% of the total GDP (United Nations World Tourism Organisation, 2018; ZTA, 2017). The tourism sector in Zimbabwe contributed about 5.1% of jobs in the country with around 159 500 employed in the industry for 2016 alone (ZTA, 2017). In 2016, the total contribution of Travel and Tourism to employment, including jobs indirectly supported by Visitor exports generated USD0.2bn, which is 7.3% of total exports (World Travel and Torism Council, 2018) .Whilst the industry was second best in Southern Africa, its contribution was significantly very little as compared to USD 8.7 billion to the GDP of South Africa (World Tourism Council, 2018).Whilst it can be argued that the South African economy is significantly larger than the Zimbabwean economy, South Africa offers much better priced tourism packages and products (Moyo, 2016).

Many countries in the Southern African region connect to each other by road through Zimbabwe (SADC, 2018). There are many hotels in Zimbabwe including world famous hotels located in cities and resort areas (ZTA, 2020). The hotels are registered with ZTA and are star rated. The hotels provide their services to tourists, travellers, business meetings and conferences, and private functions. The hotels are owned by international corporations, local business people and local institutions operating as chain group hotels or independent hotels. The hotels are facing quality problems emanating from cleanliness, food quality, customer service, ambience, bedding, lighting, water and security according to review from one of the biggest and popular travel blogs (TripAdvisor, 2018). Taking a look at quality from human standpoint, Pareto analysis, cause and effect diagram and check sheets brings out relatively similar problems of quality among the hotels. The researcher is a practitioner in hospitality industry; during my eight years of experience, I noted relatively similar major and ancillary causes of poor quality in the hotels. The hotels are lagging behind in adoption of quality management systems especially low to medium rated hotels.

A study by Zengeni, Mapingure, Zengeni and Marimbe (2014) show that local hotels are increasingly facing quality problems and need to adopt quality management systems to

improve their competitive advantage by reducing costs of services, improving service delivery and improving quality of products. Hotels have failed to adopt quality management systems due to a variety of reasons such as lack of finance, lack of support from the owners, resisting change, cultural and religious beliefs and high cost of finance (Nasim, 2018; Bouranta, Psomas, Suárez-Barraza & Jaca, 2018). Apparently, hotels in Zimbabwe seem to be struggling with adoption of QMS. Efforts by the Hospitality Association of Zimbabwe (HAZ), Standards Association of Zimbabwe (SAZ) and Zimbabwe Tourism Authority (ZTA) to engage hotels to standardise their products and services have not yielded much anticipated results as most of them fail to acquire credit or working capital to standardise their products (Muzapu & Sibanda, 2016). Of late the current economic environment has been very difficult for hospitality and tourism industry, most hotels in Zimbabwe operate below 60% of annual carrying capacity (Zimbabwe Tourism Authority, 2018). Research shows that failure to standardise products and services results in variation of product quality, poor service and wastage of resources and ultimately results in reducing customer base which affects revenue of hotels.

Measuring success of quality management systems amongst hotels is particularly difficult in the sense that most facilities have poor record keeping procedures. Studies carried out in Zimbabwe show that literature is scant and only seemed to focus on TQM of large organisations in the manufacturing industry at the expense of the hospitality and tourism industry (Ngwenya, Sibanda & Matunzeni, 2016; Maganga, 2018; Madanhire & Mbohwa, 2016). There is reason to believe that the low economic impact of tourism in terms of GDP, employment and exports in Zimbabwe is due to late adoption of quality management systems in the tourism industry. Hotel products are not attractive to tourists and travellers due to a number of reasons; one of the reasons is failure to meet standards expected by customers. Hence this paper investigated the internal and external factors contributing to late adoption of quality management systems (QMS) in the Zimbabwe hotel industry. The research answered questions on: What are the internal factors affecting adoption of QMS in hotels; What are the external factors affecting adoption of QMS in the hotels. Recognition of factors affecting adoption of quality management systems in Zimbabwe hotels might lead to improved adoption of QMS in the hotels from hotel management, owners, authorities and government perspectives in order to improve sustainable hotel operations. Sustainable hotel operations mean more visitor exports, creation of more jobs and improved hotels competitiveness.

