

**Assessing the Implementation of Kaizen Project in a Public Inter-Governmental**

**Context:** *The Case of the African Union Commission (AUC)*

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*A Thesis submitted to Addis Ababa University School of Commerce Distance Education  
Graduate Program in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Award of the Degree of  
Master of Arts in Project Management*

**By:**

***TEFSEHIT BEYENE***



**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF COMMERCE DISTANCE EDUCATION  
GRADUATE PROGRAMME**

**AUGUST 2017  
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

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***By:***

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Under the Guidance of

Mengistu Bogale (PhD)

*A Thesis submitted to Addis Ababa University School of Commerce Distance Education  
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Arts in Project Management*

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF COMMERCE DISTANCE EDUCATION  
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AUGUST 2017  
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**Assessing the Implementation of Kaizen in a Public Inter-Governmental  
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**CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the thesis entitled” **Assessing the Implementation of Kaizen Project in a Public Inter-Governmental Context: *The Case of the African Union Commission (AUC)***” submitted to Addis Ababa University School of Commerce for the award of the Degree of Master of Arts in Project Management is a record of bonafide research work carried out by Mrs. Tefsehit Beyene Mulatu, under my guidance and supervision.

Therefore, I hereby declare that no part of this thesis has been submitted to any other University or Institution for the award of any Degree or Diploma.

\_\_\_\_\_

Adviser’s Name

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

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Signature

## DECLARATION

I, Tefsehit Beyene Mulatu, do hereby declare that this thesis entitled “**Assessing the Implementation of Kaizen Project in a Public Inter-Governmental Context: *The Case of the African Union Commission (AUC)***” is the result of my investigation and research and the matters embodied have not been submitted earlier in part or in full for the award of any Degree or Diploma to any other Institution and all the reference materials referred in the process have been duly acknowledged.

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Researcher’s Name

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Date

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Signature

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Tefsehit B. Mulatu

August 2017

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## ACRONYMS / ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AU</b>	African Union
<b>AUC</b>	African Union Commission
<b>AHRM</b>	Administration and Human Resource Management
<b>CSF</b>	Critical Success Factors
<b>ITP</b>	Institutional Transformation Process
<b>KAIZEN</b>	<b>K</b> anban, <b>A</b> pproach, <b>I</b> mprovement, <b>Z</b> ero Defects, <b>E</b> ffectiveness, <b>N</b> etworking
<b>LM</b>	Lean Manufacturing
<b>PDCA</b>	Plan, Do, Check Act
<b>PM</b>	Project Management
<b>SAQ</b>	Self- Administered Questionnaire
<b>TQM</b>	Total Quality Management
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Program

**ABSTRACT**

*Organizations today are operating in a more competitive environment and adapting increasingly to various challenges in the environment. This calls for the implementation of change either in a radical manner, or on a small-scale in a continuous manner. For any organization to be efficient and effective, it is generally necessary to strive for the development of processes that track and document why organizational changes are necessary; why the changes mark improvement within the organization; and how to continuously refine and re-evaluate what the organization is doing to achieve its mission (Sackmann, 1997). Kaizen, a Japanese business management concept that calls for continuous improvement has been implemented in the African Union Commission (AUC) to improve organizational efficiency by standardizing work procedures and eliminating wasteful activities through a collective effort. The implementation of Kaizen does not offer a quick fix to a problem and the fruits often take time to be realized. Also, Kaizen projects often require large amount of funding to enable among others, training of the employees. Hence the implementation process becomes a very important stage for the eventual success of the programs. Organizational literature shows that the experience of public and private sector institutions that have implemented Kaizen has not always been positive. Failure is frequently identified as the implementation issue, rather than failure of the concept and theory of Kaizen. The aim of this research is to assess the implementation of Kaizen project in the context of inter-governmental and multi-cultural organization such as the African Union Commission. The study relies on a consolidated theory on critical measurement variables of Kaizen as the main theoretical framework. The study was also narrowed down to the implementation of Kaizen project, as a major case study on how the measurement variables manifest themselves in the implementation of Kaizen at the African Union Commissions. The study is a descriptive case study that uses cross-sectional panel data (quantitative) and synthesization of qualitative data. Using a Systematic Random sampling technique, 131 respondents (employees) were selected from a total population of 1743, with the sampling frame of 700. Primary data was collected using a Self-Administered Questionnaire (SAQ) complemented by a Semi-Structured interview which was then subjected to subsequent statistical analysis using SPSS –version 20. This was augmented by the review of existing literature. Research findings generally reveal that various challenges exist, some of which are common to single-government organizations and others which are specifically created by the multi-national and multi-cultural environment. The study recommends strategies and approaches for the management of the AUC as it drives its continuous improvement initiatives.*

**Key Words:** *Continuous Improvement, Kaizen, Implementation, Inter-governmental*

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

This section of the study provides information on the Background of the study, Research Rationale, Overview of the Research Environment, Overview of the Kaizen Project, Statement of the Problem (including the Research Question), the Objective, Significance, Scope and Limitation of the study. The Structure of the Thesis is also briefly introduced at the end of the Chapter.

### 1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In a competitive business climate, an organization's ability to efficiently align resources and business activities with strategic objectives can mean the difference between succeeding and just surviving. In order to achieve strategic alignment, organizations are increasingly managing their activities and processes as projects. Projects have clearly become a central activity in most organizations and companies are investing more and more resources in projects among others, new product development, process improvement, or building new services. In essence, they are making their organizations project driven in order to monitor performance more closely and make better decisions about their overall work portfolio. Yet, many studies have demonstrated that most projects do not meet quality, scope, schedule and budget goals, or fail to satisfy customer and or company expectations (Brian, 2008).

In today's businesses in general, and the public sector in particular, there is a growing recognition that isolated improvements in particular aspects of business are no longer adequate and that a holistic strategy is needed to bring competitive advantage in the market place. This can only be achieved by the adoption of management and operational approaches, which are not just concerned with services, process development and customer delivery but also with the relationship with suppliers, customers, commercial and managerial processes and the contribution of all employees no matter where ever they work in the organization (Raja *et al*, 2011).

According to Stephens (2012), public sector organizations seeking continuous improvements in business performance through customer satisfaction apply various means for improving quality, reducing costs and increasing productivity. These may include Total Quality Management (TQM), Total Productive Maintenance (TPM), Kaizen, Quality management

system (QMS), Lean Manufacturing, (LM), Business Process Re-engineering (BPR), Manufacturing Resources Planning (MRP), Just-in-Time (JIT), etc. All these interventions help businesses/industries to maximize their profit and improve their service delivery, since they act as managerial tools or mechanisms to users who are keen to measure and increase their performance (Pekar, 2009). This concept is applicable to all industries and has given birth to the concept of TQM. This study was intended to discuss the role of Kaizen in improving and enhancing quality services, customer satisfaction and organizational performance of the African Union Commission (AUC).

## **1.2. RESEARCH RATIONALE**

Nowadays both profit and non-for-profit businesses are competing for scarce resources and quality of the product has become a strategic issue in attaining and retaining competitiveness. With the blossoming of the public sector in almost every economy, quality imperative is no longer the sole concern of manufacturing. As a result, service organizations are facing the same ground realities as those that confronted their manufacturing counterparts in the past. This leads to quality moving from its manufacturing origins into public organizations. While competition will improve both service efficiency and innovations, it is necessary for organizations' to develop approaches that will enhance performance of their administrations.

Improving organizational performance in public service calls for a paradigm shift from inward-looking, bureaucratic system, processes and attitudes to new ways of working which put the needs of the public first (White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery 1997 p. 3). The introduction of Kaizen to public sector organizations serve as a postmodern organizational theory in the context of a broader transformation associated with quality.

Even though these organizations' desire to provide quality goods and services, their ability has come under ever increasing pressure. The literature presents Kaizen philosophy that was applied by a large number of manufacturing industries in order to stay competitive in a highly dynamic business environment. However, despite the popularity of this philosophy, Kaizen implementations in the companies had little success (Aoki, 2008) the reason being ineffective or inappropriate mode, inappropriate environment/structure and method for implementation. According to a survey conducted on US manufacturers, 90 % of the 3,000 industrial organizations had implemented continuous improvement projects; however, only 10 % felt that they were achieving the desired results. Furthermore, a study conducted (Jacaetal, 2008) on the sustainability of continuous improvement systems in two industrial

communities of Spain and Mexico revealed that 33 % of 360 firms adopted the Kaizen methodology. Nevertheless, the study concludes that there were few tracks of continuous improvements, due to poor cooperation by operators and organizations, and resistance to change by employees in systems improvement.

While Kaizen was ranked third among all techniques that were management favorites in 1993, it dropped to 10th place in 2007(Riby & Bilodeau, 2007). The drop in the ranking of this management approach has resulted in questions like: Is the Kaizen age over? Is it another management fad? To find answers to these questions, it is important to explore and understand the reasons of the failure of many programmes.

Moreover, there has been a lot of debate on whether quality concepts from the manufacturing or private sector can be transferred to the public sector in some meaningful way. Whereas Kaizen proponents tend to argue that big private companies and public entities face the same kind of bureaucratic problems, more critical experts argue that the private and public sectors operate under different frameworks and conditions (Hassounah, 2001, p.153). More importantly, the implementation process is a pertinent stage to the eventual success of quality programs. This research therefore will attempt to contribute to the elimination of a gap in the literature by focusing on a multi-national public institution, which exists in a multicultural setting.

As such, the case of the AUC has to be discussed in the context of the evolutionary development and current reality of the public inter-governmental sector. It is worth noting that a number of project efforts have been ongoing within the AUC to transform and continuously improve the institutional capacity of the Commission as well as provide quality goods and services to its internal and external customers. It has also been able to facilitate and effectively manage internal and external resources thereby remaining competitive and adding value to the institution. The AUC implemented a number of projects aimed at enhancing the provisions of quality service necessary for the African Union to deliver quality service to African citizens.

Despite these efforts, the reality on the ground is contrary to what has been expected by the senior management.

The researcher's interest in this area has been driven by insights into the practical challenges faced in the implementation of the Kaizen Project in the AUC. Many of these project initiatives have not been fully rationalized to the level that is expected by senior management.

In the light of the above, this study attempts to assess the implementation of Kaizen project in a public inter-governmental context. For this purpose, scientific research methodologies and procedures are used. The research aims to offer valuable insight to the Leadership and Staff of the Commission in developing and implementing strategies to improve the rate of project success that could be applied within the AUC. This study examined the way in which public inter-governmental organization like the AUC have so far improved its organizational and business performance by implementing Kaizen and examine its role in the organization's efforts to achieve maximum customer satisfaction.

Through undertaking this research, the researcher will gain practical project management knowledge and skills which are relevant for her chosen career path of becoming a successful Project Manager within the AUC.

### **1.3. RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT/CONTEXT**

#### **1.3.1. Overview of the African Union and the African Union Commission**

This section briefly introduces the organization's background and environment in relation to the subject matter of the study.

The African Union (AU) is a regional body comprising 55 African Member States (**See Appendix A**). It was originally established as the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1963, and subsequently transformed into the African Union (AU) after its mandate was redefined. Since its inception in 2003, the African Union has pursued the sole objective of achieving greater unity and solidarity among African countries and among the people of Africa. Its vision is that of "An integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena" (AUC Strategic Plan, 2014-2017).

The African Union Commission (AUC) is the secretariat of the African Union and entrusted with executive functions, playing the central role of managing the day-to-day running of the Union's activities. The AUC has a staff of 1,743, drawn from Member States, making it a rich multinational and intergovernmental organization.

