

## Total Quality Management and Performance of Medium Enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis Benue State

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**Abstract:** This study determined the effect of Total Quality Management Practices on Performance of Medium Enterprises in Benue State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study examined the effect of customer focus, process orientation, top management commitment and continuous improvement on the performance of medium enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State. The study adopted survey design, primary data and secondary data was used. The population of the study consists of 1, 255 employees of fourteen (14) registered medium enterprises that are operational in Makurdi Metropolis in Benue State. Yamane (1967), formula was used, to determine the sample size of 304 employees of medium enterprises. A Likert scale-typed questionnaire was used as the main tool for data collection and was administered to 304 respondents out of which 304 were retrieved and appropriately filled. Validity stood at 0.836, while the overall reliability index was 0.847. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (percentages, frequency, mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis) and inferential statistics (correlation and regression analysis). The hypotheses were tested using regression estimates computed with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, Version 25) at 5% level of significance or 95% confidence level. Findings revealed that Customer focus have positive/significant effect on the performance of medium enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State ( $p\text{-value} .000 < \alpha 0.05$ ). Process orientation have positive/significant effect on the performance of medium enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State ( $p\text{-value} .021 < \alpha 0.05$ ). Top management commitment have positive/significant effect on the performance of on the performance of medium enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State ( $p\text{-value} .000 < \alpha 0.05$ ), finally, continues improvement process have positive/significant effect on the performance of medium enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State ( $p\text{-value} .000 < \alpha 0.05$ ). The study concluded that adapting TQM has enabled these enterprises to achieve superior performance outcomes and position themselves for long-term success in the competitive business environment. Consequence to the findings and conclusions above, the recommended that. Consequence to the findings and conclusions above, the recommended that management of medium enterprises should emphasize the more on customer-centricity business approach that prioritizes understanding and meeting the needs, preferences and expectations of customers by conducting a regular customer satisfaction surveys to gather feedback on product/service quality, responsiveness and overall satisfaction as well as establish mechanism for collecting and analyzing customer complaints, suggestion, and preferences to identify areas for improvement.

**Keywords:** Total quality management, performance, customer focus, process orientation, top management commitment and continuous improvement

## 1.0

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the study

In today's world, organizations are facing the growing challenges from global competition and more sophisticated customers in terms of what they want and their changing needs. The ever increasing global competitive nature of the business environment has forced corporations to develop strategies to become low cost producers and to differentiate their goods and services from their competitors. Through customer focused quality programs, quality lowers the cost and will become a powerful product differentiation to customers. The increasing tide of competition, businesses must craft survival strategies. Consequently, total quality management (TQM) is one of the important issues that have generated a substantial amount of interest among managers and researchers (Nagaprasad and Yogesha, 2019). Since 1980s, TQM has been regarded as one of the effective ways for firms to improve their competitive advantage (Kriengsak and Thanh, 2017). Leading pioneers in the quality area such as Deming (1986) and Juran (1993) asserted that competitive advantage can be gained by providing quality products or services.

Total Quality Management (TQM) is a management tool, philosophy, and a set of principles which can be applied to all functions and processes of an organization to continuously improve the quality of products and services, to exceed customer satisfaction at any given period, as well as continuously reduce the cost of production (Prajogo and McDermott, 2015). Total Quality Management is generally referred to as the business process and management practices which are concerned with how to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of Medium enterprises (Mahmud and Hilmi, 2014). Organizational performance, according to Khan and Adnan (2014) is the capacity of an organization to achieve stated goals for output and profit as well as the development and progress intended by the leader or creator. Organizational performance includes achieving goals or objectives like maximum profit, high-quality products, increasing market share, lucrative financial results, and a successful development and expansion strategy (Musmuliana, 2020). Quality management seeks excellence in all aspects of business through organization wide continuous improvement, commitment by all, and customer focus. It is a firm wide management philosophy of continuously improving the quality of the products, services and processes by focusing on the customers' needs and expectations to enhance customer satisfaction and firm performance (Aletaiby *et. al.*, 2017). Rust, (2019) observed that, financial performance of organizations can be increased by improving quality performance. Their study showed that organizations whose principles relate to quality are guided by focus on value created for customer.

A study on total quality management practices on operational performance of a large number of manufacturing companies in California revealed that their relationship between TQM practice and organizational performance is significant in a cross-sectional sense, but not all of the categories of TQM practice were particularly strong predictors of performance. The categories of leadership, management of people and customer focus were the strongest significant predictors of operational performance (Corredor and Goñi 2018). Several studies on total quality management and performance of medium enterprise were conducted in Kenya, (Bahri, 2012 and Saad, 2014). It was evident that the adoption of TQM measures such leadership and top management commitment, strategic planning, empowerment, teamwork, continuous improvement, and customer and employee satisfaction leads to sustained improvements in organizational performance.

In Nigeria, the impact of total quality management in enhancing Medium enterprises productivity has been established by numerous researchers such as Abdulrahman (2022); Mahmoud (2022) and Princewill, and Godwin (2021). Nevertheless, existing research work argued that the level at which Medium enterprises in Nigeria adopts total quality management practices is relatively low as compared to their counterparts in developed and developing countries which is obvious in their level of performance and survival. This indicates that the adoption and implementation of total quality management practices by these Medium enterprises have not reached the desired level. In addition, existing studies in Nigeria have revealed insufficient explanation as whether the adoption of all the total quality management measures can influence Medium enterprises performance in Benue State, Nigeria (Shahid *et al.* 2019). In other for Medium enterprises in Nigeria to grow, it is important that they adapt the implementation of adequate total management practices that will enhance their performance in the study area hence, the need for this study. It is alongside this background that this study seeks to determine total quality management practices on performance of Medium enterprises in Benue state, Nigeria.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

In the increasingly competitive business environment in Benue State, medium enterprises face significant challenges in maintaining and improving their performance. Total Quality Management (TQM) has been recognized as a pivotal strategy for enhancing the performance and competitiveness of businesses (Winkler, 2022). However, the specific impact of TQM practices on medium enterprises in Makurdi remains underexplored. This has made businesses to established management policies and rendered conventional methods of products / services development and delivery outdated such as establishment of fundamental principle of TQM that emphasizes understanding and meeting customer needs and expectations, identification, management, and improvement of business processes to achieve better efficiency and effectiveness involvement of top management and fostering a culture of continuous improvement to help SMEs adapt to changing market conditions by achieving a desired result with the least amount of resources possible, completing tasks or projects within the set time frame and successfully reaching intended outcomes and objectives.