Literature review

Quality management system is a set of coordinated activities to lead and control an organisation in terms of quality (ISO, 2015). Tarí, Molina-Azorín, Pereira-Moliner and López-Gamero (2019) observed a number of authors defined QMS as that part of management system which focused on leading and controlling an organisation in relation to quality (Pereira-Moliner, Claver-Cortés, Molina-Azorín & Tarí, 2012; Fonseca, 2015; ASQ, 2019). There are macro quality management systems which are applicable in any organisation and there are micro quality management systems which are industry specific. Macro QMS include total quality management, ISO 9001, continuous improvement, six sigma, lean production, benchmarking, Busines Excellence and micro QMS specific to the hotel industry include Hazardous Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP), ISO 22000 Food Safety Management (FSM) and Assured Safe Catering (ASC). These are reviewed in the following sections. Adoptions of QMS such as ISO 9001 by organisations have shown significant improvement in quality of their product (Watiki, 2014; Isabiry & Pelser, 2017; Chivandi & Maziriri, 2017). Watiki (2014) has studied hotels in Kenya to understand factors prompting customer satisfaction and the association between service quality and customer satisfaction. His findings suggest that service quality supports 74.2% of customer satisfaction. This implies that QMS contributes 74.2% of customer

satisfaction whereas the other factors contribute 25.8%. Masrurul (2019) showed that Bangladesh tourism organisations using quality management systems were performing well with good and effective relations with customers and employees. He surveyed hotel companies and results pointed out that a high proportion of companies being certain of their reputation, products and services improvement after adopting QMS. QMS adoptions have led to expect design, product, processes and supplier relationships according to research done at Delta, one of the biggest beverages manufacture in Zimbabwe (Madanhire & Mbohwa, 2016). Benefits and improvements brought by QMS are also internal improvements, greater quality awareness and improved awareness of problems within the work organisations. Product development processes based on QMS have improved (Biswakarma, 2017; Tefera & Govender, 2017; Mugondi, 2015; Mmutle & Shonhe, 2017).

Adoption and implementation of QMS in the hospitality industry are affected by internal and external factors. The internal factors impacting adoption of QMS in any organisation arise from within the business and are generated by business operations. The various internal factors impacting adoption of QMS in the hospitality industry include technology, capital, physical and human factors - expertise, experience, skills, education (Kasongo & Moono, 2010; Otieno, 2015). External factors expressively influence business strategies, controlling management strategies in the industry from the industry environment (Nasim, 2018). Strategic planning and performance of hotels is affected by external environment (Maphosa, 2014). External factors are the risks that arise due to events occurring outside the business which are beyond the business owners. The risks are difficult to predict and the probability of their occurrence cannot be determined with accuracy (Heizer & Render, 2014). The hospitality industry environment has direct and inverse effect on firm performance regardless of strategic choices and therefore it is imperative to analyse the effect of external factors and all their uncertainties on the decision-making process of the owners (Fernández-Robin, et al., 2019). Changes in the external environment which include changes in the economic, political, social, technological and international environment affect all businesses and hotel industry is not spared. Furthermore, QMS implementation in the hotels is by affected natural disasters, interest and exchange rates, inflation, unemployment, crime, and government legislation. Internal and external factors affecting adoption of QMS in hotels are presented in Table 2 as picked from selected literature.

Table 2: Internal and external factors affecting QMS adoption in hotels

Internal factors	Key Postulators
1. Demotivated employees	Biswakarma (2017), Pereira-Moliner, Claver-Cortés, Molina-Azorín, & Tarí (2012)
2. Poor management	Nanda (2016); Candido & Esgarrancho (2017)
3. Inadequate finance	Sitharam & Hoque, (2016); Maphosa (2014)
4. Failure to embrace trend technology	Iqbal, Hassan, & Habibah (2018); Yuan, Gretzel, & Fesenmaier (2006)
5. Uncoordinated quality communication	Oakland (2011); Heizer & Render (2014)
6. Failure to embrace change	Chivandi & Maziriri (2017); Popescu, Mandru, & Gogoncea (2017)
7. Functions/ departmentalisation	Subburaj (2012); Roy & Ghose (2016)
8. Organisation size	Borkar & Koranne (2014); Chan (2011)
External factors	Postulators
1. Political interference	Galawe (2017)
2. Dynamic competition	Iqbal, Hassan, & Habibah (2018); Wang, Chen, & Chen (2012)
3. Technology	Murphy (2016); Ren (2019)
4. Globalisation	ISO (2019)
5. Regulations and laws	Muzapu & Sibanda (2016); Munyoro, Chikombingo, & Nyandoro (2016)
6. High exchange rate	Nyamunda (2017);
7. Poor infrastructure	Sitharam & Hoque (2016); Tinarwo (2016)

8.	Crime and corruption	Transparency International (2019); Sitharam & Hoque (2016)
9.	Customers	Crosby (1999); Deming (1993)
10.	Best practices	Aletaiby (2018); Sawant (2016)