The mission of the Commission is to become “An efficient and value-adding institution driving the African integration and development process in close collaboration with African Union Member States, the Regional Economic Communities and African citizens” and is guided by the following values:

- Respect for diversity and team work;
- Think Africa above all;
- Transparency and Accountability;
- Integrity and impartiality;
- Efficiency and professionalism; and
- Information and knowledge sharing

It also focuses on promoting peace, security and stability on the Continent in recognition that this is a prerequisite to foster the implementation of its development and integration agenda. The AUC is composed of a Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, eight Commissioners holding different portfolios, and Staff. The employee composition is drawn from each of the 55 Member States, making it a rich multi-cultural environment. Like many organizations worldwide, the AUC is constantly striving to excel at delivering on its mandate to the people of Africa and in doing so, faces the challenge of having to react to the technological, economic, social and political changes in its internal and external environment. As part of its strategic plan (2014 – 2017) the AUC has committed itself for a continuous improvement and embarked on an Institutional Transformation Process (ITP) to address these challenges. One of the major initiatives has been the introduction of the Kaizen project, a project which strives to an overall improvement of the operational, administrative and financial system.

### **1.3.2. Overview of the KAIZEN Project**

The AUC is an executive body that represents the Union, which proposes and implements policies and legislations. The AU highly appreciates Japanese policies towards African development, which is, among others, represented by the process of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD). The AU has been co-sponsoring TICAD since 2010, which demonstrates the strengthening of ties between Japan and AU. During the meeting of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) held in 2009, the AUC’s Deputy Chairperson learned about “Kaizen” after which his leadership motivated for the pilot phase as AUC was experiencing a rapid expansion with its operations becoming more complex. Under these circumstances, recognizing the “Kaizen” methodologies’

effectiveness was the at most priority for the Commission. Kaizen Institute Africa (KIA), a Kaizen Institute branch in Africa, was contracted to implement the “Pilot phase” from October 2009 to March 2011 targeting four “Service Directorates”. A Kaizen Coordination Team was formed to serve as KAI’s counterpart in implementing Kaizen activities. The Kaizen Team followed up individual Kaizen activities that had been initiated in the pilot phase. The Kaizen activities initiated in the “Pilot phase” were then suspended with the main reasons being that the “Pilot phase” ended before Kaizen firmly took root within AUC’S service Directorates and that the Kaizen tools introduced by KIA were rather difficult to use requiring Kaizen Champions’ intensive engagement (Kaizen Inception Report 2012).

Early 2013, Kaizen activities were restarted, with some new features, to improve efficiency and attain speed-up of administrative work. However, the activities stagnated because of the insufficient capacity of the Kaizen Coordination Team that had to play a central role in Kaizen, coupled with AUC’s insufficient commitment. Nevertheless, due to some results achieved, the senior management highlighted the necessity of Kaizen as a means of enchaining the services delivered in the AU and its subsidiary organizations, which is one of the eight priority areas of AU strategic plan.

Against this background, AUC requested Japan for technical assistance to reactivate Kaizen initiatives. Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) was commissioned to revitalize Kaizen initiatives and institutionalize its approach within AUC through capacity development. The project named “Implementation phase” started in October 2014 and ended late October 2016.

The implementation of Kaizen was a huge step undertaken to improve the major business processes and focus on the customer’s need of the AUC on a sustained basis. It is against this backdrop that it has been chosen as a case study for this research, which seeks to better understand the critical success factors and the effectiveness of the Kaizen in the context of inter-governmental and multi-cultural environment like the AUC.

#### **1.4. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Organizational operations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are characterized by ever increasing global competition, customer expectations, and change. Many organizations face a dilemma where they ‘either change or die’ (Beer & Nohria, 2000). Continuous improvement is now a key concern of most business organizations. The new millennium has been marked by an understanding that traditional work arrangements are inadequate to address the challenges of

organizations, particularly those encountered in the public sector today.. Accordingly, managers began to realize that the approaches they use to deliver services as leaders are the true enablers of quality, customer satisfaction, and business results (Evans & Lindsay 2008, p.10). The ability of the non-profit sector to provide quality products and services has come under ever-increasing pressure with changes in demographic shifts, new commercial initiatives, growing competition and cutbacks in resources, the global financial crisis and the subsequent sovereign debt crisis among others.

The AUC is no exception. In the public inter-governmental context, like the AUC, approaches such as Kaizen are viewed as a ‘must have’. Currently, there is too much waste in the AUC with business being conducted largely along the traditional approaches. The AUC has tried to shift to projects to streamline work and reduce waste. As a result, the number of projects have increased with not much success on waste reduction. It is worth noting that, in the past ten years, a number of strategic projects have been undertaken to transform and continuously improve the institutional capacity of the Commission, to help it remain competitive and provide quality goods and services to its customers. These projects have come under many banners: Integrated Management Information System (IMIS): consisting of financial, human resource and materials management functions of the AUC; Kaizen Project: program of continuous improvement of spaces and working procedures; International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS): which aims at the alignment of best accounting practices through the application of credible, independent accounting standards that will result in greater accountability, transparency and comparability of general purpose financial reports; ARCHIBUS: a software solution for Real Estate, Infrastructure and Facilities Management; and recently a Comprehensive Organizational Restructuring Project: which was embarked upon to develop proposals for a new Commission that is significantly more effective and efficient to better address the key areas of improvement, specifically ineffective structures, lack of clarity of roles and responsibilities, ineffective processes and lack of a collaborative culture.

In almost every case, the underlying objective of these projects has been the same: to make continuous improvements in the quality of the processes and services delivery, to enhance customer satisfaction which would lead to a fundamental change in how business is conducted in order to cope with the ever competitive business environment and transforming the AU to drive the “Africa We Want”.

The AUC still faces many operational challenges, among which, delays in handling customer requests, employee resistance, communication gap, high consultancy fees, inadequate allocation of resources, as well as the challenge of rolling out to the other Directorates within the Commission and field offices. Moreover, studies by several authors have shown a consistent pattern of failure of quality product and service delivery.

The researcher's interest in this area has been driven by insights into the practical challenges faced in the implementation of Kaizen initiatives in the AUC and the inability of the project to firmly establish a measurement criterion for its success. The undeniable truth is that many of the initiatives have not been fully operationalized (about 55% realized according to the Kaizen implementation progress report 2016) to the level that is expected by senior management. In this regard, the researcher finds it relevant to assess the implementation of Kaizen in the AUC.

#### **1.4.1. Research Questions**

In view of the rationales and points discussed above and the views expressed in relevant literature, the research addresses the following questions:

##### **Central Question:**

How is the implementation of Kaizen project influenced by an inter-governmental and multicultural environment?

In investigating the primary research question four sub-questions were formulated as follows;

##### **Sub Questions:**

**RQ1.**What are the major contributing factors to the effective implementation of Kaizen?

**RQ2.** What are the challenges faced by the AUC in the implementation of Kaizen?

**RQ3.** Does the multi-national (multi-cultural) environment pose a barrier to implementation of Kaizen?

**RQ4.** Are the processes well defined to facilitate the successful implementation of Kaizen?

## 1.5. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

### **General Objective:**

The general objective of this study is to assess the implementation of the Kaizen project in the AUC.

### **Specific Objective:**

More specifically, this study is intended to:

- Identify the relationship of inter-governmental and multinational nature of the AUC and its influence on implementation of Kaizen;
- Examine the wider environment social, political, economic landscape, and specifically assess aspects such as structure, size, communication and leadership;
- Identify the key challenges in the implementation of Kaizen project in the AUC.

## 1.7. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In the globalization era, organizations attempt to apply strategies to support their advances in the economic, social, and human levels. Kotter (2013) argues that “leaders establish the vision for the future and set the strategy for getting there; they cause change, consequently they motivate and inspire others to go in the right direction”. Producing high quality products and services is one of the key concerns in order to keep up with the ever increasing competition. The logical question that may be asked is: “to what extent are the public inter-governmental institutions determinants of the implementation of Kaizen Programs? Furthermore, what other variables intervene between the successes of Kaizen implementation in a public inter-governmental institution? The significance of this study is anchored in the answers to these questions.

Currently, there is a reasonably vast body of literature available on the relationship between implementation challenges and success of Kaizen in a single public institution. Most notably however, these studies are carried out in different socio-cultural contexts. Therefore, the findings cannot be invoked with full confidence in understanding the situation of the AUC.

In the light of this observation, the results of this study have the following importance:

- The study will offer valuable insights to the AUC’s Chairperson and senior management the importance of identifying the critical success factors of a Kaizen project and recommends a strategy to improve the rate of project success that could be applied within the AUC. This information will provide an opportunity for senior

management to measure and improve the organization's performance in terms of improved products and service quality, process and productivity, reduced defects, employee satisfaction and improved skills. It is envisaged that this knowledge can be used by the African Union as it implements the Kaizen Project at the Headquarters and other AUC offices ( Regional offices located outside Ethiopia) and the other Organs of the Union were it has not yet been implemented;

- The study will serve as the basis for the elaboration of an action plan for the preparation and implementation of corrective action. It will also provide an opportunity for the development of a holistic approach to support management strategies;
- The study will recommend strategies to bridge the knowledge gap and address those shortcomings pertinent to the AUC's success in relation to the project management discipline. Moreso, the researcher will come up with an appropriate model with a practical understanding of the factors that are likely to obstruct Kaizen implementation in a public inter-governmental organizations;
- It also draws attention to organizations operating within a similar context, that is, inter-governmental and multi-cultural institution, to highlight the key success factors to be considered and the approach to successful implementation of Kaizen initiatives;
- The study will therefore enable the researcher to put into perspective the various theories that have emerged in the literature; and provides with the idea to come up with studies of novelty value such as a model building for better implementation of Kaizen in the public, inter-governmental and multi-cultural organizations.

## **1.8. SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The study dealt mainly on the assessment of the Kaizen Project on the selected inter-governmental, multi-national public sector organization (AUC) and its implementation challenges. The researcher primarily considered the conceptual limit of Kaizen. For this purpose, a composition of certain theories in Kaizen was considered for its applicability in a public inter-governmental organization. Other factors which affect the implementation of Kaizen, such as organization process assets, enterprise environmental factors, personality or personalities of the pioneer(s) and the way in which internal group processes and interaction are not taken into consideration. The study is also limited to the Headquarters of the African

Union Commission. Furthermore, the scope of the study includes but is not restricted to the following:

- The study focuses on one international public sector organization composed of African nationals; hence the ability to generalize the findings will be limited to the African Union Commission context;
- The target location is restricted to the African Union Commission Headquarters, in Addis Ababa, hence, the findings of this study may not be generalized to AU Organs, or other regional and liaison offices;
- Another restrictive factor is the project end date for various undertakings. In this regard, the study is limited to the monitoring and assessment aspect of the project. Evaluation aspect has not been discussed in this paper.
- AUC has 23 Directorates, each headed by a director who reports to the Commissioner. For the purposes of this study, only Kaizen implemented Directorates were considered.

## **1.9. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The limitations include but are not restricted to the following:

- My role in the research as ‘Privileged observer- judge’ although having the advantage that the people being observed could easily seek clarifications and make their point of view understood, gave rise to limitations in that firstly, some staff members tended to modify their points of view due to the fact that they were being studied;
- Lack of access to some of the data required;
- Unavailability of relevant secondary data;
- Unavailability of key personnel in the Kaizen Project who could provide current and first-hand information.

## **1.10. STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS**

This thesis is composed of five chapters with each chapter beginning with a brief introduction.

