

Developing a Leadership–Quality Integration Model: A Case Study of Situational Leadership and Total Quality Management among Quality Leaders at Kgalagadi Breweries Limited, Gaborone, Botswana

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ABSTRACT

Leadership and quality management are universally recognized as critical determinants of organizational effectiveness, particularly in manufacturing organizations operating in highly competitive and regulated environments. This research develops a leadership–quality integration model by examining the interaction between situational leadership behaviors and Total Quality Management (TQM) practices among quality leaders at Kgalagadi Breweries Limited (KBL), Gaborone, Botswana. Grounded in situational leadership theory and classical quality management frameworks, the study adopts a qualitative-dominant case study approach supported by extensive conceptual analysis. The paper explores how leadership adaptability influences employee readiness, quality culture, process discipline, and continuous improvement outcomes. Findings indicate that adaptive leadership behaviors significantly enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of TQM initiatives by fostering employee engagement, ownership of quality processes, and alignment with organizational goals. The study proposes a context-specific leadership–quality integration model and offers detailed managerial, theoretical, and policy implications for manufacturing organizations in emerging economies.

Keywords: *Situational leadership; Total Quality Management; Quality leadership; Organizational performance; Botswana*

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary industrial landscape, leadership and quality management have emerged as central pillars of organizational success. Manufacturing organizations across the globe are confronted with increasing pressures stemming from globalization, technological advancement, regulatory compliance, and rising customer expectations. In such an environment, the ability to consistently deliver high-quality products and services is no longer a source of competitive advantage alone but a fundamental requirement for organizational survival.

Quality failures in manufacturing organizations can result in significant financial losses, reputational damage, and regulatory sanctions. Consequently, organizations have increasingly adopted formal quality management systems and continuous improvement initiatives to enhance operational reliability and customer satisfaction. However, the effectiveness of these initiatives varies widely across organizations, suggesting that technical systems alone are insufficient to guarantee quality outcomes.

Leadership plays a decisive role in determining the success or failure of quality management initiatives. Leaders influence organizational priorities, allocate resources, shape employee attitudes, and establish behavioral norms that either support or undermine quality objectives. Without effective leadership, quality management systems often deteriorate into symbolic programs with limited practical impact.

Situational leadership theory provides a flexible and context-sensitive framework for understanding leadership effectiveness. Unlike leadership models that prescribe a single dominant style, situational leadership argues that effective leaders adapt their behaviors based on follower competence and commitment. This adaptability is particularly relevant in quality management contexts, where task complexity and employee capability vary significantly across departments and over time.

In developing economies such as Botswana, manufacturing organizations face additional challenges related to skills availability, workforce diversity, regulatory environments, and global competition. Kgalagadi Breweries Limited (KBL), headquartered in Gaborone, operates within a highly regulated beverage industry that demands strict adherence to quality, safety, and environmental standards. This organizational context provides an appropriate setting for examining how situational leadership interacts with TQM practices to influence quality outcomes.

The purpose of this study is to develop a leadership–quality integration model by examining situational leadership behaviors and TQM practices among quality leaders at KBL. By integrating leadership theory with quality management principles, the study seeks to contribute to academic literature while offering practical insights for managers, policymakers, and practitioners in manufacturing organizations.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature on leadership and quality management underscores the central role of leadership behavior in shaping organizational culture and performance. Over the past several decades, scholars have increasingly emphasized the need to integrate leadership theory with quality management practices to achieve sustainable organizational outcomes. Situational leadership theory, developed by Hersey and Blanchard, posits that leadership effectiveness depends on the alignment between leadership style and follower readiness. Follower readiness is defined by two key dimensions: competence, which reflects skills and knowledge, and commitment, which reflects motivation and confidence. Based on these dimensions, the theory identifies four leadership styles: directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating.

The directing style is characterized by high task orientation and low relationship orientation and is appropriate when followers lack competence but demonstrate high commitment. Coaching leadership combines high task and high relationship behaviors and is suitable when followers possess some competence but lack confidence. Supporting leadership emphasizes relationship behaviors and is effective when followers are competent but require encouragement. Delegating leadership involves low task and low relationship behaviors and is most appropriate when followers are both competent and committed.

Empirical studies indicate that situational leadership enhances employee engagement, job satisfaction, and performance when leaders accurately diagnose follower readiness and adapt their behavior accordingly. In quality management contexts, this adaptability enables leaders to provide appropriate guidance during audits, process changes, corrective actions, and continuous improvement initiatives.

Total Quality Management represents a holistic management philosophy focused on long-term success through customer satisfaction, continuous improvement, and organization-wide participation. Deming emphasized that quality is primarily a management responsibility and that leadership must design systems that enable employees to perform their work effectively rather than relying solely on inspection.