The conceptual framework adoption of QMS in the hotel industry is hinged on the internal and external business environment. In the external environment, there are stakeholders that affect directly QMS adoption in the hotel industry despite specific literature being scant. From the literature it is evident that external stakeholders impact adoption of QMS internally or externally as depicted in the conceptual framework. A number of mediating effects of the internal and external factors such as lack of strategy, poor service, dissatisfied customers and conventional way of doing business are evident. Figure 1 shows the conceptual frameworks of internal factors, external factors and stakeholders in late adoption of QMS in the hotel industry.
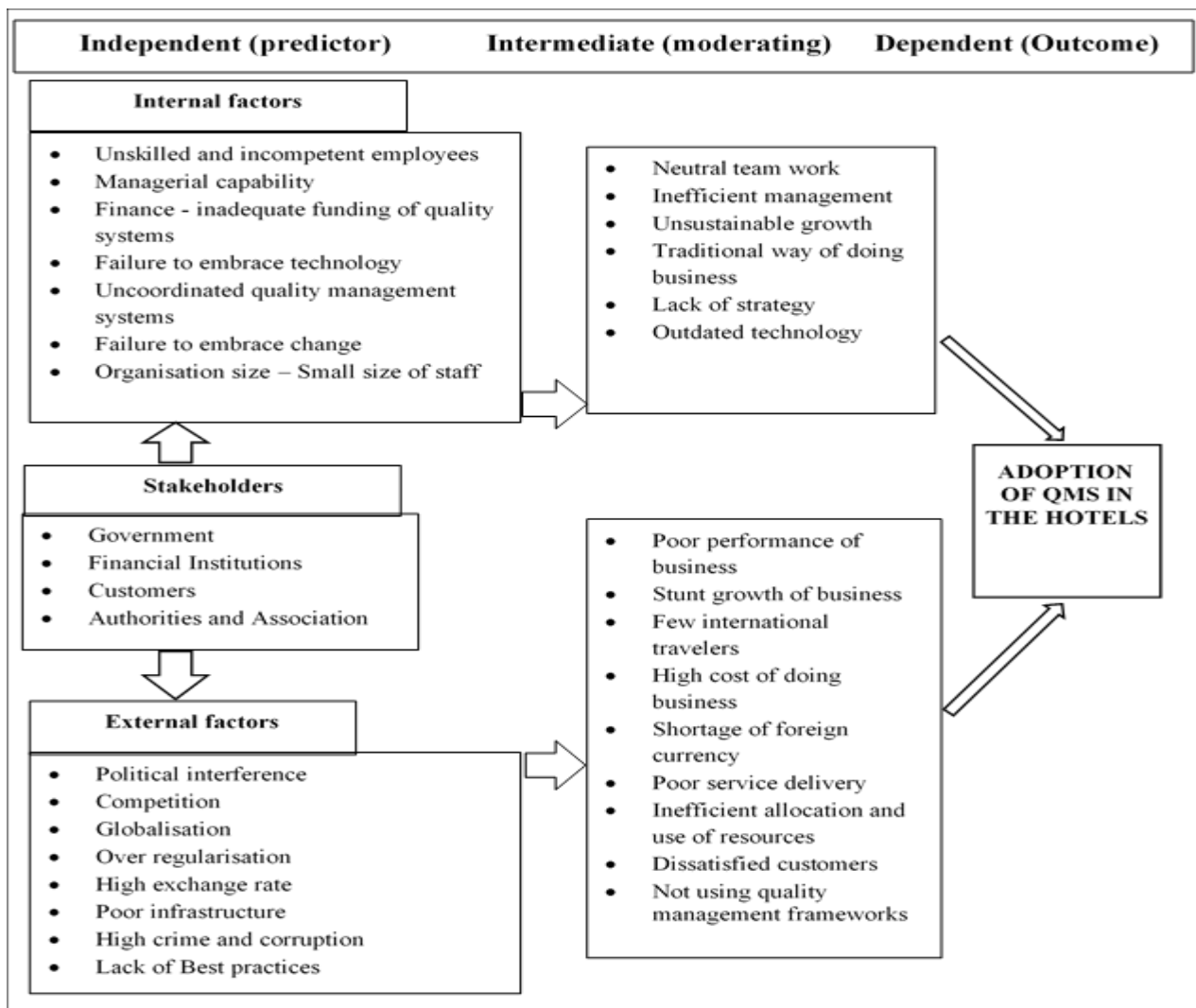

Figure1. Conceptual framework of internal factors, external factors and stakeholders