Issues of prioritizing the needs and satisfaction of customers, emphasizing on the importance of business processes in achieving organizational goals, ensuring active and sustained involvement of senior leaders in driving organizational success as well as adopting ongoing effort to enhance products/services/processes have created some alarm on the state of total quality management among medium enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis. However, despite the prevalence of TQM in organizations especially Medium enterprises in particular, few studies have been carried out on TQM and performance of these enterprise in Nigeria (Kari *et al.* 2023; Afodigbueokwu 2022; Mahmoud 2022). Also, previous studies including (Daniel *et al.* 2022; Winkler, 2022) used different dimensions of total quality management and most studies were carried out in the banking sector organizations (Gezew 2022; Abdulrahman 2022; Kashif and Satirenjit 2022). To fill the identified gap, this study is carried out to examine the effect of total quality management on performance of medium enterprises in Makurdi metropolis, Benue State, Nigeria.

## **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The aim of the study is to determine the effect of Total Quality Management on performance of Medium Enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State. The specific objectives of the study are to:

- i. determine the effect of customer focus on the performance of medium enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State;

- ii. determine the effect of process orientation on the performance of medium enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State;
- iii. determine the effect of top management commitment on the performance of medium enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State; and
- iv. determine the effect of continuous improvement process on the performance of medium enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State.

#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The study on relationship between total quality management and performance of medium enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State shall be of immense importance to the stakeholders as the study unveils the effect of total quality management measures to the stake holders and provide the management with a deeper understanding of the need for and appropriate TQM measure required to be adopted. Employees of these firms will focus on quality management and continuous improvement, so as to establish and uphold cultural values that create long-term success for both customers and the organization. For academicians as well as the researchers, the study serves as a reference material for literature review by academicians in the field of study.

In pursuance of the stated objectives, the study is divided in to five major components. Having addressed the first part of the components which is introduction, part two focuses on review of related literature covering the theoretical, concepts of TQM and performance of medium enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State. The third section is on methodology employed in carrying out the study. Component four is on results and discussion of findings, component five provides the conclusion and recommendations accordingly. The results and recommendations of the study would contribute towards the unveiling of the contributions of TQM on performance of medium enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State.

## **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

This section describes the theoretical framework, conceptual framework and review of related empirical studies.

### **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework of this study is anchored on Deming theory because William Edward asserted that organizations that focused on improving quality would automatically reduce costs while those that focused on reducing cost would automatically reduce quality and actually increase costs as a result which is one of the primary objectives of Medium enterprises.

#### **2.1.1 Deming Theory**

Deming theory was propounded by Deming in the 1951. He is known as the father of the total quality management movement. The theory was based on the fourteen (14) points of management to assist organizations enhance their product and service quality which are the creation of constancy of objectives and purposes by developing a long term continuous strategy to improve the product and service, adoption of the new philosophy by everyone in the organization, understanding the purpose of inspection to improve the process and cost of quality and where appropriate reliance on mass inspection should be eradicated, discontinuing the system of awarding business on pricing alone but on quality, constant improvement of the system to ensure quality, productivity and cost reduction, instituting new training methods for employees to ensure effective job performance, instituting new and modern ways of supervision to implement the quality philosophy, eradicating fear by encouraging open communication between the employees and the management, breaking all barriers both internally and externally

to foster teamwork, cooperation and unity, eliminating exhortations by making tools, techniques and methods available before asking for a higher level of productivity, eliminating numerical quotas and management by objectives, preventing loss of pride in workmanship by removing restrictions such as ineffective machineries, inadequate trainings, disciplinary supervision and so on that deprive workers of being proud of the job, training and education for everyone to meet the changes in the requirements of the organization and establishing a structure that will execute the philosophy of quality and continuous improvement.

However, the theory helps in guiding the organization on expanding quality control from production to all the departments in an organization and expanding quality control from workers to management and indeed expanding quality control to cover all the operations and processes in an organization. It is on the basis of these theoretical arguments that the three most popular and widely recognized TQM were birthed, which are customer focus, continuous improvement and teamwork. Deming theory have been criticized by Stevenson, (2012) that it concentrates too much on quality while failing to consider other important objectives and may result to conflict of the program with the strategies and plans of the organization.

## **2.2 Conceptual framework**

This section presents a comprehensive clarification of the concepts used in this study as well as in the form they are used. The aim here is to lay a foundation for clear understanding of the study.

### **2.2.2 Total Quality Management**

Quality may be defined as an acknowledged standard for everything, whether it is a product, a material, or a person. Because of the complexities of today's business environment and results, preventative and customer-focused procedures are required to produce service or an actual quality product from a comprehensive plan of strategy (Nagaprasad and Yogesha, 2019). The approach of total quality management (TQM) explains the quality of the services and procedures of all the individuals required in the development and use of services by businesses, employees, and suppliers, requiring management and customers to continue to meet the expectations of the customers (Kriengsak and Thanh, 2017). Ali and Shastri (2020) further elaborated it by defining TQM as doing things right, improving continuously, fulfilling customers' needs and making quality the responsibility of every employee. TQM is an extensive approach because it starts from the top management, the suppliers, down to all the employees in the organization. From reviewed literature, there are principles that make up the concept of TQM and they are team work, customer focus, employee involvement, training, competitive benchmarking, continuous improvement and so on and the benefits that will be derived from using TQM include increase in revenue, increase in organization's goodwill, increase in market share to mention just a few.

Farooq, *et al.* (2017) described TQM as the art of arranging the entire to attain excellence. According to Addae -Korankye (2019), TQM is a search for excellence that guarantees the proper attitudes and controls are established to prevent faults and promote customer satisfaction through high effectiveness and efficiency. Ngambi and Nkemkifu (2019) defined it as a concept that focuses on continual improvement of an organization's processes in addition to the quality of the goods and services that those processes produce. TQM may be derived from these definitions as an idea that assures customer satisfaction by delivering quality via the efforts and participation of everyone in the company (Murad and Rajesh, 2020). TQM is based on a set of principles, which have been examined in many publications. They include teamwork, top management leadership/commitment, customer focus, employee involvement,

continuous improvement, tool, training, team approach, champion, quality at the source, competitive benchmarking (Stevenson, 2022).

### **2.2.2 Dimensions of Total Quality Management**

Agarwal, *et al.* (2022), postulated the following dimensions of total quality management used in this study which includes; customer focus, process orientation top management commitment and continuous improvement process as discussed below:

**i. Customer Focus Orientation:** Customer focus stresses the importance of organizations' delivering products and services that satisfy their consumers' needs and expectations. In this case, both internal and external customers are served by this company. The external customers are the general public, whereas the internal customers are the organization's workforce (Ali and Shastri, 2020). A central core value in TQM is that all products and processes should always have a customer focus. Quality should be valued by the customers and should always be put in relation to their needs and expectations (Nagaprasad and Yogesha, 2019). Despite the fact that TQM places a heavy focus on external consumers, internal customers should also be satisfied (Najafabadi, *et al.*, 2018). Customer focus is the set of beliefs that puts the customer's interest first, which does not exclude those of all other stakeholders such as owners, managers and employees, in order to develop a long-term profitability" (Nwokah and Maclayton, 2017). The philosophy of customer focus in a TQM system emphasis serving the external customers by understanding their expectations and offering targeted products and services accordingly (Sadikoglu and Olcay, 2017). The whole essence of the TQM philosophy regarding customer focus is to satisfy customer needs (Adediran and Adediran, 2018). Customer focus determines the direction and nature of the production system, which ultimately produces high quality and reliable products and services to meet customer needs (Zehir and Sadikoglu, 2021).