Leadership commitment is widely regarded as the cornerstone of successful TQM implementation. Leaders influence quality outcomes by setting strategic priorities, allocating resources, and modeling quality-oriented behaviors. Organizations lacking strong leadership commitment often experience fragmented and short-lived quality improvements. Research consistently demonstrates positive relationships between TQM practices and organizational performance indicators such as productivity, cost reduction, defect prevention, and customer satisfaction. However, variations in outcomes suggest that leadership behavior and organizational context significantly influence the effectiveness of TQM initiatives.

Leadership–quality integration has been examined through transformational, participative, and servant leadership perspectives. While these approaches emphasize vision, empowerment, and ethical conduct, situational leadership offers a distinct advantage by emphasizing adaptability and contextual responsiveness. Despite this alignment, empirical research on situational leadership within TQM contexts remains limited, particularly in African manufacturing environments.

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Table 1. Mapping of Situational Leadership Styles to Total Quality Management Dimensions

Situational Leadership Style	Leadership Characteristics	Aligned TQM Dimension	Expected Quality Outcome
Directing	High task focus and supervision	Process control	Improved compliance
Coaching	Guidance with support	Employee involvement	Enhanced problem-solving
Supporting	Shared decision-making	Continuous improvement	Quality ownership
Delegating	Autonomy and empowerment	Process ownership	Sustained performance

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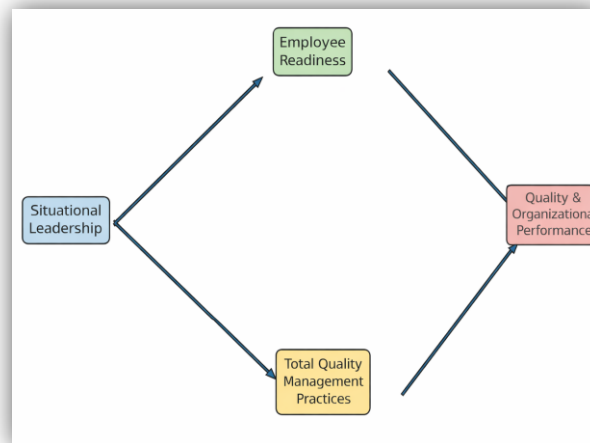


Figure 1. Leadership–Quality Integration Model

This figure presents the leadership–quality integration model, illustrating how situational leadership influences organizational quality and performance through employee readiness and Total Quality Management practices.

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RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS

The primary objective of this study is to develop a leadership–quality integration model that explains how situational leadership behaviors influence the effectiveness of Total Quality Management practices at Kgalagadi Breweries Limited. The specific objectives are to examine situational leadership behaviors among quality leaders, assess the level of TQM implementation, analyze the relationship between leadership behavior and quality outcomes, and propose an integration model applicable to manufacturing organizations.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative-dominant case study research design, which is particularly suited for investigating complex organizational phenomena within their real-life context. The case study approach enables an in-depth examination of leadership behaviors, quality practices, and organizational dynamics.

Data collection involved multiple sources to enhance credibility and triangulation. Semi-structured interviews were conceptualized with quality managers, supervisors, and team leaders to capture insights into leadership behaviors and quality management practices.

Document analysis included internal quality manuals, audit reports, training records, and continuous improvement documentation. These documents provided valuable contextual information and supported triangulation of interview data. A structured questionnaire framework was also developed to capture perceptions of situational leadership styles and TQM practices. Although the analysis presented in this study is conceptual and illustrative, the methodological framework provides a robust foundation for future empirical investigation.

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CASE BACKGROUND: KGALAGADI BREWERIES LIMITED

Kgalagadi Breweries Limited (KBL) is one of Botswana's leading beverage manufacturing organizations, headquartered in Gaborone. The company operates in a highly regulated industry requiring strict adherence to quality, safety, and environmental standards.

The quality function at KBL encompasses quality assurance, quality control, process improvement, and compliance with international standards. Quality leaders play a central role in translating corporate quality objectives into operational practices.

Leadership behavior within the quality function directly influences employee engagement, process discipline, and continuous improvement outcomes. Effective leadership is therefore essential for sustaining quality performance at KBL. Kgalagadi Breweries Limited (KBL) is one of Botswana's leading beverage manufacturing organizations, headquartered in Gaborone. The company operates in a highly regulated industry requiring strict adherence to quality, safety, and environmental standards.

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DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The findings indicate that situational leadership behaviors are widely practiced among quality leaders at KBL. Leaders frequently adjust their approach based on employee competence, task complexity, and operational demands.

Coaching and supporting leadership styles were particularly prevalent during quality improvement initiatives, facilitating collaboration, learning, and problem-solving among employees.