Methodology

The study adopted the qualitative approach as the study sought to gain an in-depth understanding on the factors contributing to late adoption of quality management systems in hotel industry. The researcher generated comprehensive non-numeric (narrative) data from purposively selected participants from the hotels and hotel industry key stakeholders. The

population for the study comprised of managers and junior staff members in hotels that were purposively selected in Harare. Hotels that are 4-star and 5-star rated were not included in the research assuming that they are much ahead in adoption of QMS. Data was generated from hotel staff, managers and key stakeholders using in-depth interviews and focus group discussions respectively. 9 interviews were done with managers, 9 focus group discussions were done with staff and 4 interviews were done with key hotel stakeholders' representatives. The in-depth interviews lasted thirty to forty minutes and focus group interviews lasted between one hour to one hour thirty minutes in order to capture all diverse views in the discussions as proposed by (Krueger & Casey, 2009). Interviews offered an opportunity for the researcher to investigate ideas and beliefs of participants further and to gather data that may not be obtained by other methods such as observation or survey (Creswell, 2014). Interviews have the potential to provide greater depth of information. The interviews were done in a natural setting in the respondents work environment. The researchers used both interviews and focus group discussions in the study so as to get a better understanding of the phenomenon under investigation and for methodology triangulation. Triangulation is the use of different data collection techniques within one study in order to ensure that the data are telling you what you think they are telling you (Trochim, Donnelly & Arora, 2016). With more than one referent point, the researcher was able to know where the truth lies. The researchers recognised the value of using multi-methods for corroboration of findings and for enhancing the validity of data.

The generated data were analysed and interpreted using thematic analysis - directed content analysis. Margaret (2019) defined qualitative content analysis as a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns. The themes used in the research were guided by key themes found in the literature review which makes them valid and reliable since they are based on proven theories and previously related results (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018). New themes were noted and embedded as new themes. A multiple case study design was adopted in the study. The issue of "factors affecting adoption of quality management systems" was the focus of the study, investigating it across bounded cases. Managers and staff members from 9 hotels in Harare that are not four- and five-star hotels were treated as a bounded case. The case study was recommended for interpretivist research design (Kothari, 2011; Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill & Bristow, 2019) as it is ideal to answer the "what, who, why, how, when" questions thus providing an in-depth understanding of the problem. The use of a multiple case study method was more probable to achieve the key aim of the research and meeting the study objectives: To determine internal and external factors affecting adoption of QMS in the hotel industry and proffer recommendations to encourage adoption of QMS in the hotel industry.

Results
Hotel ownership and size
Hotels in Zimbabwe are either independent hotels - family-owned, owned by small companies and or owned by group chain hotels. The staff establishment of most independent hotels was relatively small ranging from ten to fifty personnel with 60 rooms on average. The group chain hotels staff establishment was two hundred personnel with 100 rooms on average.

Product range
Hotels in Zimbabwe offered a wide range of facilities and services extending from accommodation and food to business support like office services and conference facilities. The services and amenities offered differed from one hotel to another from independent hotels to

group chain hotels. Most independent hotels had limited facilities and were not offering full hotel service. The group chain hotels some of them had leisure services including gym, health resort and swimming pools. Most of the hotel rooms were standard rooms and a number of executive rooms were found within group chain hotels.

The internal factors
Table 3 shows the issues raised on respective themes during focus group discussions and during interviews with managers and key stakeholders. Eight themes identified are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Internal factors

Sub-themes	Issues raised	Key stakeholder	Managers	Focus Group
Employees	• Qualifications		✓	✓
	• Period in service		✓	✓
	• Nature of employment contract		✓	✓
Management capability	• Commitment to quality		✓	
	• Mentorship		✓	
	• Management turnover		✓	
Finance	• Cost of QMS implementation	✓	✓	
Failure to embrace trend technology	• Sophisticated technology	✓	✓	✓
	• Self-service technology	✓	✓	
Uncoordinated quality communication	• Quality awareness		✓	✓
	• Company's mission and vision		✓	
Failure to embrace change	• Employee's participation		✓	✓
Departmentalisation of functions	• Quality teams, departments, committees		✓	✓
Organisation size	• Quality certification	✓	✓	✓