**ii. Process Orientation:** Process management is defined as the process of planning and administering the activities necessary to achieve a high level of performance in key organizational processes and identifying opportunities for improving quality and operational performance, and ultimately, customer satisfaction (Evans, and Lindsay, 2018). Common organizations processes include acquiring customer needs; strategic planning; conducting research and development; purchasing; developing new product or service; fulfilling customer expectations; managing information; measuring and analysing performance and training employees. In order to improve quality, many organizations have created quality teams that are required to develop specific plans and set goals that will have a measurable impact on an organization's key area of customer satisfaction (Al-Damen, 2017). The focus should be on how best to design, manage and improve processes in order to fully satisfy, and generate increasing value for customers and other stakeholders (Otunga, 2017). Process orientation dimension of TQM maintains that quality programmes should not be portrayed as a definite end-point but as a process, a process that involves a constant examination of the technical and administrative processes in search of better methods (Adediran and Adediran, 2018). As a strategic variable, TQM philosophy seeks to address the needs of customers through continuous process "improvement efforts at all organizational levels and functions by involving all the stakeholders" (Jabeen *et al.*, 2019). Process orientation refers to desire for continuous improvement in all aspects of the organizational life and searching for a never ending improvement in the process of delivering value to the customers.

### **iii. Top Management Commitment**

The definition of commitment is a force that binds an individual to a course of action of relevance to one or more targets (Meyer and Herscovitch, 2021). Executive commitment as argued by Hambrick, *et al.*

(1993), depicts a commitment that top managers have towards a course of action, which they refer to it as a trajectory. Learning from the arguments by Ghemawat (2019), this study considers top management commitment as the persistence of strategies that top-level managers of Medium enterprises show in the entrepreneurial process. Theoretical arguments have indicated that executive leadership and indirectly executive commitment is the most important TQM dimension that has the most Effect on organizational performance (Harrington and Williams, 2018). Top management commitment is paramount in the implementation of total quality management (Alamutu, *et al.* 2022) since they are responsible for training the rest of the organization on the necessity of TQM. Most implementation of organizational changes, providing leadership and training requests are approved by the top management (Mehra, *et al.*, 2021). For TQM implementation to be successful, top management should champion its implementation by providing leadership and engage all employees in the work of satisfying the customer with a continuously improved quality. This means that continuous improvement should be practiced everywhere in the processes and that the involvement of all employees at every level should be facilitated. Secondly, the work is based on the skills and participation of every employee and his or her understanding of what are required. Top management should champion training of all the employees to provide the knowledge needed on the mission, vision, direction, and strategy of the organization as well as the skills they need to implement TQM and resolve problems. (Witjaksono, 2022).

**iv. Continuous Improvement Process:** Continuous process improvement refers to desire for continuous improvement in all aspects of the organizational life and searching for a never ending improvement in the process of delivering value to the customers. As argued by Bayo and Harcourt (2020) by improving organizational processes, “organizations will be able to generate innovation, improve internal and external processes, meet customers’ expectations and create precious value to all stakeholders.” Therefore, continuous process improvements should not just continuous but should also cover all aspects of organizational life in such a way as to ensure legitimacy by all and sundry. As argued by Escrig-Tena (2018) for continuous process improvement to be successful, top management, human resource management and efficient information system is paramount. Bhuiyan and Baghel (2018), define continuous improvement as a culture of unrelenting improvements. Marin-Garcia, Val and Martin (2019), refer to continuous improvement as a tool for sustaining and enhancing competitiveness. Continuous improvement can be defined as an unceasing effort to enhance products, services or processes (Mudhafar, *et al.*, 2020). The benefits that continuous improvement can bring to an organisation include: waste reduction enhanced quality/performance (Goh, 2020) enhanced customer satisfaction and increased employee commitment (Taylor and Hirst, 2021). Furthermore, an avalanche of scholars submitted that the benefits continuous improvement can bring to an organisation include: reduction of waste, provision of a healthy workplace, ideas and suggestions coming from the employees who are closer to the actual work done, improved performance/quality, low capital investment, improved customer satisfaction and increased employee commitment (Temponi, 2021). Continuous improvements help organisations progress towards an optimal production process. The intent is to revisit the improved process to ensure the proper implementation of the change, to address any variation, and to look for additional means of improving the process (Deranek, *et al.*, 2017).

### **2.2.3 Performance of Medium Enterprises**

Performance is the output of the firm’s operations or achievements of firm’s goals (Mehmood *et al.*, 2018). Organizational performance captures the measure that is used to evaluate and assess the success of an organization to create and deliver value to its external as well as its internal customers (Bayo and Harcourt, 2020). As argued by Rolstadas (2018), organizational performance is a complex relationship involving seven performance criteria that must exist for such an organization to be regarded as successful. These

criteria include effectiveness, efficiency, quality, and productivity, quality of work, innovation and profitability. In other words, performance of Medium enterprises could be conceptualized as the metric that is used to quantify both the efficiency and effectiveness of actions (Neely, *et al.*, 2019), of managers or owners of Medium enterprises in their entrepreneurial task. It is therefore, all the factors that contribute to the achievement of the strategic objectives of Medium enterprises. In this study, Medium enterprises performance is defined as the ability of an organization to produce the desired output that customers are willing to buy at a reduced cost. An organization is said to have performed when it produces the right goods or services through its members and at the same time improves the profitability, return on investment and market share of the organization. Medium enterprises performance is measured using profitability, customer satisfaction and market share.

#### **2.2.4 Measures of Performance**

This study adopts performance dimensions (service / Product quality, effectiveness and efficiency) adopted by postulated by Musmuliana (2020), because he found in his study that they help leaders at every level to set targets, track their impact, and provide accountability to stakeholders.

**i. Service/Product Quality:** Service quality is a measure of how an organization delivers its services compared to the expectations of its customers (Musmuliana, 2020). Customers purchase services as a response to specific needs. They either consciously or unconsciously have certain standards and expectations for how a company's delivery of services fulfills those needs. The concept of service/product quality encompasses the characteristics and attributes that determine the ability of a product or service to meet or exceed customer expectations. It is a critical aspect of business success and customer satisfaction (Everard and Burrow, 2021). They added that ensuring high quality in products and services requires continuous improvement processes, customer feedback mechanisms, and adherence to quality standards and regulations. This leads to increased customer satisfaction, loyalty, and competitive advantage. To Fandom, (2017), product quality refers to how well a product satisfies customer needs, serves its purpose and meets industry standards. When evaluating product quality, businesses consider several key factors, including whether a product solves a problem, works efficiently or suits customers' purposes.

