THE EVALUATION OF THE INVOLVEMENT OF EMPLOYEES IN QUALITY PROJECTS AT
LOCALLY BASED COMPANIES

N. Govender\textsuperscript{1}, S. Latiff\textsuperscript{2}, A. Hlongwane\textsuperscript{3} and R. Singh\textsuperscript{4}
\textsuperscript{1,4}Department of Industrial Engineering
Durban University of Technology, South Africa
\textsuperscript{1}21002410@dut4life.ac.za
\textsuperscript{2}21019363@dut4life.ac.za
\textsuperscript{3}21010378@dut4life.ac.za
\textsuperscript{4}ranils@dut.ac.za

ABSTRACT
The fields of employee involvement and quality are constantly evolving and repositioning
themselves in direct relation to a more competitive business environment. The benefits
associated with the holistic involvement of employees for the duration of quality projects is
an often debated issue. In light of this, deriving the true benefit (if any), of unreservedly
involving employees in quality initiatives becomes an interesting proposition that may
provide new information from a local perspective. Review of the associated literature
provided the study with the grounding of several theories that provide a consensus for
employee involvement in quality as a necessity for business excellence. However, employee
involvement in quality is still not prevalent in many local companies. Two separate locally
based multinational firms were selected as participants in this study so as to gain a better
perspective and understanding of the current status of employee involvement in quality
efforts. The results of the investigation indicate a positive interrelation between the
involvement of employees in quality projects and the subsequent success of these projects.
The positive benefits were applicable to both company and employees alike. The
investigation highlights the universality of involving employees in quality as a key success
factor among local industries.

* Corresponding Author
1 INTRODUCTION

The broad field of quality has advanced significantly and continues to reinvent itself and the way it is viewed and adapted in industry. Despite its common prevalence in a variety of literature sources, application techniques and practices, it remains a much debated topic in that several contrasting theories and techniques are practiced by various industries in pursuit of providing a quality product or service. Every business year, companies around the world strategically plan their quality endeavours and begin their annual pilgrimage journey into the vast abyss of quality, some uncovering hidden strategies quickly succeeding and rising to the top of their markets, whilst others fade away in their journey toward quality excellence. One aspect of quality remains fundamental i.e. rising competition, customer expectations, and a greater emphasis on continual business improvement. With this in mind, companies are having to regularly rethink strategies for attaining success in quality projects.

As the advent of employee involvement gains momentum, there has been a paradigm shift of thinking in industry today. The fundamentals of employee involvement, which calls for the holistic participation of employees across the vertical and horizontal structures of the organisation, provides a basis for untapped prospects of organisational success. Correctly managed staff who are well motivated, properly utilised, and given the necessary delegation of authority can often yield quite surprising results, which may be equally applicable to quality projects.

An interesting proposition surmounts when combining the distinct fields of employee involvement and quality, both of which serve as powerful components to an organisation. Varying levels of speculation exist with regards to the feasibility of involving staff in quality endeavours. On the one side of the spectrum, theories propose the use of employee involvement as a key factor to reaching quality excellence [1], whilst adversely others tend to adopt the general practice of soliciting quality specialists or the quality department in the undertaking of quality projects [2]. The results from case studies when integrating employee involvement in quality projects will provide more light on whether the combination of these two factors surmount to an explosive advantage in quality results, or conversely, on whether the two components fail to complement each other, hampering quality projects from reaching their desired results.

One of the confounding aspects in favour of the prescription of employee involvement in quality is that proponents of employee participation in quality observed this combination from a variety of international settings. The differences in cultural backgrounds, management styles, traditional deployment and the centre’s of power within industries in South Africa will differ vastly from other international locations such as Japan or the United States for instance. This study aims to evaluate and assess employee involvement in quality based projects from a local context i.e. multinational firms based within the Durban Metropolitan area. Company A: a fast moving consumer goods manufacturer and Company B: an automotive manufacturer. Both these companies collectively share the same ideology of employee involvement in their quality based projects, and to this end, will provide the study with an interesting view into the topic.