Chapter one contains the introduction to the topic area and defines the research question and the significance of the research. Chapter two is the review of the different literature related to the study topic. Chapter three describes the research methodology employed for this research and sets out details of the stages to enable readers to understand how the research was conducted. It also explains, among other things, the sample selection method, and the questionnaire design. Chapter four contains the results and discussions of the research structured in line with the various parts of the questionnaire and the semi-structured interview. Finally, Chapter five addresses the conclusions and limitations of the study as well as recommendations. Important information, some of which could not be presented in the main text is contained in the appendices which include the List of Countries According to Region, Questionnaire, and Summary of Responses, Interview Guide and the Interview Response and other information which the readers could find useful.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### INTRODUCTION

This literature review provides a background to the study by analysing and evaluating previous research undertaken within the field.

It provides an Overview of the Concept of Quality, and Total Quality Management followed by a brief discussion on the Modern Quality Management approaches and effectiveness of managing projects through Quality Improvement Initiatives. It also provides an insight into the Concept of Kaizen as an approach to continuous improvement with illustrations on Kaizen toolbox and the implementation strategies and further elaborates the Practical Implementation Challenges in the Public Sector. The Conceptual Framework is also presented in the last section.

#### 2.1. OVERVIEW OF THE CONCEPT OF QUALITY

The concepts of quality are as old as the human civilization. It had been a constant endeavor of any society or culture to design and develop finest pieces of quality in all walks of life. Quality is a performance measure of a product, service, human being or anything. Even though, it is expressed in different ways; it means the same thing, viz., performance. Its definitions also have been revised and evolved through several decades. This section briefly presents these definitions and perceptions.

Quality is defined (PMBOK® Guide, 2013 p.228) as the degree to which a set of inherent characteristics fulfills requirements. Quality, which is considered as a critical strategic factor in achieving business success, is required now more than ever in the successful operations of business within the global market sphere (Dean & Evans, 1994). It has become the key slogan as organizations strive for a competitive advantage in markets characterized by liberalizations, globalization and knowledgeable customers (Sureshchandar, Chandrasekharan & Anantharaman, 2001).

Following Millar's (1987) prediction that there will be two kinds of company in the future: companies which have implemented total quality and companies which are out of business. Companies across the world, large and small, both in the manufacturing and service sectors have adopted quality strategies and total quality as a core management tool kits (Dow,

Swanson & Ford, 1999). Quality is the degree to added value for products and/or service delivery as perceived by stakeholders through conformance to specification and the degree to add excellence for product and/or service delivery through motivated workforce that aim to meet customer needs (Oschman, 2004p.38). Quality is a relative concept. What is regarded to be of high quality to one person may not be so for another and there is no single agreed definition (Anon, 2009b).

Dale et al., (2007a p.4) defines quality as ‘the degree to which a set of inherent characteristics fulfils requirement’. They further stated that for the meaning of quality to be effective in an organization there should be a common understanding of the term. Other authors like Faidros (cited in Hiderbrandt et al., 1991 p.5) describe quality as an experience of which ‘people may disagree on quality, not because quality differs but because people have different experiences’. Even though Total Quality Management (TQM) was not mentioned by Imai (1986), when analyzing the components and definition of this concept, the similarities between the concept of Kaizen and that of TQM were established which have been noted in the succeeding paragraphs.

## **2.2. TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT (TQM)**

Over the past 10 years, the emphasis in strategic management thinking has shifted away from industry structure and competitive positioning, towards internal, firm-specific architecture, “within strategic group” (Cool & Schendel, 1988). Factors such as culture, capabilities, administrative skills, learning, process improvement and organizational climate have continually been critical in the establishment of relevant strategic management mechanisms.

Quality initiatives initially focused on reducing defects and errors in products and services through the use of measurements, statistics, and other problem solving tools. In the era of development and globalization, organizations began to realize that sustainable improvements could not be accomplished without appropriating significant attention to the operational quality management practices. Managers began to realize that the approaches they use in listening to customers and develop long term relationships, develop strategy, measure performance and analyze data, reward and train employees, design and deliver products and services, and act as leaders in their organizations are the true enablers of quality (Evans et al., 2008). Put differently, managers began to recognize that the quality of management is as important as the management of quality. From this logic, quality assurance gave way to quality management. Rather than a narrow engineering or product based technical discipline,

TQM took on a new role that permeated every aspect of running an organization. It demands thinking about quality in term of all functions of the organization at all levels. It is a systematic approach that considers every interaction between the various organs of the organization (Omachonu, Ross, & Swift, 1998).

### **2.2.1. Definition of (TQM)**

Total Quality Management (TQM) 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 (Sharma, 2006 p.23). It is an effective system of integrating the quality development, quality maintenance and quality improvement efforts of various groups in an organization so as to enable marketing, engineering, production and service at the most economical levels which allow for full customer satisfaction (Juran, 2010). TQM is one of the most popular and durable management concepts and it has passed through a number of phases since 1920s. The roots of TQM goes back to the teachings of Peter Drucker, Joseph Moses Juran, William Edwards Deming, Kaoru Ishikawa, Philip Bayard Crosby, Armand Vallin Feigenbaum and others that have studied the practices and tried to refine the process of organizational management. TQM is a collection of principles, techniques, processes and best practices that overtime have been proven effective (Talib et al., 2012).

Dale et al., (2007 p.1) explains that TQM involves the mutual co-operation of everyone in the organization and associated business processes to produce value-for-money products and services which meet and exceed the needs and expectations of customers. It requires the application of quality to all aspects of the organization and the integration of internal/external customer and suppliers into the key business processes (ibid).

### **2.2.2. Modern Quality Management Approaches (PMBOK® Guide, 2013)**

Project Quality Management includes the processes and activities of the performing organization that determine quality policies, objectives, and responsibilities so that the project will satisfy the needs for which it was undertaken (PMBOK® Guide, 2013 p.229). Modern Quality management approaches seek to minimize variation and to deliver results that meet defined requirements. These approaches recognize the importance of:

**Customer satisfaction:** Understanding, evaluating, defining, and managing requirements so that customer expectations are met.

**Prevention over inspection:** Quality should be planned, designed, and built into—not inspected into the project's management or the project's deliverables.

**Continuous improvement:** The PDCA (plan-do-check-act) cycle is the basis for quality improvement as defined by Shewhart and modified by Deming. In addition, quality improvement initiatives such as Total Quality Management (TQM), Six Sigma, and Lean Six Sigma could improve the quality of the project's management as well as the quality of the project's product.

**Management Responsibility:** Success requires the participation of all members of the project team. Nevertheless, management retains, within its responsibility for quality, a related responsibility to provide suitable resources at adequate capacities.

**Cost of quality (COQ):** Cost of quality refers to the total cost of the conformance work and the nonconformance work that should be done as a compensatory effort because, on the first attempt to perform that work, the potential exists that some portion of the required work effort may be done or has been done incorrectly. The costs for quality work may be incurred throughout the deliverable's life cycle.

### **2.2.3. Effective Project Management through Quality Improvement Initiatives**

In recent years the discipline of project management (PM) has changed its application dramatically to accommodate emerging management processes and philosophies related to implementation of organizational development and strategic change (Cicmil, 1997). Contemporary literature on best business practice introduces many different terms related to PM, including management by projects, project-based organizations, project oriented businesses, temporary project organization and project form organizational structure.

Projects are becoming a template for operational and strategic re-design (Morris, 1994). The reasons for this are numerous, and reflect endeavors of modern organizations in responding to the environmental changes through the adoption of specific patterns of coping behavior. On this, continuous improvement in product and services delivery through projects makes achievement on highest returns possible by optimal utilization of all project constraints (including scope, quality, schedule, budget, resources and risk). Companies increasingly seek ways to effectively manage product development and sustainable market expansion so as to provide a disciplined approach in gaining the necessary competitive advantage by creating target specific products and services. The emerging paradigm of PM is, thus, not a breakthrough of new ideas but a renaissance of the discipline in a contemporary business

context. Traditionally, PM has been regarded as an exclusive management process of scientific nature with specialized planning, monitoring and control techniques, and applied to the operations of very few project-oriented industries such as construction, engineering and defense. It is now being increasingly accepted as an all-inclusive concept integrated into general organizational endeavor to provide better quality to customers through effective organizational integration and optimal utilization of scarce resources.

Consequently, as a complex managerial process, it positions itself among other organizational processes such as TQM, organizational learning or kaizen that ensure an optimal balance between internal organizational design of the firm and its emerging strategies.

### **2.3. THE CONCEPTS OF KAIZEN**

In Japan, the concept of Kaizen has been recognized under many terminologies. Fundamentally Kaizen could be termed and referred as Just- in- time, Kanban, Productivity, Productivity improvement, Product development, Quality Control Circle (QC Circle), Quality improvement, Total Productive Maintenance (TPM), Total Quality Control (TQC) and Zero Defects (ZD).

Kaizen is not a one a day, a once a month or a once a year activity. Its implementation requires an ongoing effort to improve all aspects of the business in the light of their efficiency, effectiveness and flexibility. Improvements are based on many, small changes rather than the radical changes that might arise from Research and Development (Imai, 1986). Kaizen is a focused and structured improvement mechanism that uses a dedicated cross-functional team to improve a targeted work area, with specific goals, in an accelerated timeframe (Farris et al., 2008, p.1). Often used in conjunction with an organization's lean manufacturing or lean production efforts (Alukal & Manos2006), the concept of Kaizen began appearing in the 1970s (Montabon, 2005; Sheridan, 1997). Toyota is recognized as the first organization to implement this form of improvement mechanism (Bicheno & Sheridan, 2009). Many companies that observed Toyota's successful use of Kaizen have been inspired to implement this improvement approach. Although all mentioned terminologies above explain the idea of Kaizen (Imai, 1986; Lukkrabj & Kano, 1989) however state that this quality mechanism can be systematically classified into four major categories as follows:

- **The Kaizen objective category:** the concept of productivity could be seen as equally as the objective of Kaizen. Both concepts intend to improve the uses of resources and

inputs efficiently. However, Kaizen focuses more on development of production process;

- **The Kaizen result category:** Just-in-time and Kanban system are categorized within this group. The concept of Just-in-time and the Kanban system could be seen as the implementation results of Kaizen or continuous improvement. By practicing the scientific problem solving steps, Toyota Corporation could successfully develop the famous JTI and Kanban system to solve their inventory challenges.
- **The Kaizen main category:** the concept of Quality Control Circle (QCC) and the suggestion sheet system belong to this group. From the definition of Kaizen provided by Imai (1986), the QCC is the vehicle which could call attention and participation from all levels of employees from top management, managers and supervisors to shop-floor workers. The Kaizen concept utilizes the cooperative features of the QC Circle to collect suggestions on the work process.
- **The Kaizen extension category:** the concept of Total Productive Maintenance (TPM), Zero Defects (ZD), Total Quality Control, Six Sigma, and Total Quality Management (TQM) were arranged into this group. This group could be seen as the category of quality management tools that utilize the concept of Kaizen as the fundamental knowledge in order to achieve higher level of quality improvement.