**ii. Effectiveness:** The concept of effectiveness refers to the degree to which an intended outcome is achieved. It measures the success of an action, process, or strategy in reaching its goals or objectives (Musmuliana, 2020). Effectiveness is a key metric in various fields, including business, healthcare, education, and personal productivity. Mahmud, *et al.* (2019) opined that effectiveness is about doing the right things to achieve desired outcomes. It involves setting clear goals, measuring progress, and ensuring that the actions taken are relevant, impactful, and sustainable.

**iii. Efficiency:** According to Schermerhorn *et al.* (2017), viewed efficiency as something that has useful effect. Efficiency is the ability to act or produce effectively with a minimum of waste, expenditure or unnecessary effort. The focus is on the resources and speed with which organisational goals are achieved. Drucker (1974) asserted that efficiency means 'doing things in the right way'. Efficiency is measured by output, which is the quality of work done over a given time (Everard and Burrow, 2021). Efficiency is a measure of the ability to minimize unnecessary effort, resources and expenditures (Cole, 2017). Cole further asserted that efficiency is concerned with the way resources are used and the time spent to achieve specific organizational goals. Employees that are efficient are able to achieve more using fewer resources. An efficient employee is productive, and they know how to organize their time and effort in order to complete daily tasks (Everard and Burrow, 2021).



### **2.3 Review of Related Empirical Studies**

The review of related empirical studies for this study shall be done based on research objectives as follows;

Kari *et al.* (2023), investigated the soft total quality management (soft TQM) dimensions that affect the environmental and social sustainability of Finnish small and medium-sized enterprises considering the companies' business, size, and possible certificates as control variables. The study specifically determined total quality management dimension, ascertain the level of implementation of detailed issues, the survey was constructed and sent to 6889 randomly selected CEOs in autumn 2020. A total of 271 responses were received. Based on prior literature and studies, 10 hypotheses were proposed. The collected data were analysed using regression analysis. The results reveal that two practices business management systems and human resources (HR) practices were related to environmental sustainability, while only business management system was related to social sustainability. None of the control variables affected environmental sustainability; however, the industrial sector influenced social sustainability. The study presents recommendations for company managers and the government to support sustainable development, especially in Finnish Medium enterprises. This study focused on sustainability and not the overall performance of the medium enterprises which create gap for this study.

A study by Daniel *et al.* (2022), on influence of total quality management in performance of small and medium enterprises in animal feed manufacturing in Kenya. The study adopted cross-sectional research design and target population was 65 animal feed manufacturing Medium enterprises in Kenya. The study conducted a census approach. The unit of analysis was 65 managers/CEO and directors. The data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The study findings revealed customer orientation had a statistically significant influence on performance of small and medium animal feed manufacturing enterprises in Kenya. Managers and marketing officers of small and medium enterprises in animal feed manufacturing in Kenya should be encouraged to adopt and embark on market orientation practices, for instance; addressing customer needs and wants promptly and also implement innovative practices so as to maximize performance. The prior study was conducted in Kenya using animal feed manufacturing firms and the result may not be applicable to firms in Nigeria. The population of the study is too small and may not produce a reliable result that can be generalized. This create the gap for this study.

Silima *et al.* (2021), analysed the impact of TQM in Medium enterprises' daily operations. The specific objectives where to study the effects of TQM adoption on the performance of Medium enterprises; Clarify the extent of TQM adoption by South African Medium enterprises; and finally Outline an understanding of the TQM principles which enterprises in South Africa consider important. The study followed a quantitative approach with a purposive sample of 210 Medium enterprises located in the Maboneng district in South Africa was studied. Data collection was done using questionnaires while data were analyzed using SPSS 25, where measures of central tendencies such as the mean and the average were calculated. Fundamental descriptive analysis has been used to portray the findings of the study. Results showed that many Medium enterprises adopt TQM as a production philosophy even though not all components of TQM are appropriately applied. However, most businesses do not see the need to involve the employees in all aspects of the production, especially if they do not understand the production process. Thus, this Practice is self-contradictory to the philosophy of TQM. The prior study was conducted on Medium enterprises in Johannesburg, however, the findings of the study might not be applicable Medium enterprises in Nigeria. Thus, creates a gap for this study.

Mukhlis and Dudi (2020), analysed the Effect of Quality Management System Implementation on Corporate Performance through Competitive Advantage: A Study at PT. Persada Engineering and Contracting. The aim of the study is to examine the effect of customer focus, supplier focus, process

management, quality assurance, competitive advantage on corporate performance. This study adopts a quantitative approach with the type of explanatory research. The population of this study is 53 employees. The sample method used (probability sampling) and the sampling techniques was simple random sampling. Through the Structural Equation Model (SEM) approach with measurement model using the Smart PLS program version 3.2.8. The results showed that Customer focus has a positive effect on the corporate performance, Supplier focus has a positive and insignificant effect on the corporate performance, Process management has a positive effect on the corporate performance, Quality assurance has a positive effect on the corporate performance, Competitive advantage has a positive effect on the corporate performance, Consumer focus has a positive and insignificant effect on the corporate performance through competitive advantage, Supplier focus has a positive and insignificant effect on the corporate performance through competitive advantage, Process management has a positive and insignificant effect on the corporate performance through competitive advantage, Quality assurance has a positive effect on corporate performance through competitive advantage. This study was conducted in Jawa Barat, Indonesia and the findings might not be applicable to Medium enterprises in Benue State Nigeria. This creates the Gap for this study.

Asenge *et al.* (2019), explored the effect of total quality management on performance of deposit money banks in Nigeria. The study specifically examined the effect of top management commitment and process management on the performance of deposit money banks in Nigeria using 32 management staff of selected banks in Makurdi metropolis. Using regression analysis, the authors found that top management commitment, customer focus and process management all have a significant positive effect on the performance of deposit money banks in Nigeria. However, the studies of Asenge *et al.*, only studied two dimensions of TQM. The population size of the study was also too small and may not produce a reliable result that can be generalized.