The objective of this study is then to evaluate the aspect of involving employees in quality based projects at these two Durban based companies. In researching the objective of the study, the project will aim to look at the effectiveness of a sample of quality based projects exhibiting employee participation from both companies and will collect the perceptions of employees regarding their participation in these quality based projects. From the study, it was also the researchers’ intention to unearth possible recommendations for refining and/or enhancing the local implementation of employee participation in quality based projects from the data collected.
2 LITERATURE REVIEW

In the coverage of developmental aspects surrounding employee involvement, it becomes important to note the aspects of scientific management as proposed by Frederick W. Taylor [3]. This is further reinforced through the use of a popular example of the Ford Motor Company [4] where the implementation of mass assembly line production demanded high focus on achieving efficiency. However some may argue that whilst efficiencies may have been achieved, scientific management came at a cost namely its failure to address certain human aspects of work.

It is the human relations movement that started looking into the human factor as an important aspect in job design. The likes of Frank B. Gilbreth and his wife Lillian M. Gilbreth, performed extensive studies and research into the psychological implications of work, together covering and drawing early attention to aspects such as worker motion, fatigue and ergonomics amongst several other human-factor related aspects [5].

The Hawthorne studies conducted on worker behavior and motivation by George E. Mayo contributed immensely to the establishment of Human relations management with the discovery that encouragement, teamwork and morale played an integral role in achieving results leading to productivity improvement [4].

The resultant formation of Human relations management opposed much of Taylor’s traditional scientific management systems by viewing it as inadequate treatment and utilisation of human assets. In other words, the use of scientific management in companies was specified for high efficiency regardless of worker emotion, culture, fulfillment and development towards work.

Quality pioneer William E. Deming noted that the use of work measurement systems set expectations without much due consideration for workers as individuals. Individuals with needs, talents and the longing to express their contributions in the work that they performed [1].

Ultimately, Mayo, along with the other pioneers discussed above, believed in a simple yet unequivocal statement in that if workers were motivated, involved and supported, their performances could surpass what was established using the traditional scientific management methodology.

Silos [6] and Sun, et al [7] state that employee involvement is a process designed to empower members in an organisation to make decisions and solve problems. The involvement of all employees makes the drive towards achieving the objective much smoother and more efficient. If employees are equipped with the necessary skill to accomplish tasks they are able to further enhance the quality achieved by the organisation. According to Yan and Zhang [8], to successfully implement a strategy on quality, it is essential to get the holistic involvement of the workforce.

According to Besterfield, et al [9], Stevenson [4] and Sun, et al [7]; T.Q.M. (Total Quality management) is a philosophy used to involve everyone in the company in a continual effort to improve quality and achieve customer satisfaction. To this end, T.Q.M. can be viewed as the art of managing the whole to achieve brilliance requiring a disciplined approach, fundamental management techniques, existing improvement efforts and technical tools [10].

Three highlighted obstacles to the implementation of T.Q.M. according to Suganthi and Samuel [11], Stevenson [4] and Kelemen [12] are; (a) Lack of employee involvement, (b) Lack of workforce motivation and (c) Lack of leadership.

From denoting obstacles (a-c) above, it becomes evident that the lack of employee involvement serves as one of the underlying obstacles to T.Q.M. success. It is further noted that management serves as one of the key initiators of T.Q.M.; as management must lead and provide the necessary motivation to employees, which may occur through soliciting a higher degree of their involvement.
Quality circles promote making small improvements in the performance of an element of the production system [13]. It is further noted according to Rich [13], that the word circle represents a team. In Japan the concept involved 5 to 10 employees meeting regularly to solve problems within the same working area. He further goes on to state that quality circles;

- offer job satisfaction through respect for people;
- contribute to the development of the organisation; and
- aids in fully realising and utilising employees skills and potential capabilities.

Silos [6] and Sun, et al [7], in agreement with Rich, state that forming quality circles is the first step in implementing employee involvement as the advent of a team makes a significantly positive difference in the process of improvement. The contribution of a team with a unified goal would provide greater momentum as compared to an individual effort or the effort of management alone since employees are directly involved in the process and could provide greater insight into the problem and greater effort towards its solution.