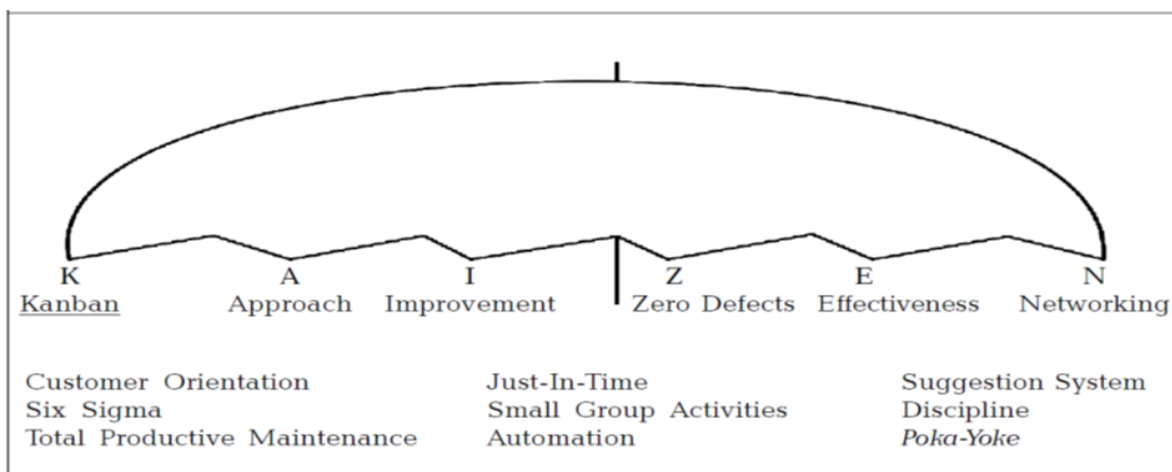
Generally speaking within this group, there are two kinds of subgroups. The first subgroup is the concepts that utilize Kaizen as their base and pinpoint more specifically on specific area such as the concepts of Total Productive Maintenance (TPM) and Zero Defects (ZD). TPM focuses more on the maintenance activity of the equipment, while ZD focuses more specifically on the issue of a zero defective product during production. The second subgroup includes the concepts that combine Kaizen with other concepts to construct broader quality controls. The examples of these sub group's concepts are Total Quality Control (TQC), Six Sigma, and Total Quality Management (TQM). Both the TQC and the TQM have utilized the concept of Kaizen as a basis for knowledge combined with other tools to construct more completed and effective ideas to achieve the quality control objective and operational excellence. For the concept of Six Sigma, the concept of Kaizen is utilized to find the work problems from both internal shop- floor workers and external company's customers.

### 2.3.1. Definition of Kaizen

Kaizen is a Japanese word that has become common in many companies. The word indicates a process of continuous improvement in the standard way of work (Chen et al., 2000). It is a compound word involving two concepts: Kai (change) and Zen (for the better) (Palmer, 2001). The term comes from Gemba Kaizen meaning ‘Continuous Improvement’ (CI). Continuous Improvement is one of the core strategies for excellence in production and service delivery, and is considered vital in today’s competitive environment (Dean & Robinson, 1991). It calls for endless effort for improvement involving everyone in the organization (Malik & YeZhuang, 2006).

Created based on the evolution of the quality concept and in the favorable context of the appearance and development of organizational culture, national culture and intercultural management concept, Kaizen management is considered to be the most performing management system to the manufacturing success (Ashmore, 2001). Broadly defined, Kaizen is a strategy to include concepts, systems and tools within the bigger picture of leadership involving people and culture, all driven by the customer.

As discussed in 2.3above, Kaizen forms an umbrella that covers many techniques including Kanban, total productive maintenance, six sigma, automation, just-in-time, suggestion system and productivity improvement, etc. (Imai, 1986) as shown in the next page in Figure 1.



**Fig.1 – The Kaizen Umbrella**

*Source: Imai, 1986, p.4*

### 2.3.2. Methodology of Kaizen

There is a standard methodology of Kaizen which can be used in different fields like engineering, manufacturing, management and other supporting processes in the organization. W. Edwards Deming, a pioneer of the field, popularized a tool. The methodology of Kaizen is also known as Deming's PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) Cycle or Shewhart Cycle. According to Watson (1986) the origin of Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle or Deming cycle can be traced back to the eminent statistics expert Shewhart in the 1920s. Shewhart introduced the concept of PDCA. The Total Quality Management (TQM) guru Deming modified the Shewhart cycle as: Plan, Do, Study and Act. The Deming cycle is a continuous quality improvement model consisting of a logical sequence of these four repetitive steps for Continuous Improvement (CI) and learning. The PDCA cycle is also known as Deming Cycle, the Deming wheel of CI spiral. The methodology of Kaizen is illustrated in the figure as follows:



**Fig.2 – Methodology of Kaizen**

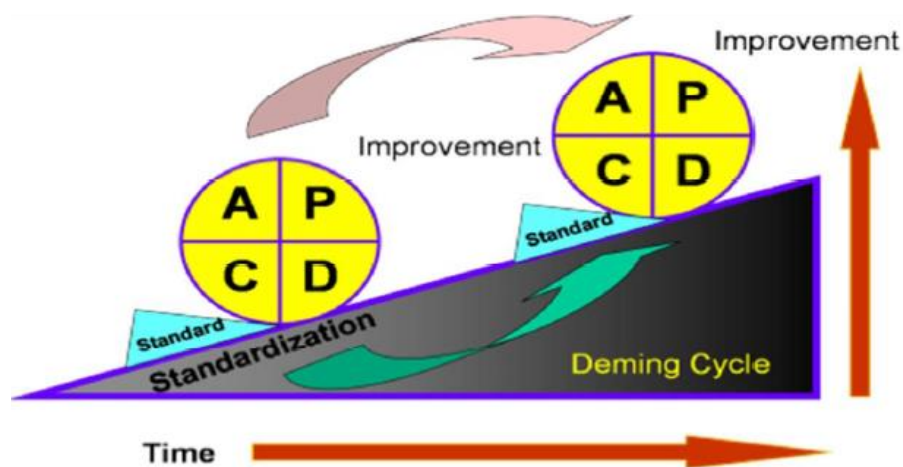
*Source: Compiled by the author, based on Imai (1986), Bicheno et al., (2009)*

### 2.3.3. Kaizen Toolbox

Managing Kaizen implementation becomes easier and more effective when you have the right Kaizen tools put in place. Research defines that there are no standard technique/instruments used for the implementation of Kaizen. The Kaizen Toolbox contains various tools, which are briefly discussed as follows:

#### PDCA Cycle

PDCA cycle also known as Deming Cycle for continuous improvement (Sallis, 2014) as presented in Figure.3 is an iterative four step management method used in business for the control and continuous improvement of processes and products.



**Fig.3 - Deming Cycle for Continuous Improvement**

*Source: Al-Ibrahim, 2014*

- ✓ **Plan:** involves analyzing the current situation, identifying an opportunity and planning for change.
- ✓ **Do:** Implement the change on a small scale in controlled circumstances.
- ✓ **Check:** Use data to analyze the results of the change and determine whether it made a difference.
- ✓ **Act:** If the change was successful, implement it on a wider scale and continuously assess your results. If the change did not work, begin the cycle again.

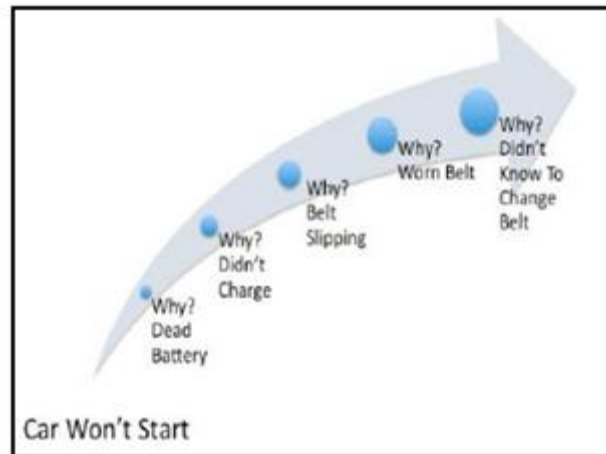
#### 5 Why Technique

The “Why” technique is an easy process that will lead to the root cause. By repeatedly asking the question “why”, you can peel away the layers of symptoms which can lead to the root cause of the problem.

- ✓ Basic for kaizen and at the same time the simplest organizing technique simultaneously.

- ✓ The primary goal of the technique is to determine the root cause of a defect or problem.

Captivated in motto —when you find a problem, ask why five times; it ask so many times as you will find the deepest reason of problem. The primary goal of the technique is to determine the root cause of a defect or problem. Fig. 4 expresses an example of finding root cause by —5 Why Technique.



**Fig.4 - 5 Why Technique**

*Source: Compiled by the author, based on Imai (1986), Bicheno et al., (2009)*

### **5S (Workplace Organization)**

One of the fundamental steps to begin a successful Kaizen initiative is implementing the five S's often called 5S-Kaizen (Cooper, Keif & Macro, 2007). 5S-Kaizen is a methodology of managing workplace or workflow with the intention of improving efficiency, eliminating waste, and increasing process consistency (Sujova & Marcinekova, 2015). It derives its name from the use of five Japanese words beginning with the letter “S” as the cornerstones of this philosophy.

These words are: “Siri” meaning Sort, “Seiton” meaning Set in Order, “Seiso” which implies Shining or Cleanness, “Seiketsu” which means Standardize, and “S” Shituke” which implies Sustaining. Fig. 5 explains the concept of 5S (Workplace Organization).



**Fig.5 –5S(Workplace Organization)**

*Source: Compiled by the author, based on Imai (1986), Bicheno et al., (2009)*

### Elimination of 7 Wastes (Muda)

A key concept in implementing Kaizen is to understand what value is and then to eliminate completely (or at least minimize) all non-value added activities. Everything which does not add value, is a waste. Fig 6. Describes the classification of 7 Wastes (Muda):



**Fig. 6 – 7 Wastes (Muda)**

*Source: Compiled by the author, based on Imai (1986), Bicheno et al., (2009)*

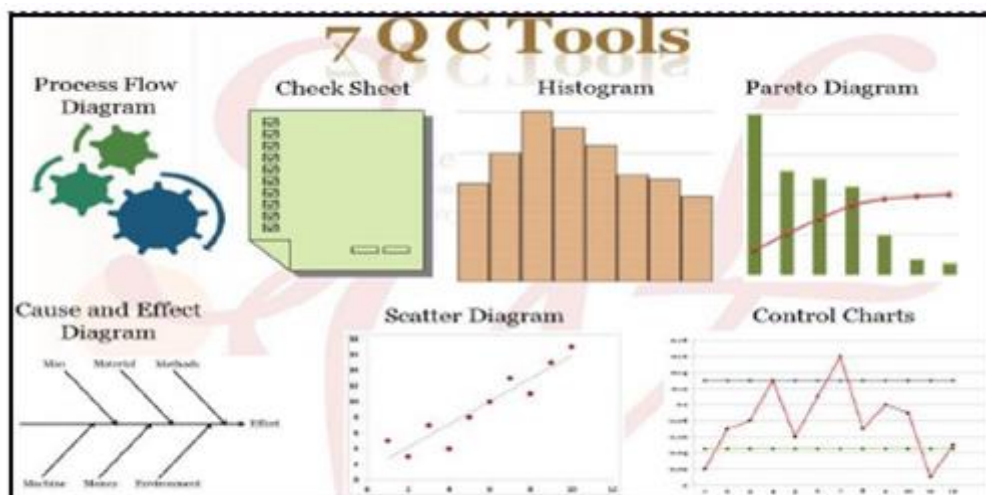
1. **Over Production:** Producing items for which there are no orders, which generates such wastes as overstaffing and storage and transportation costs because of excess inventory.
2. **Excessive Inventory:** Excess raw material, work-in-process, or finished goods causing longer lead times, obsolescence, damaged goods, transportation and storage

costs, and delay. Also, extra inventory hides problems such as production imbalance, late deliveries from suppliers, defects, equipment downtime, and long setup times.