### **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted survey design, primary data and secondary data was used. The population of the study consists of 1, 255 employees of fourteen (14) registered medium enterprises that are operational in Makurdi Metropolis in Benue State. Yamane (1967) formula was used, to determine the sample size of 304 employees of medium enterprises. A Likert scale-typed questionnaire was used as the main tool for data collection and was administered to 304 respondents out of which 304 were retrieved and appropriately filled. Validity stood at 0.836, while the overall reliability index was 0.847. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (percentages, frequency, mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis) and inferential statistics (correlation and regression analysis). The hypotheses were tested using regression estimates computed with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, Version 25) at 5% level of significance or 95% confidence level. A multiple regression model was employed to determine whether a set of independent variables (customer focus, process orientation, top management commitment and continuous improvement process) together predict the dependent factor (performance) of medium enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State. In keeping with the research objectives, research questions and hypotheses, the implicit model of the study takes the following form: In this study Medium enterprises performance is given as a function of Total Quality Management. The implicit form of the regression model is expressed thus:

$$P = f(TQM) \tag{2}$$

$$P = f(CTF+PRO+TMC+CIP) \tag{3}$$

Where;

P = Performance (dependent variable)

TQM = Total Quality Management (independent variable)

P = performance of Medium enterprises

CTF = Customer Focus

PRO =Process Orientation

TMC = Top Management Commitment

CIP = continuous Improvement Process

The explicit form of the model can be stated thus:

$$Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + b_4X_4 + e \quad (4)$$

Where:

Y is the Performance

a = constant

$\beta$  is the model's constant,

$\beta_1$  to  $\beta_4$  are the model's coefficients

e = error term

In this study, both descriptive statistics (percentages, frequency counts and mean values) and inferential statistics (regression analysis) were employed for data analysis. While descriptive statistics were focused on assessing the respondents' characteristics and responses to study questions, inferential statistics was used for test of hypotheses. Multiple Regression analysis was used to test the three hypotheses in order to determine the effect of TQM on performance of Medium Enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State. These analytical tools were computed using a computer-based Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. The Multiple Regression Analysis technique aids in determining the extent of the influence exerted by the independent variables on the dependent variable. Furthermore, the research hypotheses formulated were tested through the use of t-statistic at a significance level of 5% (0.05), allowing for an evaluation of the statistical significance of the findings. **Decision rule:** The following decision rule will be used for accepting or rejecting hypotheses. If the p -value (sig.) is greater than 0.05 ( $p > 0.05$ ), the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) will be accepted. However, if the p -value (sig.) is less than 0.05 ( $p < 0.05$ ) the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) will be rejected and the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) will be accepted.

**4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

This section deals with data presentation and analysis, test of hypotheses and discussion of findings.

**4.1.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

Table 3 present demographic characteristics of respondents cutting across work experience and educational qualification.

**4.1.2 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

This section provides the details of demographic characteristics of the respondents. The respondents who participated in the study were required to indicate their gender, work experience and educational qualification.

**Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	186	61.2
Female	118	38.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Work Experience (years)</b>		
1-5	54	17.6
6-10	88	29.4
11-15	133	43.5
16-20	29	9.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Highest Educational Level</b>		
SSCE	55	18.1
ND/NCE	99	32.6
HND/First Degree	127	41.8
Higher Degree	23	7.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2023.*

The results presented in Table 1 presents data on shows gender of the respondents, result shows that 61.2 percent were male respondents while 38.8 percent were female respondents. This shows that majority of the respondents are male respondent. This could be that majority of male respondents would allow for more robust analysis of the male perspective within the organization. The result further revealed that

respondents between 1-5 years were 17.6 percent, 29.4 percent have worked from 6-10 years, 43.5 percent have worked from 11-15 years, and 9.4 percent have worked from 16-20 years. This implies that majority have operated/ managed the businesses for a reasonable period of time have the necessary knowledge and experienced about their work and are qualified to provide information for the purpose of this study. Finally, the Table shows that 18.1 percent were SSCE holders, 41.8 percent were ND/NCE holder, 41.8 percent B.Sc./HND holders, and 7.6 percent were higher degree holders. This indicates that the respondents were highly educated, and experienced about their working environment and fit to participate in the study.

**4.1.3 Frequency Distribution of Responses**

**i. Customer Focus**

In order to determine the effect of customer focus on the performance of medium enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State, frequency tables of respondents were presented with questions and the responses are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Descriptive statistics on customer focus of Medium enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State**

Variables	SA (%)	A (%)	NS (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Total
Your organization keeps customers above all your business decisions.	57 (18.8)	222 (73)	25 (8.2)	-	-	304 (100)
Been customer focused helps achieve faster revenue growth than competitors.	91 (29.9)	188 (61.8)	25 (8.2)	-	-	304 (100)
Customer focus dimension helps to retain and maintain more customers.	78 (25)	203 (66.8)	25 (8.2)	-	-	304 (100)
It helps to Build relationships with customers.	213 (70.1)	66 (21.7)	25 (8.2)	-	-	304 (100)
Our market share improved since the organization upgrade due to enhanced customer focus and satisfaction.	38 (12.5)	224 (74)	25 (8.2)	16 (5.3)	-	304 (100)

Source: Computation of Field Result, (2023)

Analysis in Table 2 shows that 18.8 percent of the respondents strongly agree and 73 percent agreed that organization keeps customers above all your business decisions while 8.2 percent were not sure. The Table

also shows that 29.9 percent strongly agreed and 61.8 percent agreed that been customer focused helps achieve faster revenue growth than competitors while only 8.2 percent were not sure. Similarly, Table 2 reveals that 78 percent strongly agreed and 66.8 percent agreed that customer focus dimension helps to retain and maintain more customers, only 8.2 percent were not sure in their response. In the same vein, Table 4 further revealed that 213.5 percent strongly agreed, 21.7 percent agreed that been customer focus helps to Build relationships with customers, while only 8.2 percent were not sure. Finally, Table 2 shows that 12.5 percent strongly agreed, 74 percent agreed 8.5 percent were not sure, while 5.3 percent of the respondents disagreed that been customer focus help their market share improved since the organization upgrade due to enhanced customer focus and satisfaction.

**ii. Customer Focus**

In order to assess respondents’ views process orientation of Medium enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State, respondents were presented with sets of questions and the responses are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Descriptive statistics on process orientation of Medium enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>NS</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>(%)</b>	<b>(%)</b>	<b>(%)</b>	<b>(%)</b>	<b>(%)</b>	
The organizational leadership have well spelt direction for process of activities in the organization.	103 (33.9)	160 (52.6)	18 (5.9)	23 (7.6)	-	304 (100)
The directives to process helps to identify the most efficient and productive way to meet customer and community need.	107 (35.2)	154 (50.7)	19 (6.3)	15 (4.9)	9 (3.0)	304 (100)
Process orientation helps to improve efficiency and timeliness by reducing the number of hours or the number of machines in a manufacturing process.	91 (29.9)	188 (61.8)	25 (8.2)	-	-	304 (100)
Process orientation helps to improve accuracy by ensuring that Defects-Per-Million-Opportunities (DPMOP across the process’s value stream.	91 (29.9)	188 (61.8)	55 (8.2)	-	-	304 (100)
Process orientation helps Medium enterprises to ensure better customers satisfaction by identifying the number of variations that your customers are experiencing, what is causing these variations and finally how the number of dissatisfied customers can be reduced.	118 (38.8)	161 (53)	5 (1.6)	16 (5.3)	4 (1.3)	304 (100)