Employees
From the focus group discussions, it seemed that most of the junior staff had obtained recognised qualifications from colleges. A member of focus group FG4 from hotel H4 indicated: I am a qualified chef. I have a certificate from college. From our department majority are trained from college. But some have been trained here as an apprentice. The interviewed managers reinforced the issue of qualification as very important as they stipulate the required qualifications when hiring. From the focus group discussions, it appeared that most of the employees were not permanent employees. It was noted that they were more contract workers than permanent workers among junior staff. One junior staff from focus group FG5 from hotel H5 indicated that: Very few of us are permanent workers here, you can work for many years on contract and we do not know why they do not want us to be permanent. There are some departments with not even one permanent worker here. It also emerged from the focus group the employees were not happy with their remunerations and welfare at work. A focus group member from focus group FG8 raised a concern that: Our salaries are not all that motivating. When on work shift, we only get one meal and our working hours are long. The study revealed that most of the hotel staff and managers had obtained recognised qualifications from colleges and universities meaning that they are highly competent for their jobs. This is in line with Oakland (2011) assertion that educated and qualified employees are the asset of the organisation which contributes to the success of QMS implementation however the adoption of formal QMS in the hotel industry is very low. This is conflicting with Muiruri (2016)

assertions that managerial qualifications have a positive influence on the performance of any organisation.

Management capability

The study showed that managers of the hotels were committed to quality, backing and mentoring junior staff. It was noted that there was high management turnover in the hotels. Manager M2 from hotel M2 indicated: Because of our dedication to quality our strategic planning to everyday operations quality is key. We invest a lot of resources to ensure that our customers receive services of better quality. As a manager, I am also going for training on quality management. We offer moral support and organise mentorship programs for our junior staff where we mentor them on producing quality services. We send them to visit other big hotels so that they have an appreciation of what is better than what we are offering. From interviews of managers, it was revealed that almost all the managers had served less than five years in their respective positions. This indicated that there was high management turnover in the hotels. That is there was a lack of continuity in management strategy as managers change. From focus group FG6, one member highlighted: I have been here for five years now and I have been under four different managers. The study findings revealed that there is high staff and management turnover (hiring and dismissal) in the hotels. The study showed that managers of the hotels were committed to quality, backing and mentoring junior staff. The junior staff confirmed this in the focus group discussion confirming the support they get from management through training, job empowerment and enrichment.

Finance

From the interviews, all the managers indicated the lack of financial resources as a deterrent to implementation of QMS. One manager M3 noted: We encounter a grave trial of sourcing finances to implement certain QMS due to economic crisis in the country. It requires a lot of investment in capital goods which takes do not pay back within a short period as we are surviving on hand to mouth. Banks are not reluctant to offer us loans to spruce up our facilities. The proprietors are sceptical of putting in more funds in the hotel as the economy is volatile. A lot of money is required also on training employees on the system. The key stakeholders interviewed also highlighted that it is costly to implement accredited standards. Despite the hotels need to adopt QMS they come at a cost. One key stakeholder K3 indicated that: Very few hotels are accredited with ISO: 9000 because of costs. The ones that are accredited are big chain group hotels. This view was supported by the other two key stakeholders and they got affirmation from the interviewed managers. On the factor of finance, the results revealed that inadequate financial resources were correspondingly a deterrent in adoption and implementation of QMS in hotels. The hotels require a lot of money to train employees on quality, procure and set up required equipment and pay expert consultants. The hotels approached banks to secure loans even from the RBZ tourism revolving facility with no success. Hotel proprietors were financing quality enhancement processes through their own means and from profits realised from the hotel businesses.

Failure to embrace technology

The interviews showed that some of the hotels were using old technology whilst others were striving to embrace trend technology. Manager M3 from hotel H3 noted: We are now using the latest technology so as to offer our services efficiently, especially in the reservations, food and beverages, and housekeeping. Some of our hotels are five-star hotels and we use the same technology with them. We are now using cards for rooms access; we use latest equipment in our kitchens that are computer programmed and video conferencing boardrooms. One member

from focus group FG4 from hotel H4 noted: We are still using old ways of doing things. From our kitchen department, everything is manual from cutting vegetables to preparation. The management promises to change the equipment but it's now long overdue. This points out that managers were prepared to embrace trend technology in the hotels. They appreciated the value of using latest technology so as to improve quality of the services they offer. Failure to adopt trend technology makes it difficult for the junior staff to perform and produce quality services.

Quality communication

It appeared that hotels used different modes of communication within their organisations from the gathered data. One of the managers M9 from hotel H9 remarked: Communication here is done through notice boards, briefing, meetings and workshops. The nature of communication determines the medium of communication. If we want to implement new management system that affect the operation of the whole organisation, we organise training workshops. Daily matters of quality are communicated using briefings and notice boards. A number of managers noted the same. From the group discussions, employees remarked that there are various mediums of communication in the hotels. Other focus group members raised concerns about the communication mediums. From focus group FG2 from hotel H2 one member noted; Communication is done via various mediums here mainly notice boards, memorandums and briefings. Sometimes due to pressure of work we fail to check notice boards regularly which end up affecting operations. We do not receive communication through emails since we do not have access to internet here during working hours and use of social media to communicate work official information is disregarded here. The need for appropriate quality communication in hotels cannot be underestimated in the adoption of QMS in the hotel industry in Zimbabwe. It appeared from the study that different positive quality communication mediums and or strategies were used to encourage quality awareness and adherence to quality. These comprised use of notice boards, meetings, workshops, bulletins, magazines, pamphlets, emails, WhatsApp and websites which showed that the hotels embraced formal and informal communication.