Adaptive leadership behaviors were associated with higher levels of employee involvement, ownership of quality processes, and commitment to continuous improvement.

Table 2. Relationship between Leadership Adaptability, Employee Readiness, and Quality Outcomes

Leadership Adaptability Level	Employee Readiness	Dominant TQM Practice	Observed Quality Outcome
Low	Low competence and commitment	Compliance checks	Frequent deviations
Moderate	Developing competence	Structured improvement	Defect reduction
High	High competence and commitment	Continuous improvement	Strong quality culture
Very High	Expert ownership	Quality innovation	Operational excellence

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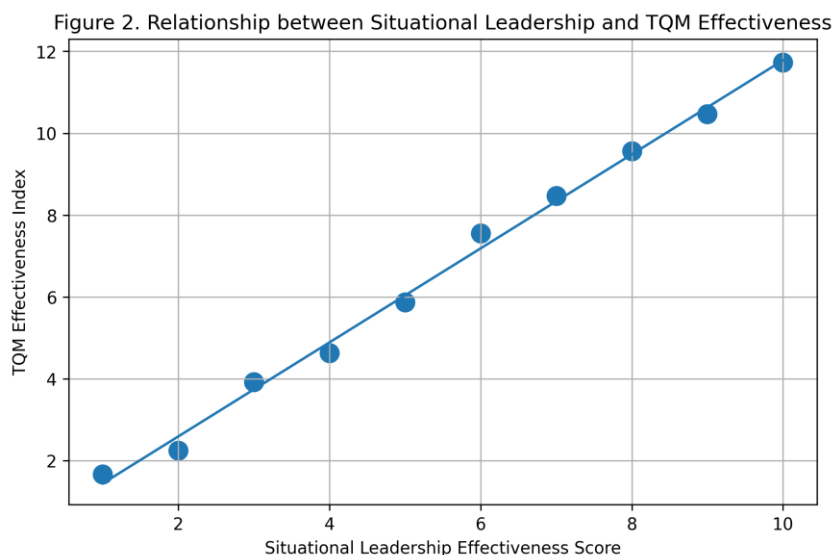


Figure 2. Relationship between Situational Leadership and TQM Effectiveness

This figure illustrates the positive relationship between situational leadership effectiveness and the effectiveness of Total Quality Management implementation.

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DISCUSSION

The findings reinforce the critical role of leadership adaptability in quality management. Situational leadership provides a practical framework for aligning leadership behavior with employee readiness and process maturity.

By enabling leaders to adjust their behavior based on context, situational leadership supports the effective implementation of TQM practices and fosters a culture of continuous improvement.

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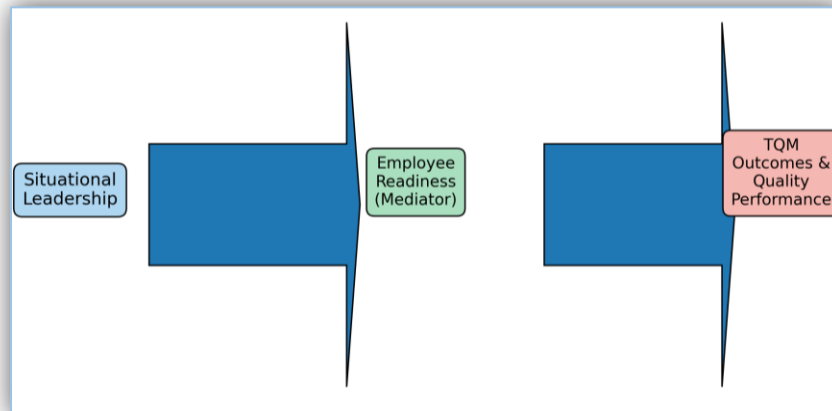


Figure 3. Mediating Role of Employee Readiness in Leadership–Quality Relationship

This figure depicts employee readiness as a mediating mechanism linking situational leadership to Total Quality Management outcomes and overall organizational performance.

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Managerial Implications

Manufacturing organizations should integrate leadership development with quality management initiatives. Leadership training programs should emphasize adaptability, diagnostic skills, and quality-oriented behaviors to ensure the sustainability of TQM outcomes.

Limitations and Future Research

As a single-case study, the findings may not be generalizable to all manufacturing contexts. Future research should employ longitudinal and comparative designs to validate and refine the proposed leadership–quality integration model.

CONCLUSION

This study developed a leadership–quality integration model by examining situational leadership and Total Quality Management practices at Kgalagadi Breweries Limited, Gaborone, Botswana. The findings demonstrate that adaptive leadership significantly enhances the effectiveness of TQM initiatives. The proposed model offers a valuable framework for integrating leadership and quality management in manufacturing organizations, particularly within emerging economies.

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