Source: Computation of Field Result, (2023)

Investigation from Table 3 shows that 33.9 percent of the respondents strongly agree, 52 percent agreed, that the organizational leadership have well spelt direction for process of activities in the organization. While 5% were not sure, 7.6 percent disagreed. It shows that majority agreed with the statement. The Table also shows that 35.2 percent strongly agreed 50.7 percent agreed that The directives to process helps to identify the most efficient and productive way to meet customer and community need, 6.3 percent where not sure, 4.9 percent disagreed and 3 percent strongly disagreed. Implying that majority agreed. Similarly, Table 3 reveals that 29.9 percent strongly agreed and 61.8 percent agreed that Process orientation helps to improve efficiency and timeliness by reducing the number of hours or the number of machines in a manufacturing process, while 8.2 percent were not sure. This shows that majority of the respondent agreed. In the same vein, Table 5 shows that 29.9percent strongly agreed and 61.8 percent agreed that process orientation helps to improve accuracy by ensuring that Defects-Per-Million-Opportunities (DPMOP across the process's value stream. About 8.2 percent were not sure. This indicates that majority of respondents agreed. Lastly, Table 3 shows that 38.8 percent strongly agreed, 53 percent strongly agreed that process orientation helps Medium enterprises to ensure better customers satisfaction by identifying the number of variations that your customers are experiencing, what is causing these variations and finally how the number of dissatisfied customers can be reduced, while 1.6 percent were not sure of their response, 5.3 percent disagreed and 1.3 percent of the respondent strongly disagreed. This clearly indicates that majority of the respondents agreed.

### **iii. Top Management Commitment**

In order to assess respondents' views on top management commitment of Medium enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State, respondents were presented with sets of questions and the responses are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4: Descriptive statistics on top management commitment of Medium enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>NS</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>(%)</b>	<b>(%)</b>	<b>(%)</b>	<b>(%)</b>	<b>(%)</b>	
Top management personal involvement in total quality improvement will increase profitability in achieving its stated goals effectively	57 (18.8)	209 (68.8)	21 (6.9)	17 (5.6)	-	304 (100)
Your organization has a sound quality policy that is supported by plans and facilities to implement it.	83 (27.3)	196 (64.5)	9 (3.0)	16 (5.3)	-	304 (100)
Sound quality policies by top executive of your organization enhance high level of organizational performance.	106 (34.9)	173 (56.9)	9 (3.0)	16 (5.3)	-	304 (100)
Top management commitment boost workforce moral leading to boost productivity.	67 (22)	212 (69.)	25 (8.2)	-	-	304 (100)
Top management commitment leads to reduced customer complaints due to the implementation of its strategic quality plan which is entrenched in its vision statement.	74 (24.3)	205 (67.4)	14 (4.6)	11 (3.6)	-	304 (100)

*Source: Computation of Field Result, (2023)*

Data in Table 4 reveals that 18.8 percent of the respondents agree and 68.9 percent strongly agreed top management personal involvement in total quality improvement will increase profitability in achieving its stated goals effectively. About 6.9 percent of the respondents were not sure, and 5.6 percent disagreed. This implies that majority agreed. The Table also shows that 27.3 percent strongly agreed and 64.5 percent agreed that their organization has a sound quality policy that is supported by plans and facilities to implement it, while 3 percent were not sure, 5.3 percent disagreed. In the same vein, Table 4 shows that 34/9 percent strongly agreed and 56.9 percent agreed that sound quality policies by top executive of your organization enhance high level of organizational performance, while 3 percent respondents were not sure, 5.3 percent respondents totally disagreed. This result implies that majority of the respondents in the study area agreed. Again, Table 4 shows that 22 percent and 69.7 percent of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that Top management commitment boost workforce moral leading to boost productivity, while 8.2 were not sure. Implying that most of the respondent agreed. Finally, Table 4 show that 24.3 percent and 67.4 percent of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that Top management commitment boost workforce moral leading to boost productivity, 14, percent of the total respondents were not sure, and only 3.6 percent respondents disagreed. This shows that most of the respondents agreed.



**iv. Continuous Improvement Process**

In order to assess respondents' views on Continuous improvement process of Medium enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State, respondents were presented with sets of questions and the responses are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5: Descriptive statistics on continuous improvement process of Medium enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State**

Variables	SA	A	NS	D	SD	Total
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	
Continues improvement process has been absolutely vital to the success of Total Quality Management in your organization	105 (34.)	165 (54.)	14 (4.6)	20 (6.6)	-	304 (100)
Our organization is keen about creativity and innovativeness.	101 (33.)	169 (55.)	29 (9.5)	5 (1.6)	-	304 (100)
Continuous process helps to improve accuracy by ensuring. Defects-Per-Million-Opportunities (DPMOP) across the process's value stream.	73 (24)	212 (69.7)	19 (6.3)	-	-	304 (100)
Our employees are highly committed to quality improvement	73 (24)	206 (67)	25 (8.2)	-	-	304 (100)
It helps to identify and eliminate fault (s) in work flow and will free workers from fixing defects and focus on working out details that will really make the difference	87 (28.3)	193 (63.5)	25 (8.2)	-	-	304 (100)

*Source: Computation of Field Result, (2023)*

Information from table 5 shows that 34.5 percent of the respondents strongly agreed, 54.3 percent agreed that continues improvement process has been absolutely vital to the success of Total Quality Management in your organization. However, about 4.6 percent respondents were not sure, while 6.6 percent respondents disagreed, indicating that majority of the respondents agreed. Result from Table 5 further revealed that 33.2 percent strongly agreed and 55.6 percent agreed that their organization is keen about creativity and innovativeness, while 9.5 percent were not sure, 1.6 percent respondents disagreed. This implies that majority of the respondents agreed. Similarly, Table 5 revealed that 24 percent respondents and 55.6 percent respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that continuous process helps to improve accuracy by ensuring. Defects-Per-Million-Opportunities (DPMOP) across the process's value stream, only 6.3 percent were not sure. This implies that majority agreed. In

the same vain, 24 percent of respondents strongly agreed that their employees are highly committed to quality improvement, 67 percent agreed and about 8.2 percent were not sure. Implying that most of the respondents agreed. Finally, result in table 5 shows that 28.3 percent of the respondent strongly agreed, 63.5 percent agreed that continuous process improvement helps them to identify and eliminate fault (s) in work flow and will free workers from fixing defects and focus on working out details that will really make the difference, 8.2 percent were not sure. This result shows that majority of the respondents agreed.