According to Tang, et al [14], in an instance, over 90% of the Fortune 500 companies were estimated to have had Quality Circle programs in the mid 1980s and over two hundred thousand U.S. workers have had Quality Circle experience during that period. However he goes on further to state that Quality Circle programs in the United States have failed in more than 60-75% of the companies whom had implemented them. This points to the fact that implementation of quality involvement programs (in this case Quality Circles) are not as straightforward and elementary as may seem. The principles underlying these philosophies may be beyond dispute; however implementation and failure of these programs is an ever present danger faced by many companies as is evidenced through above statistics within the fortune 500 companies.

The act of employee involvement embodies itself in several commonly utilised programs adopted in industry today such as kaizen (continuous improvement), employee suggestion schemes, employee empowerment, teamwork initiatives and quality control circles. Despite the name of the program or the package implemented within a company, almost all programs of improvement consist of and call for the involvement and participation of employees in decision making and problem solving [6]. With employee involvement attributed to being the baseline of emphasis within industry programs in their various forms, taking cognisance of the importance of employee involvement in isolation becomes an important factor.

3 METHOD

The methodological design for achieving the objectives of this investigative project is characterised by the following:

a) On site observations & interviews to determine the effectiveness of quality based projects encompassing employee involvement

b) The use of questionnaires to analyse the perceptions of employees regarding their participation in quality based projects.

As mentioned earlier data were collected from two separate locally based multinational manufacturing companies i.e. Company A and Company B. Using the concept of triangulation [15], which seeks to support or enhance the internal validity of an investigative project, data were collected using two distinct research methods mentioned above. These methods are further discussed individually below;
3.1 Methodology: On-site observation/Interviews

To determine the effectiveness of quality based projects encompassing employee involvement; three quality based projects were selected and observed from each of the two companies under study. Criteria selections for the projects were as follows:

- projects should encompass holistic employee participation (employees are active members of the project team from point of problem identification through to solution implementation);
- projects would have to have been undertaken between years 2011 to 2013;
- adequate amounts of data from these projects as well as its active integration in the factory should be prevalent during the on-site observation visit/interview; and
- projects should exhibit a compact number of employees (5-10) in order to collect data within the time frame allocation and to promote uniformity in project scope.

The projects were then inspected and verified on-site at each company by a member of the project team. Data on each project, in the form of Key Performance Indicators (KPI’s) were collected through direct observation, consultation and from company information databases.

3.2 Methodology: Questionnaire

The perceptions of employees regarding the aspects surrounding their participation in quality based projects were solicited through the use of a closed loop questionnaire. The questionnaire will serve to provide a firsthand perspective and understanding of the dynamics and current state surrounding employee involvement in quality projects at these local companies. The formulated questionnaire consisted of 15 statements, each of which was designed to test a specific outcome as is illustrated in table 1. The questionnaire adopted a three point Likert scale with options of agree, neutral and disagree. All questionnaires were submitted during the on-site observation visits and members of the project team remained on site during its completion to provide any necessary support that may be required by the respondents.

Table 1: Statements in questionnaire and their distinct link to an outcome

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I have been or am involved in a quality project</td>
<td>Outcome 1: To ascertain primarily, if the companies within this study adopt employee involvement strategies in quality projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I think I can be more involved in quality projects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>My company emphasises staff involvement in quality projects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Shop floor staff are involved in most quality projects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I feel responsible for the success of the project</td>
<td>Outcome 2: To determine the success or failure of quality projects with holistic of employee involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>All the quality projects that I am involved in complete their objective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The projects completed were made possible largely due to people involvement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>My manager/team leader is the only reason the project ultimately succeeds</td>
<td>Outcome 3: To determine the employees perception of quality involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>People should not be involved in quality projects as it is the job of the quality department</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I want to be involved in as many quality projects as is available</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>Outcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>From my view, being involved in a quality project was a value adding experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I am involved but my ideas/opinion are not always taken into account</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>I get a significant amount of time to address quality projects</td>
<td>Outcome 4: To assess the broader culture of employee involvement in quality projects and management styles adopted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>I receive adequate recognition for my efforts within quality projects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>I am aware of other quality projects plant wide</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.1 Quality based projects encompassing holistic employee involvement

In order to determine the effectiveness of quality based projects encompassing holistic employee involvement, a total of six quality based projects with holistic employee involvement were selected (three from each company) and studied through the onsite observation/interviewing methods discussed above. A short synopsis of each of the individual projects along with their results is presented in table 2.