Failure to embrace change

The investigation showed that most of the hotels have embraced change in terms of their products though some have failed to embrace change in terms of both their products and operations. Products have been improved in many ways. Manager M7 from hotel H7 noted that their hotel had recently introduced gym, spa, hair saloon and video conference center. He remarked: We changed our product portfolio to suite the international hotel products. When we renovated our hotel, we added a gym hall, modern saloon and video conference rooms. Most of the conferences now are done online and we decided to open video conference center so that we keep business. Employees noted change as being embraced in the hotel, from focus group discussion FG7 from hotel H7, the group members acknowledged change. One member from FG7 noted: Our furniture and fittings in the rooms have been changed. The equipment we use in doing our work is also changed regularly moving with changing trends. The findings indicated that hotels were embracing change by growing their product portfolio and use of latest technology in their operations with the help of key stakeholders.

Departmentalisation of functions

The study exposed that most hotel have departmentalised functions headed with specialists in food and beverages, rooms, maintenance, accounts, marketing and reservations. Very few hotels had a department specialising in quality management. The manager M1 from hotel H1 noted: We have a group quality department headed by operations director which is responsible for quality issues in our hotels. The quality department comes up with SOPs and train everyone

on the work procedures. Manager M5 from hotel H5 indicated: We do not have a department that deals with quality issues due to the size of our hotel. We have a quality committee comprising of all departmental managers. Our managers are responsible for more than one specialised area function. One member from focus group FG8 noted: We often switch departments when need arises so as to manage work levels. You can be working in the rooms and also assisting in the kitchen.

Organisation size/structure

It was observed that the hotels are of medium size chain hotels and independent hotels with different structures accommodating different managers. The manager M3 from hotel H3 noted: Because we are part of a group of hotels our structure follows that of the group. Some managers might not be resident here but they operate from head office. Manager M9 from hotel H9 remarked: Our structure is unique tailor made to our hotel. Managers are few with one manager overseeing a number of functions and there are no supervisors. The findings showed that group hotels have big organisation structures than independent hotels.

The external factors

Table 4 shows the issues raised on respective themes during focus group discussions, and during interviews with managers and key stakeholders. Eight themes identified are shown in Table 3.

Table 1:The external factors

Sub themes	Issues raised	Key stakeholders	Managers	Focus Group
Government regulations and laws	• Taxes • ZTA act, Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation Licenses and by laws	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	
Dynamic competition	• Coopetition • Renovation and innovation	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	
Technology and Globalisation	• Reservation Systems • Marketing • Hotel Equipment • Internationalisation	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	
High exchange rate	• Inflation • Change of currencies		✓ ✓	
Infrastructure	• Electricity • Water • Internet		✓ ✓ ✓	
Crime and corruption	• Theft • Grading	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	
Customers	• Customer groups/ Associations • Sanganai/Hlanganani Travel Expo	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	
Best practices	• Benchmarking	✓	✓	

Government regulations and laws

The study proposed that government regulations and laws are contributing to the late adoption of QMS in hotels. Manager M9 acknowledged: The ZTA demands high amounts on registering a hotel, we have been closed for the past three years and it was very expensive for us to register this hotel anew. Licenses which are required to comply with are too many, we pay Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation tv licenses and each television that we have is charged, Zimbabwe Music Rights license and 2% bed tax is paid upon paying VAT. With the level of our business, the licenses and taxes alone increased our operating expenses and we are really left with

minimum to improve our management systems. Manager M3 expressed: We have 80 televisions here and each is licensed which takes a lot of money. The study revealed that government regulations and laws were contributing to the late adoption of QMS in the hotel industry. The findings showed that for a hotel to be registered there are a number of authorities that require fees, from ZTA, local authority, Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation, Zimbabwe Music Rights Associations and others which stifles the hotels' resources.