**Table 6: Descriptive statistics on performance of medium enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State**

Variables	SA (%)	A (%)	NS (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Total
Customers satisfaction can be enhanced by been customer focused.	100 (32.9)	179 (58.9)	25 (8.2)	-	-	304 (100)
Profitability of our organization can be achieved through process orientation.	114 (37.5)	171 (56.3)	16 (5.3)	3 (1)		304 (100)
Market share can enhance through Top management commitment.	112 (36.8)	167 (54.9)	10 (3.3)	7 (2.3)	8 (2.6)	304 (100)
High turnover can be improved through continues improvement process.	92 (30.3)	187 (61.5)	7 (2.3)	18 (5.9)	-	304 (100)
Medium enterprises performance can be achieved through total quality management.	99 (32.6)	180 (59.2)	10 (3.3)	10 (3.3)	5 (1.6)	304 (100)

*Source: Computation of Field Result, (2023)*

Descriptive statistics from Table 6 on performance of Medium enterprises shows that 32.9 percent of the respondents strongly agreed that customers satisfaction is enhanced by been customer focused, 58.9 percent strongly agreed, 8.2 disagreed. Indicating that majority of the respondent agreed. Table 6 also shows that 37.8 percent strongly agreed and 56.3 percent agreed that pprofitability of our organization can be achieved through process orientation, while 5.3 percent were not sure, only 1 percent disagreed. Similarly, 36.8 percent of the respondent strongly agreed, that market share can enhance through Top management commitment, 54.9 percent agreed, 3.3 percent were not sure, 2.3 percent respondents disagreed and about 2.6 percent respondents strongly disagreed. This shows that majority of the respondents agreed. Furthermore, result from Tale 6 shows that 30 percent respondents strongly agreed that high turnover can be improved through continues improvement process, 61.9 percent agreed, 2.3 percent were not sure and only 5.9 percent strongly disagreed. This clearly shows that most of the respondents agreed. Lastly on Table 6, result shows that 32.6 percent respondent strongly agreed, 59.2 percent agreed, Medium enterprises performance was achieved tthrough total quality management, 3.3 percent were not sure, another 3.3 percent respondents disagreed and only 1.6 percent strongly disagreed. This result shows that majority of the respondents agreed.

**4.1.4 Regression Analysis**

This sub-section presents the outcomes of regression analysis for the model under study. The outcomes of the regression model elucidate the extent of effect of the independent variables, namely; customer focus, process orientation, top management commitment and continuous improvement process on the dependent variable, which is performance. The outcomes are presented in the form of a model summary, analysis of variance, and parameter estimates (coefficients).

**Table 7: Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.961 <sup>a</sup>	.923	.922	2.55978	1.879

a. Predictors: (Constant), CTF, PRO, TMC,CIP

b. Dependent Variable: Performance

Source: Computation of Field Survey, 2023.

**4.1.8 Model Summary**

The result from Table 7 indicates that coefficient of determination (R square) explains the variation in the dependent variable due to changes in the independent variable. The R square value of .961 is an indication that there was variation of 96.1% in the performance of small and medium enterprises in Makurdi metropolis due to changes customer focus, process orientation, continuous process orientation and top management commitment at 95% confidence interval. Also, the value of R (.826) from Table 7 revealed that there was a strong relationship between the study variables

**Table 8: ANOVA**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	98.266	4	24.566	892.419	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	8.231	299	.028		
	Total	106.497	303			

a. Dependent Variable: P

b. Predictors: (Constant), CTF+PRO+TMC+CIP

Source: SPSS Result Output, (2023)

The result from the ANOVA statistics in Table 10 indicates that the processed data, which is the population parameters, had a significance level of .000<sup>b</sup> which shows that the data is ideal for making a conclusion on the population’s parameter as the value of significance (p-value) is less than 5%. This implies customer focus, process orientation, continuous process orientation and top management significantly affect the performance of small and medium enterprises in Makurdi metropolis. The significance value was less than 0.05 which indicates that the model was statistically significant (F = 892.419, P = .000 < 0.05).

Table 9: Regression Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.651	.072		9.057	.000
	CF	.359	.037	.371	9.675	.000
	PO	.065	.028	.091	2.316	.021
	TMC	.263	.045	.325	5.884	.000
	CIO	.295	.037	.389	8.000	.000

a. Dependent Variable: PRM

**Source: SPSS Result Output, (2023)**

The regression equation shows that Medium enterprises performance = .651 + .359(customers focus) + .065 (process orientation) + .263 (Top management commitment) + .295(continues improvement orientation). The regression equation above indicated that, a unit increase in customer focus to a constant zero, affect Medium enterprises performance in Makurdi metropolis by 35.9%, whereas a unit increase in team work would affect Medium enterprises performance in Makurdi metropolis by 6.5%, a unit increase in continuous process improvement would affect Medium enterprises performance in Makurdi Metropolis by 26.3%, meanwhile, a unit increase in top management orientation would affect the Medium enterprises performance in Makurdi Metropolis by 29.5%. Based on the table 9, all independent variables (CF, PO, TMC, and CIO) are significantly related to the dependent variable (PRM) as their p-values are less than 0.05. This means that each of these variables contributes to explaining the variation in PRM. The variable with the largest standardized coefficient (Beta) is CIO, indicating that it has the strongest relationship with PRM among the independent variables. However, the unstandardized coefficients (B) provide the actual change in PRM for a one-unit change in the respective independent variable.

**4.2 Test of Hypotheses and Discussion of Findings**

Four hypothesis were stated for empirical testing in section one; under this section, the hypotheses are re-stated and empirically tested using the *t*-test statistics and *p*-value that is associated to each variable. Results in table 14 at 95%confidence level are used to test the hypotheses. The decision rule is that, if the computed *t*-statistics fall within the limit of two critical values ( $\pm 1.96$ ) accept the null hypothesis (Ho), otherwise reject the null hypothesis. Alternatively, accept the null if *p*-value is greater than 0.05.

**4.2.1 Effect of customer focus on the performance of medium enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State**

To test this hypothesis table 9, the strength of the effect of customer focus on Medium enterprises Performance in Makurdi Metropolis, was measured by the calculated *p*-value = .000 at a significance level ( $\alpha$ ) of 0.05. Since the computed *p*-value is less than the significance level ( $\alpha$ ) of 0.05 (*p*-value .000 <  $\alpha$  0.05), the null hypothesis was rejected. It is therefore concluded that customer focus on Medium enterprises Performance in Makurdi Metropolis in Benue State. This finding concords with that of Akelo (2017) who investigated total quality management practices and organisational performance in international research organisation in Kenya and found a positive relationship between customer focus

and organizational performance across various industries, they suggest that organizations that prioritize understanding and meeting customer needs tend to outperform their competitors in terms of financial performance, market share, and overall business success. Findings of this study is also in agreement with the studies of Pambreni *et al.* (2019) and Horsfall (2018) who both agrees in their study that customer focus influences organizational performance is by enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty. Research indicates that organizations that invest in building strong relationships with their customers, addressing their concerns, and delivering high-quality products or services tend to have higher levels of customer satisfaction and loyalty. The findings also concords with the findings of Chukwuemeka (2019) who found that companies in South East Nigeria with a strong customer focus tend to have higher levels of employee engagement, satisfaction, and commitment. Engaged employees are more motivated to deliver exceptional customer experiences, leading to improved organizational performance.