3. **Waiting:** Workers merely serving to watch an automated machine or having to stand around waiting for the next processing step, tool, supply, part, etc., or just plain having no work because of stock outs, lot processing delays, equipment downtime, and capacity bottlenecks.
4. **Motion:** Any wasted motion employees have to perform during the course of their work, such as looking for, reaching for, or stacking parts, tools, etc. Also, walking is waste.
5. **Transportation:**-Carrying work in process long distances, creating inefficient transport, or moving materials, parts, or finished goods into or out of storage or between processes.
6. **Rework/defects:**-Production of defective parts or correction. Repair or rework, scrap, replacement production, and inspection mean wasteful handling, time, and effort.
7. **Over Processing:**-Taking unneeded steps to process the parts. In efficiently processing due to poor tool and product design, causing unnecessary motion and producing defects. Waste is generated when providing higher-quality products than necessary.

## 7 QC Tools

Practical Methods of registration and analysis of data. Fig. 7 describes 7 QC Tools:



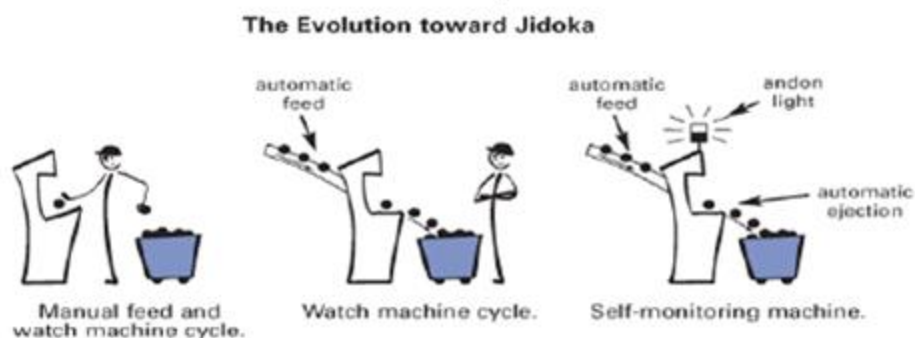
**Fig. 7 – 7 QC Tools**

*Source: Compiled by the author, based on Imai (1986), Bicheno et al., (2009)*

- ✓ **Check Sheet:-**It helps in organizing data by category. It shows how many times each particular value occurs.
- ✓ **Pareto Chart:-**A graphical tool for ranking causes from most significant to least significant. It quickly draws everyone's attention to the most important factor – providing an at – a glance snapshot of priorities.
- ✓ **Flow Chart / Process Map:-**It is a graphical tool that shows the major steps in a process. Flow charts are a useful tool for examining how various steps are related to each other. By studying these charts individuals and teams can often uncover potential sources of trouble and/or identify steps to be taken to improve or error-proof a process.
- ✓ **Ishikawa Diagram (Fish-Bone diagram):-**It is a tool for analyzing and illustrating a process by showing the main causes and sub causes leading to an effect.
- ✓ **Histogram:-**A graphic summary of a set of data that reveals the amount of variation that a process has within it.
- ✓ **Scatter Diagram:-**A graphical technique to analyze the relationship between two variables.
- ✓ **Control Chart:-**A run chart with upper and lower control limits on which values of some statistical measure for a series of samples or subgroups are plotted

### Jidoka (Autonomation)

It may be described as intelligent automation or automation with a human touch. Fig. 8 explains the concept of Jidoka.



**Fig. 8 – The Concept of Jidoka**

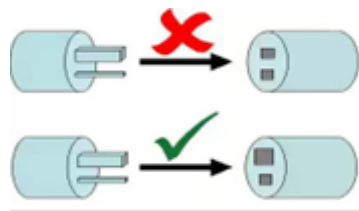
*Source: Compiled by the author, based on Imai (1986), Bicheno et al., (2009)*

The purpose of autonomation is to make it possible for the rapid or immediate address, identification and correction of mistakes that occur in process. Control process held, one of

the basic solutions improving assurance of the quality production, defects of the processed part are automatically found by the machine, which immediately stops its working mode.

### Poka-Yoke

Poka-Yoke is a Japanese term that means —Mistake Proofing. It is any mechanism in a Lean manufacturing Process that helps an equipment operator avoid (Yokeru) mistakes (Poka). Fig. 9 indicates the concept of Poka-Yoke.



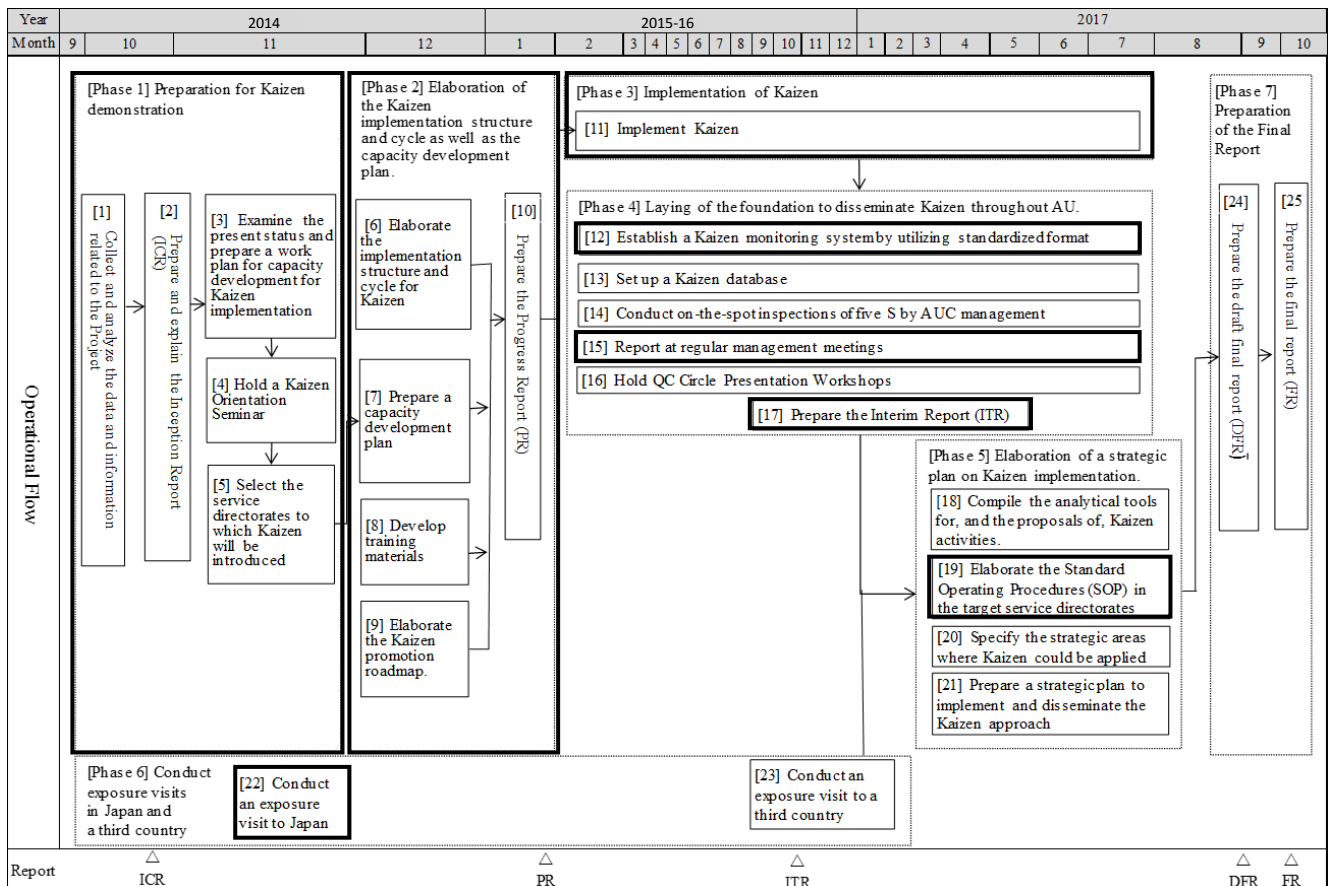
**Fig. 9 – Poka-Yoke**

*Source: Compiled by the author, based on Imai (1986), Bicheno et al., (2009)*

Its purpose is to eliminate product defects by preventing, correcting or drawing attention to human error as they occur. System of means eliminating defects being the results of inaccuracy; Poka-yoke solutions find application in stable processes and enable to drop of frequency of defects for six sigma level.

## 2.4. KAIZEN IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

To manage the organizational change surrounding the introduction of a new management approach effectively, one must examine the process of implementation. Implementation refers to all organizational activities geared towards the adoption, management and sustainability of an innovation such as Kaizen (Laudon & Laudon, 2006, p.551).



(Activities bounded by bold lines have been implemented.)

**Fig. 10- Project Implementation Process and its Progress at AUC**

Source: JICA IMG Inc. Progress report, 2017

### 2.4.1. Strategy for Implementation based on Deming's Core Ideas

There is no single agreed implementation strategy and several circumstances specific to each organization should be taken into consideration (Morgan & Murgatroyd, 1994). Other continuous improvement methods such as Six Sigma, Lean, and Total Quality Management are also recommended in the implementation of Kaizen (Ohno et al., 2009). Based on Deming's core ideas, the generic implementation strategy is discussed below.

### *i. Planning and Organization*

The starting point for an organization embarking on implementing a Kaizen program is to develop a quality management policy and formulate a long term strategy. This should be integrated with the key business strategies, departmental policies and objectives and should be in line with the overall objective of the organization (Dale et al., 2007c). Newall & Dale (1991) found poor planning in the initial stages of Kaizen implementation as one of the key reasons for future difficulties in its implementation. A successful Kaizen implementation needs long-term strategic planning (Dayton, 2001).

### *ii. Communication*

Communication is an integral part of all management functions. In order to lead, plan, organize, and control, managers have to communicate with their subordinates (Smit & Cronje, 2002, p.367). The term communication has a wide range of meanings. (Bell & Marais, 1998) define communication as “a two way process by which certain information is conveyed or transmitted from a communication source to a receiver. (Lowe, 1995, p.6) defines it as “a purposeful process, which involves sources, messages, channels, and receivers’. Effective communication should be done within the organization to obtain a common understanding of quality and associated benefits and a clear understanding of how the quality program fits into the vision and mission of the organization (Dale et al, 2007c).

### *iii. Coordination*

A management structure must be put in place to support the implementation of the Kaizen and Anon (2009b) has suggested a hierarchical structure as below:



**Fig. 11** - Representation of Quality Structure

*Source: Anon 2009:p.90*

The Champion appointed from senior management acts as the head while the Quality-Council is responsible for development of a Kaizen strategy. The multi-disciplinary quality Project Teams shall be responsible for implementing action and the Local-level facilitators will be responsible for facilitating quality-oriented developments at local areas of operation (ibid).

***iv. Cultivate Commitment and a Conducive Culture***

Top management involvement is critical for success of Kaizen. Deming (cited in Anon 2009b, p.60) states that “top management must adopt the ‘new religion’ of quality, lead the drive for improvement and be involved at all the stages of the process”. Conducive culture for continuous improvement must be created directed inter-alia towards:

- a. Encouraging all employees to identify waste and eliminate it.
- b. Employee commitment to satisfying the customer both internal and external.
- c. Honesty and sincerity in everyday dealings.

***v. Selection and use of Appropriate Tools and Techniques for Kaizen***

This stage involves equipping of individuals with the experience, knowledge and skills required for the transition to Kaizen through training and education. Anon (2009b) sets out several tools which can be utilized including Deming’s control charts, the PDCA Cycle (see Fig. 3 in section 2.3.3), Ishikawa’s seven basic tools and quality circles (Koryo, 2008).

***vi. Generic Departmental Analysis***

The Organization should conduct a generic departmental analysis at a macro-level to provide information to the micro-level analysis in order to align departmental objectives with the organizational strategy and also to define the internal and external customers (Anon, 2009b).