Table 2: Individual project synopsis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company:</th>
<th>Project outline: Reduce downtime on machine through root cause analysis and team implementation of solution</th>
<th>Condition before project: 22.4 hours per month of downtime</th>
<th>Project target: Reduce downtime to 11.2 hours per month</th>
<th>Value to reduce by: 11.2 hours of downtime per month</th>
<th>Actually achieved: 10 hours per month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company:</th>
<th>Project outline: Reduce number of defective cartons through a team based implementation and training</th>
<th>Condition before project: 128 defective cartons per annum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Project 2: Defective carton reductions (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project target:</th>
<th>Reduce to 0 defective cartons per annum</th>
<th>Value to reduce by: 128 defective cartons</th>
<th>Actually achieved: 24 defective cartons per annum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company:</th>
<th>Project outline: Reduce number of cartons scrapped for negligible reasons through team brainstorming exercise and implementation of standardised procedure for discarding of cartons</th>
<th>Condition before project: 42.19kg waste per week</th>
<th>Project target: Reduce to 20 kg waste per week</th>
<th>Value to reduce by: 22.19kg</th>
<th>Actually achieved: 14.3 kg waste per week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1129-6
Project 4: Reduction of costs associated with de-rusting of parts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company:</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project outline:</td>
<td>Team to implement FIFO system to reduce rusting of parts and hence cost associated with process of de-rusting parts prior to production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition before project:</td>
<td>R6825.60 de-rusting cost per month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project target:</td>
<td>Reduce to R2000 per month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value to reduce by:</td>
<td>R4825.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actually achieved:</td>
<td>R138.08 de-rusting cost per month</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Project 5: Reduction of defective components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company:</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project outline:</td>
<td>Reduce scratch defects on components due to internal causes through team based planning, implementation and department wide training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition before project:</td>
<td>15 defects per month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project target:</td>
<td>Reduce to 0 defects per month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value to reduce by:</td>
<td>15 defects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actually achieved:</td>
<td>3 defects per month</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Project 6: Reduction of downtime for line process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company:</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project outline:</td>
<td>Reduce downtime on engine pipe process through team observation, analysis and collective implementation of proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition before project:</td>
<td>95.7 minutes per month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project target:</td>
<td>Reduce to 10 minutes per month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value to reduce by:</td>
<td>85.7 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actually achieved:</td>
<td>10 minutes per month</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whilst it can be established from the table above that Projects 1, 3, 4 and 6 meet and exceed their proposed target value; projects 2 and 5 approximate towards their target values showing levels of improvement.

The effectiveness for each of the projects will be computed by providing a simple percentage of the actual achieved result versus the target value set and will be computed using either of the below adapted formulae (1 or 2);

If actually achieved results do not exceed the project target;

$$\text{effectiveness of project} = \left( \frac{\text{actually achieved}}{\text{project target}} \right) \times 100$$  \hspace{1cm} (1)

Alternatively, if actually achieved result exceeds the project target;

$$\text{effectiveness of project} = 100 + \left[ \left( \frac{\text{project target} - \text{actually achieved}}{\text{value to reduce by}} \right) \times 100 \right]$$  \hspace{1cm} (2)

The effectiveness for each of the six quality based projects encompassing holistic employee involvement are presented graphically in figure 1 below.
By referring to figure 1, the point which becomes evident through the collective analysis of the effectiveness for all six projects involving employees; is that both companies on average, display similar levels of overall success in their projects, although operating in vastly differing industries, conditions and cultures. The universality of success seen from the projects covered in this study (emphasising employee involvement) is noted.

Although all six projects indicate a positive trend of effectiveness through involving employees, it cannot be established thus far to what level this involvement has manifested or if shortcomings in the policy of involving employees could have impeded greater potential improvements in these projects or others.