#### **4.2.2 Effect of process orientation on the performance of medium enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State**

Since the p-value (0.021) is less than the significance level (0.05), we reject the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ). This means we have evidence to believe that process orientation does indeed have a significant impact on SME performance in Makurdi Metropolis. The findings from this study is the same with the findings of Betinah *et al.* (2018) who found a positive and significance connection between customer focus and continuous process. The findings further concords with and investigation on the soft total quality management (soft TQM) dimensions and social sustainability of Finnish small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) considering the companies' business, size, and possible certificates as control variables by Kari *et al.* (2023) who found a positive relationship between the variables. The findings also concords with that of the studies of Daniel *et al.* (2022) on influence of total quality management in performance of small and medium enterprises in animal feed manufacturing in Kenya and Afodigbueokwu (2022) evaluated Total Quality management and organizational performance. First Bank of Nigeria Aba, was used as a case study who both agrees that organizations who adopt a process-oriented approach tend to streamline their workflows, reduce redundant activities, and eliminate bottlenecks, leading to faster cycle times, reduced costs, and higher productivity.

#### **4.2.3 Effect of top management commitment on the performance of medium enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State; and**

The magnitude of the impact of management commitment on Medium enterprises' performance in Makurdi Metropolis was assessed using the computed p-value =.000 at a significance level ( $\alpha$ ) of 0.05 in order to test hypothesis table 11. The null hypothesis was rejected because the computed p-value is less than the significance level ( $\alpha$ ) of 0.05 (p-value.000 <  $\alpha$  0.05). Thus, it can be said that management commitment affects the performance of Medium enterprises in Benue State's Makurdi Metropolis. The findings of this investigation also concords with Gezew (2022); Abdulrahman (2022); Rana *et al.* (2022); Stavros, (2021); Mukhlis and Dudi (2020); Pambreni *et al.* (2019); Betinah *et al.* (2018) the all avail that TMC is positively associated with strategic alignment within organizations. They posit that when top management is committed to organizational goals and objectives, they are more likely to communicate a clear vision, set strategic priorities, and allocate resources effectively. This strategic alignment ensures that organizational efforts are directed toward common goals, which contributes to improved performance outcomes. They posit that when top management demonstrates commitment to values such as integrity, transparency, and accountability, it sets the tone for the entire organization. A culture of trust, openness, and empowerment emerges, fostering employee engagement, motivation, and commitment. Studies show that organizations with a positive culture and climate perform better in terms of productivity, innovation, and customer satisfaction. Therefore, this study concludes that there is a positive/significant effect of top management commitment on employee performance of medium scale enterprises in Makurdi metropolis Benue state

#### **4.2.4 Effect of continues improvement process on the performance of medium enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State.**

In other to test if there is significant relationship between continuous improvement process on the performance of small and medium-sized enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis. The computed p-value of .000 indicates a very strong level of statistical significance. With a significance level ( $\alpha$ ) of 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected because the computed p-value is less than the significance level ( $p\text{-value } .000 < \alpha 0.05$ ). Therefore, it can be concluded that continuous improvement process does indeed affect the performance of Medium enterprises in Benue State's Makurdi Metropolis. This suggests that there is a significant relationship between management commitment and SME performance in this area. This finding concords with that of Gezew (2022), Kashif and Satirenjit (2022), Atieno (2018), Betinah *et al.* (2018), Horsfall (2018), Akelo (2017), Chepkech (2017), Ja'afaru *et al.* (2016) who all found that continuous improvement practices have positive impact on various performance indicators such as profitability, customer satisfaction, and market share. They further posit that implementing quality control measures, standardized work procedures, and error-proofing techniques, organizations can improve product and service quality, reduce defects and errors, and enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty.

### **5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This section presents conclusion and policy recommendations that are in line with these specific objectives of the study as well as suggestions for further studies that are considered important for the extension of the research.

#### **5.1 Conclusion**

The study concluded that Total Quality Management has had a positive and significant impact on the performance of medium enterprises in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State. By emphasizing quality, efficiency, employee involvement, and customer focus, TQM has enabled these enterprises to achieve superior performance outcomes and position themselves for long-term success in the competitive business environment.

#### **5.2 Recommendations**

Consequence to the findings and conclusions above, the following recommendations are made:

- i. Management of medium enterprises should emphasize the more on customer-centricity business approach that prioritizes understanding and meeting the needs, preferences, and expectations of customers by conducting a regular customer satisfaction surveys to gather feedback on product/service quality, responsiveness, and overall satisfaction as well as establish mechanisms for collecting and analyzing customer complaints, suggestions, and preferences to identify areas for improvement.
- ii. Management of medium scale enterprises should focus more on developing clear process orientation mapping out key business processes and identify areas for streamlining, standardization, and optimization as well as implement process improvement initiatives such as Lean Management or Six Sigma to eliminate waste, reduce variability, and improve efficiency.
- iii. Medium enterprise management should improve on top level management commitment by demonstrating visible support for TQM initiatives by actively participating in improvement projects and championing quality initiatives as well as allocate resources and budgetary support for TQM training, tools, and technology investments.
- iv. Management should improve on their ongoing effort within the organization to enhance products, services, processes, and systems incrementally over time by developing a structured

framework for continuous improvement, such as Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) or the Deming Cycle, to guide improvement efforts.

#### **5.4 Limitations of the Study**

There is no research without its inherent limitations, thus this research is not an exception. The following limitations are briefly examined as follows. To make this study a very viable one, some vital information were requested from academic staff of the university which were not willing to dedicate their time in attending to the questionnaire. However, the researcher through his persuasive ability was able to get make them respondent to the questions. This study was conducted using primary data. Thus, the findings were influenced by inherent problems with the use of primary data such as negative attitude of the respondents which culminated in poor response rate from respondents, loss of questionnaire and insincere responses from the respondents. However, the research was able to overcome these challenges by conducting a pilot test to identify and rectify any issues with your data collection instruments.

#### **5.5 Suggested Areas for Further Studies**

This study suggests the following for future researchers who might be interested to research along this path:

- i. The research limited itself to only four total quality management measures; further studies could look at other additional dimensions as they affect the performance of medium enterprise.
- ii. The study was limited to medium enterprises in Makurdi metropolis further studies can should cover all businesses in north central Nigeria for a broader generalization of findings.

#### **5.6 Contributions to Knowledge**

The study revealed that process orientation as a dimension of total quality management with a P value of 0.021 has the greatest effect on performance medium enterprises in Makurdi, Benue State Nigeria followed by customer focus orientation with P values of 0.000, continuous improvement orientation with P values of 0.000 and top management commitment with P values of 0.000.

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