***vii. Appraisal and Feedback***

After implementation, the Organization should have in place a mechanism to assess the progress of the program. This involves the development of internal and external performance measures to assess customer satisfaction. The results of the appraisal can be used as feedback into Deming’s PDCA-cycle for continuous improvement of the processes (Dale et al., 2007b).

**viii. Recognition and Reward**

Finally, the Organization should institute a programme to recognize and reward accomplishments made in process improvement to serve as encouragement to all staff and reinforce the quality initiatives (Dale et al., 2007c).

**2.4.2. Critiques on the Implementation of Kaizen**

According to Imai, (1986) despite the benefits of Kaizen, not all the companies succeed and many of them are facing problems. Among the main critical problems in Kaizen implementation are: the absence of a real culture, general resistance to change, lack of momentum, no sense of ownership, short term visions, failure to identify problems, lack of resources,. Because Kaizen is seen just as another process, there is no action aimed at changing employee's behaviours or value system and even worse: actions and behaviours inconsistent with the Kaizen culture are not argued back. There is no clear desired state and there is no noble cause behind the Kaizen initiative. Existing and prevalent culture and processes will also prevent Kaizen, especially if there is a culture of 'you cannot touch that', 'this is the way we've always done it', or 'this is not my/your duty'. People are told to improve, but then there is not enough communication, no visibility, no energy, no metrics, no process, no training, and no support and the most important, there is no clear follow-up. Another issue is that not everyone is involved in the Kaizen initiative and that way people will feel that Kaizen is just another burden thrown at them. People won't be able to talk back to managers, make decisions, or, metaphorically speaking, stop the line. Sometimes, a symptom of no real ownership and empowerment can be identified when 'Kaizen circles' or 'Kaizen squads' are created at management levels instead of enrolling everyone into the Kaizen initiative. In some cases Kaizen is not a real priority. Some companies suffers from short-sighted vision, so financial goals and project delivery dates are considered more important than Kaizen initiatives or, in other cases, Kaizen is seen as a short-term project with an end date.

When it comes to identify root causes, some companies, apply shortcuts and workarounds, but are unable to reveal the real problem causes that are hidden and in some case remained never solved. As the original causes are not solved, sometimes the same cause can span different problems in an unpredictable way. Implementing Kaizen management can be a problem forms the point of view of the resources because managers do not have enough time

nor skills to approach Kaizen in a productive way so they will not analyse, reflect and plan for improvement in a productive way.

## **2.5. PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR**

Works from several authors have been utilized for this sub section, but substantive use of the work of Morgan & Murgatroyd (1994) has been done. The works by Morgan and Murgatroyd have indeed provided invaluable insights into the implementation barriers in the public sector; it is done in the context of developed and industrialized nations namely the USA, Britain, Canada, and continental Europe. These works were also undertaken from the period up to 1994, thus indicating a substantial time lapse to this research. These points need to be taken into consideration as they weaken generalization to the mostly developing nations of the African context which constitutes the AUC. Also the different points raised in this section may not be necessarily mutually exclusive.

### **2.5.1. The Public Sector as a Service Provider**

The service sector is distinguished from the manufacturing sector where Kaizen was originally conceived in many ways. These distinct service characteristics make implementation of Kaizen complicated being that: Services are intangible; the production and consumption is simultaneous and, services are usually heterogeneous in that there is usually some variability in the delivery of the same service at different times making the conventional use of quality standards more difficult (Lewis, 2007, p.234).

### **2.5.2. Implementation Challenges**

The public sector is different from other service sector organizations in that it generally covers government provisions such as health, education and social services and is non-profit making with funding coming mainly from public sources such as statutory tax collections and the consumer of the services is the society at large (Morgan & Murgatroyd, 1994; Rainey & Fei, 2003). From the literature review, the implementation difficulties have been categorized into three broad categories, namely:

- Cultural issues;
- Management systems & resources and;
- Human resource management which are dealt within details below.

### **2.5.2.1. Cultural Issues**

Kravchuk's, Murgatroyd and Skilling (cited in Morgan & Murgatroyd, 1994 p.169) identified cultural resistance to change as a significant setback to Kaizen implementation in the public sector which they termed as 'Contrapreneurship'. They defined this as the 'effective and creative use of skills and competencies to prevent change from occurring' and explained that these kinds of resistance encountered are active rather than passive, creative and powerfully effective. Contrapreneurship was further categorized into: resistance to the social and personal consequences of change; resentment about the nature of the changes being made; technical objections to the change process itself and information sharing. A closer look at these is done below.

#### **i. Contrapreneurship: The resistance components**

According to Morgan and Murgatroyd (ibid, p.170) this involves the following common points of resistance including:

- ✓ Fear that the widespread adoption of Kaizen will reduce the number of jobs available or the opportunities for promotion and is one of the main concerns for trade unions.
- ✓ The fear that the risks of Kaizen will not be compensated for through the reward and recognition structure.
- ✓ A fear of inadequacy to meet the technical skills and competencies required by Kaizen especially that public sector resources are usually meagre.

#### **ii. Contrapreneurship: The resentment components**

Morgan and Murgatroyd (ibid, p.171) identified some common forms of resentments by workers on introduction of Kaizen which include:

- ✓ A mind-set that Kaizen is another 'management fad' and the employees are the victim of management in the experiment.
- ✓ The thinking that Kaizen is a cover to ask employees to solve problems created by others termed 'the big burden problem'.
- ✓ The feeling that Kaizen is someone else's job.
- ✓ Some Managers seeing the Kaizen tools as inhibitors not suited to their needs.

### **iii. Contrapreneurship: The technical objections**

Morgan and Murgatroyd (ibid, p.173) stated the third Contrapreneurship activities relating to the systematic and technical evaluation of Kaizen which include:

- ✓ Scepticism about the scope and work of teams; the view that firstly teams are not always desirable and secondly they may take too long to complete tasks.
- ✓ Some professional like medical consultants, professional architects and others can perceive that working in teams leads to loss of personal autonomy.
- ✓ The feeling by managers that Kaizen is too slow to produce results. Since Kaizen does not produce 'quick fixes' it may not be appropriate for some problems which need to be tackled.
- ✓ The perception that Kaizen only works for management procedures (Finance, Payroll, Human resource functions etc.) and nothing to do with the core operational functions.

Further, Contrapreneurs use arguments from all the three sections above to inhibit or slow the development of Kaizen within the organization. They often use subtle methods to achieve this which include: agreeing to lead or support the team when in reality they are not doing so; systematically inhibiting the work of a team by either disrupting it's dynamic or challenging the process; being passive players in the process and active players behind the process using informal communication channels; and going with the team until it comes to implementation and then raising a series of objections which could have been dealt with earlier in the process, (Morgan & Murgatroyd, 1994 p.174).

### **iv. Information Sharing**

Information sharing especially pertaining to the financial position of the department, the operational and procedural targets for improvement, the staffing implications and implication on the future of the department, of the decisions to implement the Kaizen program were often not shared readily and frequently in some public sector departments. Apart from creating tension and resistance, this hindered the development of quality-focused team-work (Morgan & Murgatroyd, 1994).

## **2.5.2.2. Management Systems and Resources**

### **i. Organizational Awareness and Policy deployment**

According to Morgan & Murgatroyd (1994), a number of public sector organizations do not ensure adequate organizational awareness is conducted to all staff about the improvement

efforts and that the organizational vision, strategy and the policies enacted to support the quality improvement program are systematically deployed down the organization, resulting in non-translation of the vision and mission into outcome-focused plans for all staff. This also contributed to the resistance by staff.

#### **ii. Lack of Management Commitment**

A common problem identified by Morgan & Murgatroyd (1994) in the public sector was the lack of commitment of top-management. They stated that some public sector managers simply provided instructions to staff down the hierarchy and waited for the results. Also Radin & Coffee (1993) in their study on the United States federal Government found that top-managers did not demonstrate sustained commitment necessary to make the change to occur.

#### **iii. The Auditor Problem**

Public organizations are subject to both financial and value-for-money audits and most audit procedures involve the addition of steps to processes to increase the control aspects without taking other steps away. However the employees working on project teams and quality improvement teams in the public sector have often complained that their efforts to improve processes have often been constrained by the actions of the audit departments who have been viewed as part of the quality problems rather than the solution (Morgan & Murgatroyd, 1994).

#### **iv. Conditional Political Support**

Some public sector employees felt that political support for Kaizen lasted only as long as things did not go wrong and the moment risks were taken which did not pay off, they abandoned their commitment to Kaizen and looked to control and audit processes to minimise risk in the future. They further felt that politicians were in favour of short-term focused activities to achieve quick results that could be used in an attempt to win votes in their re-election bids. However Kaizen initiatives can take two to three years to move from planning to action leading to some politicians viewing it as ‘expensive and unproductive’ (ibid, p.178).

#### **v. Battle for Control of Resources, Power and Influence**

Termed as ‘*Turf wars*’, a problem common not just to the public sector, is the battle between one section and another within the same organization for resources, power and influence with the example of the historical tension in health professionals between doctors and nursing staff

over responsibilities and roles(Morgan & Murgatroyd, 1994 p.180). Karl Albrecht (cited in *ibid*) defines ‘*turfism*’ as ‘a jealous preoccupation with one’s assigned area of responsibility, to exclusion of common sense and compromise in the name of getting results’. Haigh et al., (2004) also identified this barrier in their study on the United Kingdom National Health Service which they termed ‘tribalism’

#### **vi. Over Specialization**

Milakovich (cited in *ibid* p.181) also point to growth of specialization within the public sector as a potential barrier to effective implementation of Kaizen and his argument being that specialists lead to over specialization, fragmentation and compartmentalization which makes it difficult to break down barriers and promote team work.

#### **vii. Problematic Measurement in General and Benchmarking in Particular**

Most Kaizen initiatives depend on the quality of information and data analysis for decision making based on facts. But many public sector organisations faced with overwhelming data because of their usually big sizes, find it difficult to put in place appropriate measures to provide information which can adequately support their decision-making process. This is compounded when the strategy includes benchmarking in that the data being compared may not in fact be equivalent, e.g. the labour content definitions may differ not because the process differs, but because the union agreements differ in which the labour content is priced (Morgan & Murgatroyd, 1994).Benchmarking refers to the continuous process of measuring products, services and practices against those regarded as the best equivalent providers in that particular area (Anon, 2009c).

#### **viii. Problem with Defining Customers in the Public Sector**

A study by West et al., (1993) revealed major problems with the definition of customers in the public sector context. This was also stressed by Morgan & Murgatroyd, (1994). They both suggested that the focus on the customer was confused in the public sector especially that income and continuance were not necessarily dependent on the key stakeholder needs being met. The latter give a real life example of a city manager who regarded the mayor and alderman; the municipal affairs minister; and the auditor general as his customers saying that if he could please these three then he could handle the public through the press. Morgan & Murgatroyd, (1994, p.183) gives some real life examples of the customer problem in the public sector which includes a dean of faculty for at a major university in Europe who said ‘let us imagine for just one moment that students are “customers” a fact that I cannot

personally accept, ...we would really strive to meet their needs as they understand them' despite the fact that we know best'. They contrast this with the private sector explaining that if customers simply stop buying, all other players are secondary.

#### **ix. Inadequate Funding**

The lack of availability of adequate financial resources necessary for organizational change were pointed out by Studies by Kravchuk (cited in Morgan & Murgatroyd, 1994) on fifty US states, Haigh et al., (2004) and Rainey & Fei (2003) on the Malaysian Government pointing out that the coordination, training and education components in the public sector suffered from adequate funding and hence were not conclusively done.