The following analysis on the perceptions that the employees involved in these projects have on the concepts surrounding their involvement in quality based projects provides the study with a first-hand consensus in understanding and evaluating the current state of employee involvement in quality projects studied.

The following section will analyse data collected from responses to the questionnaire. The questionnaire itself consists of four individual sections (refer Table 1), testing different aspects regarding employee involvement in quality projects at the companies. The collective responses under each section (outcome) of the questionnaire will provide a more in-depth picture of the current state and aspects regarding the employee involvement policies in quality projects studied.

4.2 Responses to questionnaires testing aspects surrounding employee involvement in quality projects at the companies

Figure 2 presents a graphical representation of the responses testing outcome 1(To ascertain primarily, if the companies within this study adopt employee involvement strategies in quality projects) for statements 1-4 of the questionnaire;
Figure 2: Outcome 1- Employee involvement in quality projects

From figure 2, it becomes quite evident that there is a strong tendency towards agreement with all four of the statements. With a percentage range from 72 to 100 for statements (1-4), it can be verified and confirmed that the involvement of employees is being adopted by both companies in their drive towards improvement.

A 100% agreement noted from the respondents with respect to statement 3(My company emphasises staff involvement in quality projects), indicates that the quality aspect is encouraged amongst employees, which augurs well since emphasis from the company on employee participation forms the basic ingredients for capturing the potential that the employee base possesses. The 72% and 80 % agreement to statement 2(I think I can be more involved in quality projects) and 4(Shop floor staff are involved in most quality projects) respectively, does indicate room for improvement in involving employees in quality endeavours.

Figure 3 presents a graphical representation of the responses testing outcome 2(To determine the success or failure of quality projects with holistic of employee involvement) for statements 5-7 of the questionnaire;

Figure 3: Outcome 2- Performance of quality projects with holistic employee involvement

From Figure 3, it is evident that all 3 statement responses depict a significant agreement to the aspects associated with the success of quality projects encompassing their (staff) involvement.

With respect to statement 5(I feel responsible for the success of the project) and 7(The
projects completed were made possible largely due to people involvement), an 84% and 88% agreement toward these statements were noted respectively. This indicates that the employees have a strong sense that their involvement within quality projects is vital and their contributions are important factors in determining final project completion and success. This also indicates favourably to employee involvement being one of the critical success factors responsible for the high levels of effectiveness seen within the six projects.

A 24% disagreement in statement 6(All the quality projects that I am involved in completely meet their objective) does indicate that although employee involvement is evident in quality projects, it may not be completely integrated in a manner that ensures all projects completely meet their objective. A further consideration to this response is that employee involvement in isolation does not guarantee a project will succeed or meet its objective. There are several contributing factors key to the success of a quality project such as; strong leadership, teamwork, power sharing and morale, these must function as a framework alongside employee involvement in order to reach success.

Figure 4 presents a graphical representation of the responses testing outcome 3(To determine the employees perception regarding their participation in quality based projects) for statements 8-12 of the questionnaire;

![Figure 4: Outcome 3- Employee’s perception of their involvement in quality](image)

From figure 4, statement 8 incurs the most spread out distribution of responses whilst the responses for statements 9, 10, 11 and 12 lean towards a particular view. The 20% in agreement and 16% neutral response evident in statement 8(My manager/team leader is the only reason the project ultimately succeeds), suggests that some employee’s feel that ultimately a project involving employees will only succeed because of their team leader or manager and not due to their own input. This proves an interesting proposition as several quality theories [1] require that management provide the necessary freedom for employees to express themselves through projects and feel the sense of accomplishment which they should attribute to their own efforts without the reluctance or mental model of wanting to equate the success of a project to a senior member of management.

In direct contradiction to the negative response to statement 8, a more positive response consensus from statements 9-12 is noted. The high percentages of disagreement obtained for statements 9(People should not be involved in quality projects as it is the job of the quality department),the agreement to statement 10(I want to be involved in as many quality projects as is available),the strong agreement to statement 11(From my view, being involved in a quality project was a value adding experience) and lastly the disagreement to statement 12(I am involved but my ideas/opinion are not always taken into account) collectively indicate that employees possess strong awareness of their input in quality and a willingness to express their commitment to quality projects.
Thus, it can be ascertained that employees have grown to become extremely knowledgeable concerning their contribution in quality and view the aspect with a willing and a positive demeanour when involved. Ultimately, this provides important information as, although both companies operate in differing environments, structures and cultures, the same willingness and affirmative reactions are seen when analysing the collective stance on the aspect of employee involvement in quality projects.