Dynamic competition

Dynamic competition was also revealed as another factor contributing to late adoption of QMS in hotels. Manager M8 remarked: We are not very competitive with other hotels here in town, our operations of late we have been focusing on low end market since we cannot afford the requirements of the high-end market. We are not very moved with latest trends in the industry. Other managers interviewed indicated the opposite from M8 as they showed that they are competitive in the market as they are becoming more innovative and renovating their facilities. Manager M7 noted: Lately we have been renovating our facilities here, manage to put new furniture and fittings in our rooms so that we remain competitive in the market. Other hotels are joining our so that instead of competing we coopt our efforts. From the results, it emerged that hotels were faced with two wide extreme dimensions of either to be dynamically competitive or remain docile. Most independent hotel were not very competitive and have been focusing on low end markets. Group chain hotels showed that they were highly competitive in the industry evidenced with embarking on renovations and acquisition of other hotel facilities.

Technology and globalisation

The study exposed that technology and globalisation is influencing adoption of QMS in the hotels as latest reservation systems, sophisticated hotel equipment and internationalisation takes over the industry. One of the managers M2 remarked: We are an international hotel and our systems are international even our meals though our main line of dishes is Chinese. We use latest equipment in our departments so as to delight the customers. The hotel facilities here are the same with those at other hotels that we run. The study revealed that group chain hotels adopted the use of latest technologies in their operations and some of them have present in the region and beyond.

High exchange rate

From the interviews with managers, it was revealed that inflation and change of currency from US$ to Zimbabwe dollar threatened QMS of many hotels. Manager M1 noted: During the use of US$ in the country we have been implementing great innovations and renovating our facilities but with the change of currency it is now expensive to procure some the equipment we want to improve our QMS since they require foreign currency. We are now operating just for survival no more to development investment in our systems. This comment was supported indirectly with the remarks of manager from K3: Ever since the inflation started to increase the number of participants from hotels participating on or quality trainings have reduced significantly. To us, this is a sign that something is not right in the hotel industry.

Infrastructure

That study exposed lack of infrastructure as another factor affecting adoption of QMS in hotels. This was specified by most managers. The manager M6 remarked: The serious problems of lack of consistent water supply and electricity outages have threatened our efforts of implementing QMS. Instead of investing in buying new hotel equipment we are drilling boreholes, buying water and buying fuel for generators. Manager M4 also noted: Internet is

very expensive and it contributes to our high bill of operating expenses. The results show lack of consistent water supply and electricity hampering efforts of implementing QMS in the hotel industry in Zimbabwe.

Crime and corruption
From the data gathered, the study showed theft of small items in the hotel by staff and guests also affecting QMS adoption in hotels. One manager M5 remarked: We have challenges of theft by staff members and we end up dismissing them and this has associated huge costs. Corruption in grading and licensing of hotels was complained of by managers. The results revealed that hotels are grappling with theft of small items in the hotels by staff and guests. The results showed that owing to lack of funds managers could not afford buying technologies that could prevent theft in their organisations. The results also showed that small hotel managers were in a tight situation with authorities when registering and renewing their licenses as they demand bribery.

Customers
The data showed that customers are integral in the QMS adopted by hotels. Manager M3 remarked: We improve the way we do things according to our customer expectations. Some of the systems that we are using are as a result of the customer's input. The results revealed that customers influenced management of quality in the hotel industry. The results showed that hotels improve their products in response to feedback that they get from customers through various means which include customer feedback forms, interviews and emails.

Best practices
The data showed that best practices inform of practising benchmarking by hotels influenced adoption of QMS in the hotels. Manager H9 noted: In this hotel industry we benchmark ourselves with hotels that are performing better than us and we do take notes from Cresta Oasis and N1 hotels. We are copying some things from them that we feel adds value to our product here. When commenting about the function of their organisation's president from K4 and manager from K2 remarked respectively: Our association is a voluntary association of hotels where we learn from each other on how to survive in this business. We organise workshops where we educate hoteliers and other players in the tourism industry on any latest development and business best practices. Hotels exhibit at Sanganai Travel Expo on their unique services.

Discussions
Of interest, the study revealed that most of the hotel staff and managers had obtained recognised qualifications from colleges and universities meaning that they are highly competent for their jobs. This is in line with Oakland (2011) assertion that educated and qualified employees are the asset of the organisation which contributes to the success of QMS implementation however the adoption of formal QMS in the hotel industry is very low. During the focus group discussions, staff members echoed that it is difficult to serve for many years in the hotels even the management changes frequently. Most of the staff members are not permanent employees in the hotels. The findings are in line with Maphosa (2014) view that management turnover disturbs the consistency of policies and subsequently overall performance of organisations. The results showed that in some hotels staff members expressed discontent with remuneration and this might have been contributing to staff turnover. Correspondingly, Deming (1986) noted turnover of management as the fourth deadly disease that impedes transition to stable QMS implementation. The hotels require a lot of finances to train employees on quality, procure and set up required equipment and pay expert consultants. The hotels are failing to acquire credit