#### **x. Inadequate Information Systems and Vague Rules and Standards**

Handler (cited in Maram 2008, p.204) pointed out problems of inadequate information systems and vague rules and standards in most public sector organizations. He pointed that implementation was further compounded by the problem that public sector organization where essentially "political creatures" made up of diverse set of internal and external "players" each with their own set of goals and interests but all having some degree of legitimacy on the system resulting in the creation of conflicting pressures on the system. Pressman and Wildavsky (cited in *ibid*), echoed the problem of disruption in implementation of Kaizen Programs due to political forces resulting from conflicting internal and external interests.

### **2.5.2.3. Human Resource Management**

#### **i. Inadequate and Poorly understood Kaizen structures**

Kaizen projects usually need new structures within the organization structure to support the implementation process. These are intended to firstly focus the energies of the organization on the strategically important initiative, secondly maintain the involvement of key players in the organization at policy deployment levels while ensuring team work is done by those doing the work and thirdly to provide a review and evaluation process within the organization. However there are two main problems identified, the first being that in most public sector institutions these structures are not in place or inadequate and secondly were the structures are in place, in some cases they are seen to duplicate the efforts of extant organizational mechanisms (Morgan & Murgatroyd, 1994).

**ii. Inadequate Training for Employees**

Kravchuk (cited in Morgan & Murgatroyd, 1994) in his study of fifty US states identified inadequate training as a problem in the implementation of Kaizen in the governments. Particularly the training was designed for and undertaken by managers in the hope that it will cascade down the organizational hierarchy. But this did not happen and some staff saw Kaizen training as management training resulting in resentment and resistance.

**iii. Lack of Adequate and Non-Aligned Reward and Recognition Systems**

The lack of relevant reward and recognition systems in some public sector organizations was identified by Murgatroyd and Skilling (cited in Morgan & Murgatroyd, 1994). There was also non-alignment between the performance management system evolving around the work of teams and the strategic goals of the organization resulting in failure of Kaizen in changing the behaviour of the organization.

**2.6. THE WIDER ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT**

Change implementation, regardless of its magnitude, is about two essential components, which are: firstly managing the environment for change and, secondly implementing the proposed change (UNDP, 2006). Understanding the environment of the organization helps define the context in which the Kaizen Initiative takes place. “The context of organizations clearly is important not only because it contributes to more meaningful interpretations of behavior, practices and policies that emerge within those contexts, but because an informed understanding of the contextual dynamics is a necessary condition for effective implementation of Kaizen” (Ferris & Kacmar, 1992).

This therefore builds a case for understanding the context in which the proposed change is going to take place, which in turn facilitates the matching of the preparation process with any identified expectations from stakeholders and existing sensitivities. The triggers for change originate from the environment, performance, characteristics of top managers, structure and strategy (Huber cited Weick & Quinn, 1999). The characteristics of an organization have a key role in determining its change capacity (Gravenhorst et al., 2005). The performance of an organization has been partly attributed to its climate (Goleman cited Andre, 2013) and this is the basis for exploring the political, social and economic landscape in the context of change management.

### **2.6.1. The Political Landscape**

The political landscape of an organization is defined as “the formal hierarchy, informal hierarchy and alternative hierarchies that link the political players together” (Bolander, 2011). The assumption is therefore that the reporting structure is a good indication of political setup of an organization. Political influences in the continuous improvement process can also be explained by the presence of different actors/political players in the process who in turn exercise their influences based on their interests. Politics can also be displayed where the interests of the powerful are reflected without necessarily having the commitment of other players (*ibid*). Another element of politics is the power dynamics where different interest groups use power to influence decision- making (Ferris *et al.*, 1992).

In the context of the organization and management, the two main elements of politics are understanding existing power bases and knowing their influence in decision-making to ensure compliance (Pfeffer, 1992; Munduate & Gravenhorst, 2003). The ability to develop power and employ it to get things accomplished is considered an important recipe for success during change implementation (Munduate & Gravenhorst, 2003). A Kaizen champion, for example a manager in this case, can use any of the following bases of power - referent, coercive, information, expert, legitimate and reward to change a target’s attitude (*ibid.*).

The second element relates to exercising influence. Influence being effectively exercised by managers is a key prerequisite in change management; however, in an organizational setting with a mix of cultures, this can be an uphill task (Yuklet *al.*, 2003). A combination of forcing and non-forcing styles is ideal in an effort to obtain target compliance (Emans, cited Munduate & Gravenhorst, 2003). Understanding the kind of power dynamics that leads to change is therefore essential.

## **2.7. SOCIAL LANDSCAPE**

### **2.7.1. Communication**

Effective communication is essential for successful change management and poor communication has in fact been identified as one of the barriers to successful change management (Kotter, 1995). Michalak (2010) proposes communication and education as a strategy for dealing with resistance to change since people are thus able to receive adequate information and participate fully in the process. Two-way communication is the most appropriate for change implementation because it encourages employees to give their opinions and leads to closer interaction between supervisors and their subordinates, motivates

subordinates to participate in the change and reduces any uncertainties related to the process (Savolainen, 2013).

Gravenhorst *et al.*, (2005) propose certain key issues for consideration in the communication of change. First is, understanding the main reasons for the change, the goals and how they can be attained as well as the implementation plan. Second, it is the communication strategy and understanding how the message will be put across.

Third is the communication style of change agents, who could be top managers, line managers or change managers. Fourth is the attitude of subordinates with particular attention to perceiving whether they understand the change and support it or not. An organization should also have an external communication policy if external stakeholders are involved in the change (Andre, 2013). Communication should not be limited to internal stakeholders; the change should be communicated to external stakeholders as well (Andre, 2013). Gravenhorst *et al.*, (2005) suggest that verbal communication is best suited for change communication. However, Andre (2013) asserts that communication should not be restricted to newsletters and meetings; rather it can be non-verbal through the actions and support of the leadership.

### **2.7.2. Leadership**

Effective leadership skills are key requirements in implementing quick and successful change programmes. Leaders should monitor change and appropriate alterations where necessary during the entire process. “The implementation of strategic change requires a melding of empowered people with new technology and re-engineered business processes. This is best achieved through effective transformational leadership” (Zeffane, 1996).

Leaders should also have the capacity to critically scan the environment and elaborate the necessary vision for change. Due to the complexity of large organizations, leadership of strategic change should be shared with managers throughout the organization in order to maximize the benefits of successful implementation. Andre (2013) however asserts that different leadership styles work for different situations. Therefore, there is a need for flexibility in the identification and utilization of a particular leadership style depending on the situation. A particular leadership style exerted by the change agent impacts on co-workers by enabling them to appreciate the particular change initiative in concerned.

This is the transactional versus transformational leadership style. The transformational style is more geared towards inciting positive feelings in co-workers, and eventually workers

adjust to particular behavior by examining the different options before them. The transactional leader does not attempt to change behaviour (Munduate & Gravenhorst, 2003). Attitudinal compliance is obtained by attempts to convince co-workers that change will have certain benefits or that it is for their own good.

### **2.7.3. Economic Landscape**

The availability of resources has a direct effect on strategic change. A firm with a healthy financial status is highly likely to implement change in a bid to adapt to its changing environment as compared to firms with poor financial status whose ability to implement change may be limited (Grohsjean *et al.*, 2011). The ability to carry out swift innovations and initiate change enables resource rich organizations to survive external threats caused by the changing external environment. To emphasize this point, (Kraatz & Zajac, 2001) contend as follows:

*Historically, valuable resources such as financial reserves, marketing expertise, research and development capability, production capacity, and general management experience can all be viewed as potentially important facilitators of strategic change.*

*These and other resources allow their possessors to respond better to environmental changes and to more readily imitate or appropriate technological, product, or organizational innovations that threaten their survival.*

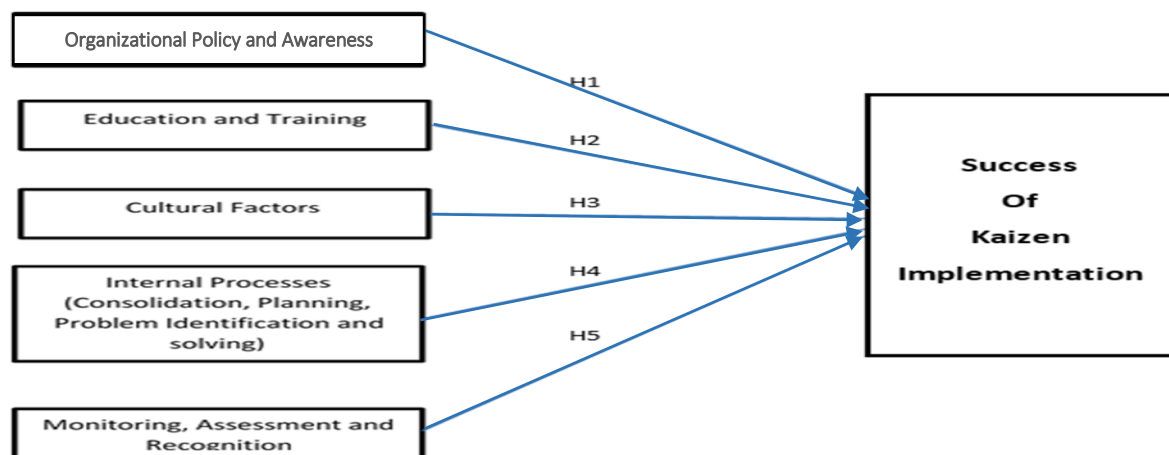
## **2.8. EMPIRICAL LITERATURE REVIEW**

In recent years, studies have been conducted on the transfer of Japanese production systems, including Kaizen. For example Hong, Easterby-Smith and Snell (2006); Taylor (1999); and Aoki (2008) examined the transferability of Japanese practices to China (Anh, Jing & Matsui, 2011). Saka (2004) examined the diffusion of Japanese operations, including Kaizen to the UK while (Kenney & Florida, 2000) looked at the transfer to the US. The results of studies on success of Kaizen transfer are mixed. Fukuda (2010); Kono (1982); White and Trevor (1983) found that Kaizen was not successfully transferred. It is therefore asserted that Kaizen approaches were not easily adopted abroad due to such environmental factors as the differences in national culture and working ethics (Anh *et al.*, 2011).

However, along with national cultural aspects, scholars argue that the adoption of Kaizen highly depends on some specific organizational culture such as centralization of authority and cross functional cooperation (Recht & Wilderom, 1998). Kamau (2012) examined the factors influencing the implementation of quality standards (Kaizen) in Kenyan flower industry. His study indicated that the following factors influenced implementation of Kaizen; team work was leading in influence, followed by training, followed by management support and last was education level of workers.

## 2.9. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Derived from the reviewed literature sources of similar subject matter, a consolidated model adopted from the work of Joseph M. Juran, William E. Deming's cycle and H. Krezner. The conceptual framework of this study (See Fig. 12 demonstrates the relationship between successful implementation of Kaizen (Dependent variable) through exploring the combined direct effects of five Kaizen success measurement variables (Independent variables). The measurement units/variable(s) represented by Organizational Policy and Awareness, Education and training, Cultural factors, Internal processes (Consolidation, Planning, Problem Identification, and solving) and Monitoring, assessment and recognition and the dependent variable represented by successful implementation of Kaizen. The conceptual model that guided this study is reflected in this Figure.