Figure 5 presents a graphical representation of the responses testing outcome 4(To assess the broader culture of employee involvement in quality projects and management styles adopted) for statements 13-15 of the questionnaire;

![Figure 5: Outcome 4- Culture of employee involvement in quality and management styles](image)

From figure 5, there is a widely distributed view held by employees which is indicated by the percentage contribution to all three statements of response. The particularly negative response to statement 13(I get a significant amount of time to address quality projects), indicate that management may not wholly or in its entirety provide the resources necessary to enable the completion of quality tasks. One aspect key to employee involvement is that management provide the necessary avenues to support the endeavour. Employees perceive that not enough time is provided for the completion of quality projects.

Whilst an employee involvement policy is commendable, providing inadequate support to enrich and develop such a policy may prove to be detrimental in future.

Furthermore, employees’ negative responses to statement 14(I receive adequate recognition for my efforts within quality projects), indicate that inadequate amounts of recognition for efforts are obtained. Whilst it cannot be assumed that there is no recognition in place at companies (as is indicative of the 16% of respondents indicating favourably to being recognised), undertaking employee involvement policies require that it become centrally and constantly reinforced and to this end, maintaining and developing new methods of rewarding and recognising employees for their contributions are warranted. Finally, the negative response to statement 15(I am aware of other quality projects plant wide), is indicative of management not adequately initiating a platform from which all quality projects may be displayed and understood. Immersing the entire organisation in learning and awareness may lead to a breeding ground for new ideas and inevitably a culture of ever improving quality.
5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

From the above analysis the following conclusions can be drawn:

- Quality based projects that encompass holistic employee participation generally attain due levels of success.

- Companies within this study are making a concerted effort to involve employees' on a more holistic level. Employees respond to this effort by acknowledging that they would like to be more involved in quality projects - the underlying message is clear in this regard; employees whom have been involved in quality projects and having experienced success and accomplishment beyond their regular functions have a motivation to want to be further engaged.

- Employee involvement has positively influenced the chance of success for the quality projects under study although, it is dually noted that employee involvement in isolation will not achieve optimal results, a complementary framework of other principles must be integrated within employee participation in order to reach further success.

- Employees from a local context are growing in their knowledge of quality aspects. It becomes a feasible proposition for companies to tap into this array of hidden skills and attributes that employees possess beyond their regular activities.

- Employees involved in the projects agree that the aspect surrounding their involvement has been a fulfilling and value adding experience to their own growth and development.

- The culture surrounding the sound implementation of holistic employee involvement in quality is still shown to be a developing aspect in local industry and aspects such as time allocation, recognition, awareness and strategic emphasis requires continued support.

- Two industry organisations that differ culturally, operationally and functionally have been shown to reach levels of success in the sample of projects studied from adopting policies of employee participation in quality.

5.2 Recommendations

From the study and the analysis the following recommendations can be made:

- Locally based companies whom do not possess employee involvement strategies in quality based initiatives should explore such avenues, as projects involving employees have been shown to achieve levels of success.

- Management must ensure that the resources to sustain such a program are available to cultivate and sustain the growth of employee involvement (aspects such as structured planned project timetables, adequate time allocation, team meetings and consultation, necessary training and support as well as budget allocations must be made available to the endeavour, since an ad hoc policy of employee involvement without due commitment and support will be fraught with failure.

- In adopting a policy of employee involvement in quality endeavours, certain barriers of power must be relinquished to the workforce. This ensures freedom for employees to express their skills and abilities, thus providing a sense of accomplishment, growth and learning to the employee.

- Rewards and recognition (in forms that are feasible to the company) should be allotted to employees in recognition of success or completion of an objective; this sustains the morale and enthusiasm for continual improvement and involvement.
REFERENCES