lines from banks which is limiting adoption of QMS. Muiruri (2017) noted that organisations require to budget for QMS and they had to meet costs of upgrading the infrastructure to meet international standards. The issue of financing budgeting gap is exposed in the Government of Zimbabwe Budget (2017) with low budget towards travel and tourism industry and high budget towards primary industry of farming and mining. It appeared from the study that different positive quality communication mediums and or strategies were used to encourage quality awareness and adherence to quality. These comprised use of notice boards, meetings, workshops, bulletins, magazines, pamphlets, emails, WhatsApp and websites which showed that the hotels embraced formal and informal communication. On the issue of employee participation in the quality communication process, the employees were trained on any new concepts to be introduced in the hotels before being given any policy documents as guidelines. The results are in line with Oakland (2011) idea that quality goals and objectives can only be set, implemented and monitored through quality awareness and developed information systems, fliers, bulletins, notices, education and training.

Independent hotels are still offering the old products and using old operation systems. The longest serving staff members in the hotels are very much comfortable with the status quo and the new employees coming from training institutions are unsettled. Of note was that very few hotels had a department specialising in quality management. Mugondi (2015) noted that departmentalisation of functions is a critical factor in service quality delivery on guest satisfaction in the hospitality industry and more effective if quality improvement is embedded in cross functional teams. The study revealed that government regulations and laws were contributing to the late adoption of QMS in hotel industry. The findings showed that for a hotel to be registered there are a number of authorities that require fees, from ZTA, local authority, Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation, Zimbabwe Music Rights Associations and others which stifles the hotels' resources. The results showed that most independent hotels find it difficult to meet all the statutory requirements. The data shows that dynamic competition in the hotel industry is affecting QMS adoption. From the results it emerged that hotels were faced with two wide extreme dimensions of either to be dynamically competitive or remain docile. Most independent hotel were not very competitive and have been focusing on low end markets. Group chain hotels showed that they were highly competitive in the industry evidenced with embarking on renovations and acquisition of other hotel facilities. The results show that hotels improved their product offerings based on customers' needs which affirms to Wang, Chen and Chen (2012) that in a competitive environment hotelier gradient to comprehend the weaknesses, strengths and performance of products adjusting them based on customer data. Data was collected only from 1, 2- and 3-star hotels leaving out 4- and 5-star hotels thus there was no comparison with well-developed operating within the same business environment. The case hotels were only from Harare and they might fail to give a full representation of the hotel industry in Zimbabwe as the cities are different and the type of hotels also differ with location.

Conclusion

The study showed internal factors affecting the adoption of QMS in the hotel industry as: high management and staff turnover, the hotels have no specialised quality function within their establishment, poor remuneration of hotel employees, shortage of financial resources, lack of product development, and hotel size and structure. In Zimbabwe's hotel industry, managers and employees are well qualified which cannot be a cause for concern in the adoption of QMS. However, the study's results showed a high management turnover with 89% managers not lasting their organisation's strategic plan life span of five years. Most of the staff members were engaged on contract basis and a number of students employed on internship constituted a big part of junior staff. The factors contributing to the late adoption of QMS in the hotel

industry are: high taxes and licensing fees, industry over regulation, high levels of competition and low levels of competition, economic challenges of hyperinflation, poor industry supporting infrastructure, corruption by authorities and lack of hotel customers associations. Competition among hotels was increasing the rate at which hotels were adopting QMS. The need by local hotels to get international recognition was also influencing the adoption of QMS. The hotels were failing to do renovations and acquire the right technology as the local currency failed to store value for capital investments. The hotel association also influenced its members to adopt best business practices through workshops, seminars and conferences. Hidden insights regarding adoption of QMS in the hotel industry were exposed which demands deep research in future studies by academicians in relation to specific factors. Strategies to harness positive factors and correct negative factors need to be developed. The study recommended for creation of hotel industry stakeholder platform to enhance adoption of QMS in the hotel industry looking at how best to ease the identified factors. There is need for a review of hotel industry operating environment from regulator perspective so as to ease the operating environment which can improve the hotels sustainability. In future there is need to do the study with a larger sample and including 4 and 5- star hotels so as to compare the results if they remain unchanged. A cross industry study can be done to find out if factors affecting QMS in different industry sectors. The study adopted qualitative approach and there is need in future to consider quantitative approach to get a deeper insight which might not be regarded subjective.

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