*Fig. 12. Consolidated Conceptual Model Adopted from Juran, 1988 Deming (1986) & Kerzner (2009)*

## 2.10. CONCLUSION

This chapter has considered the meaning of quality and given some definitions of TQM from the literature review of previous authors. The chapter has also looked at the Kaizen philosophy and implementation model based on Deming's core ideas as well as the practical challenges faced in the implementation of Kaizen the public sector organizations. From the literature, it can be concluded that there is reasonably a vast literature available on the implementation challenges in the context of the public-sector organizations for single Governments, which gives a broad view of past practices of researches carried across the globe. In reiteration the gist of this research is to bridge this gap by studying the practical barriers in the context of an inter-governmental and multicultural, public-sector organization. So a great scope of research is available for new researchers in this field. The next chapter considers the methodology which has been employed in this research.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### INTRODUCTION

This Chapter sets out the detailed methodology applied in this research. A methodology explains how the research process was undertaken (Fisher, 2004). Areas covered include Study Area Description, Research Design and Approach, Study Population and Sampling Technique and Sample Size, Methods of Data Collection and Instruments, Reliability and Validity Tests, Data Analysis and Presentation as well as Ethical Considerations. The justification for their use to address the research question and to meet the objectives of the study is also discussed.

#### 3.1. STUDY AREA DESCRIPTION

The study is conducted in the African Union Commission Headquarters located in Addis Ababa Ethiopia. The Commission is composed of a Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, eight Commissioners and staff. As of August 2016, the Commission had 1,743 staff members drawn from 55 Member States, making it an inter-governmental and rich multi-cultural environment. Arabic, English, French and Portuguese are the working languages of the African Union Commission. The AUC is chosen for this study due to its inter-governmental and multi-cultural nature. Moreover, although the Headquarters is located in Addis Ababa, regional offices and representational field offices are operating in different parts of Africa as well as Europe and the United States of America. This uniqueness brings immense value, but at the same time makes it even more complex in that it has a challenge to undergo institutional reform initiatives such as the Kaizen that transforms the management approach on quality, customer service and employee satisfaction. Finally, the researcher is a major stakeholder and employee of the AUC, and was part of the change process working in one of the service Directorates where Kaizen was introduced.

#### 3.2. RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is the logic that links data to be collected and the conclusions to be drawn to the initial questions of the study (Yin, 2003). The study is a descriptive case study that uses cross-sectional panel data (quantitative) and synthesization of qualitative data. The study is predominantly descriptive in design. However, because it is limited to the AUC, it is handled as a case study. Thus, as a combination of these two approaches, the study principally

answers the research questions and addresses the research objectives. Furthermore, it enables the researcher to identify and describe the variability in different phenomena. Yin (2003) describes the case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. The researcher also adopted a limited component of survey. The researcher carried out a cross-sectional study. According to Bryman & Bell (2007), a cross-sectional study incorporates the collection of data from more than one case with a view to establishing variations. This is only possible when more than one person is involved, and data collection on the variables is carried out for instance by filling a questionnaire addressing several variables and the information is provided at the same time, including patterns of association, which makes it possible to examine relationships between variables.

### **3.3. RESEARCH APPROACH**

The selection of a methodology to study social reality is determined by a number of conditions which include the nature of the problem, resource availability, and the researchers own prerequisites among others. Considering that Kaizen management has various elements of human behavior, it is more appropriate to use a deductive approach, choosing mixed (quantitative and qualitative) methods using case study strategies. Tashakkori & Teddlie (2003), argue that mixed methods are useful if they provide better opportunities for the researcher to answer the research questions and where they allow for a better evaluation of the extent to which the research findings can be trusted and inferences made from them. Tuli (2010) suggest that “quantitative methodology is concerned with attempts to quantify social phenomena and collect and analyze numerical data, and focus on the links among a smaller number of attributes across many cases. Strauss and Corbin (1991) define qualitative research as 'any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedure or other means of quantification'. Therefore, a combination of the two methods was applied as it gave the researcher the opportunity to come closer to those involved in the study, and capture their thoughts and feelings.

### **3.4. STUDY POPULATION**

A population is any group that is the subject of research interest (Goddard & Melville, 2006). The primary focus of this study is the African Union Commission hence the primary population. This includes senior management, professional and general service staff category. The total population is 1743.

### **3.5. SAMPLING TECHNIQUES AND SAMPLE SIZE**

#### **3.5.1. Sampling Technique**

As indicated above in the Study Area Description, the sampling frame is the total population (1743) of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) users in the AUC. The researcher ensured that the sampling frame, which is readily available and accessible, and lists the entire population stored in a database system, is unbiased, current and accurate. A Systematic Random Sampling was used in this study. The process involved selecting the sample at regular intervals from the sampling frame, then selecting the first case using a random number, before calculating the sampling fraction, and finally selecting subsequent cases systematically using the sampling fraction to determine the frequency of selection.

The sample includes all divisions under the service Directorates located in the Headquarters to which Kaizen activities were first introduced as a showcase. The Directorates are :(1) Programming, Budgeting, Financial & Accounting Directorate (PBFA), (2) Administration and Human Resources Management (AHRM) (3) Medical Service Directorate (MSD) and (4) Conference Management and Publications Directorate (CMPD), who were identified as target service Directorates that have high Kaizen needs and activities. The sample includes the senior managers and non- managerial staff of these Directorates. This sampling technique helped the researcher maintain accessibility, functional equivalence, and representativeness among respondents.

#### **3.5.2. Sample Size**

Peil, Mitchell, & Rimmer (1982) define a sample as a set of elements which ideally is representative of the population. A probability sampling is used. With probability samples the chance, or probability, of each case being selected from the population is known and is usually equal for all cases. However, the researcher's approach has some non-random component using purposive sampling.

#### **3.5.3. Sample Size Determination**

The researcher ensured that the sample size was large enough to provide the necessary confidence in the data, that the margin of error was within acceptable limits (95%) and in that regard, undertook analysis at the level of detail required. Neumann (2002) suggests that when calculating response rate, all eligible respondents should be included.

In the determination of the sample size, the most common technique is to compute the number of sampled representatives by considering the total population size, required minimum confidence level, and tolerable sampling error (Yemane, 1967, cited Abdukadir, 2014). These considerations were incorporated in the following standard sampling formula.

$$n = \frac{S}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where : n = sample size

S = size of sampling frame (Kaizen users at AUC in Addis Ababa)

N= total population size of the organization

e = sampling error/level of precision

As such, the sample size of this study was computed at a 95% confidence interval (most common in descriptive studies), 5% standard error, total population size of the organization (1743), and size of sampling frame (700).

$$n = \frac{700}{1+1743(0.05)^2}$$

Therefore, 131 participants were selected.

### **3.6. SOURCE OF DATA AND DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS**

#### **3.6.1. Source of Data**

Data was collected from primary and secondary sources. Primary data was collected from employees of the African Union Commission in Addis Ababa representing the service Directorates where Kaizen activities were introduced. Secondary data was drawn from the AUC database and publicly available sources, which includes the Kaizen Consultant's reports External Audit Reports, Implementation Report as well as publications available at the AUC Knowledge Management E-Library.

#### **3.6.2. Data Collection Methods/Procedures and Instruments**

The study focuses on attitudes and perceptions, and the importance of primary data cannot be over-emphasized. However, secondary data was also collected to augment the study. Primary data is data which the researcher collects to answer the specific research questions. The case study strategy proposes several possible data collection methods such as

questionnaires, interviews, observation and documentary analysis (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). In carrying out this study, multiple data collection methods were used to address the research questions. This choice is increasingly advocated in business and management research (Curran & Blackburn, 2001), where a single research study may use quantitative and qualitative techniques and procedures in combination, as well as primary and secondary data.

### **3.6.3. Questionnaire**

The principal data collection tool was an online Self-Administered Questionnaire (SAQ). The use of SAQ has been recognized for its suitability in gathering data on behaviour, attitudes, opinions and beliefs (Tuli, 2010). The use of structured questions also ensured that respondents received identical questions thereby ensuring standardized data (Oates, 2006). The SAQ was chosen because it enables one to reach out to a large audience even where respondents are geographically dispersed. It is relatively free from the interviewer's bias, gives the respondents' time to answer questions, and it is suitable for very large samples making the results reliable. It can also be used to reach out to respondents who are generally considered unapproachable (Kothari, 2004). The SAQ was useful for this study because the respondents were drawn across various AUC Directorates, and all have dedicated Email accounts and access to the Internet. For this study, 131 questionnaires were distributed and 111, (85%) were completed and returned for further analysis.

### **3.6.4. Questionnaire Design**

The SAQ, based on the 5- point Likert-Scale, was designed in a standardized manner and has pre-defined answers from which respondents can select a response.

The questionnaire was organized in seven sections, each addressing a specific issue concerning the research questions and objective/s. The questions were structured in such a way that they addressed the targeted research questions. The introduction provided an overview of demographic background and employment history. Part I. focused on questions related to the social, political and economic landscape, Part II. was tailored to collect pertinent information to the specific measures that is, organizational policy and awareness of the staff at the AUC, Part III. addressed the relevance of education and undertaking trainings in facilitating the implementation of Kaizen, Part IV. flagged the cultural factors, Part V. focused on the AUC's internal processes (consolidation, planning, problem identification and solving), Part VI. addressed the issues related to monitoring, assessment and recognition and Part VII. addressed questions in relation to success of the implementation of Kaizen.

With regard to form, the questionnaire was structured, in other words, it had definite pre-determined questions in the same order and wording, thus maintaining the concept of standardization. Although structured questionnaire is easy to analyze, its main shortcoming is that it restricts the respondents from answering in their own words (Kothari, 2004).

### **3.6.5. Question Formulation**

For the purposes of this study, a number of elements were standard questions used by previous researchers in similar research. For instance, questions addressing organizational policy and awareness, education and training, cultural factors, consolidation, planning, problem identification and solving, monitoring, assessment and recognition were adapted from various journal articles based on research on critical success factors (Newall & Dale 1991), with slight modifications incorporated to relate them directly to the AUC environment and make them more relevant to the environment of the respondents. The questions on communication and leadership were adapted from Gravenhorst *et al.*, (2005) & Bal *et al.*, (2008) respectively with minor modifications.

Question format was based on the 5- point Likert Scale, where respondents were asked to answer the questions in varying degrees; for example, from “Strongly disagree” to “Strongly agree”. The Likert Scale has been recognized for its usefulness in Kaizen related research because it can be used to measure before and after the implementation of a particular programme (Kothari, 2004).

### **3.6.6. Administration of Questionnaires**

The questionnaire was designed in an electronic format (**See Appendix B**). The questionnaire was administered online via Google docs. An electronic questionnaire was uploaded onto Google documents and respondents were invited to participate by sending them an e-mail which contained the link to the questionnaire using the AUC intranet.

The benefits of administering an online questionnaire cannot be underestimated; it was cheaper and it enabled the researcher to reach out to target respondents in different locations within the AUC. The respondents were also able to fill out the questionnaire at their own convenience. The total number of respondents was 111, and the response rate was substantial (85%).

### 3.6.7. Semi- Structured Interview

An interview is a purposeful discussion between two or more people (Kahn & Cannell, 1957). Interviews help to gather valid and reliable data which are relevant to the research questions and objectives.

Although the main data collection method for primary data was the use of Self-Administered Questionnaire, a Semi - structured interview was conducted (**See Appendix D**).Semi-structured and an in-depth (unstructured) interviews are non-standardized. These are often referred to as *qualitative research interviews* (King, 2004). Interviews were conducted with the then ITP Sponsor, Kaizen Project Manager( Director of AHRM) and the Kaizen Team Leader(JICA) in order to get a feel of the key issues and obtain specific data that could not be sought from respondents. In addition, two senior staff from Finance, Administration and Human Resource Management (AHRM) were interviewed in order not only to reveal and understand the “what” and the “how, but also to place more emphasis on exploring the “why”.

An interview was chosen to enable the researcher to obtain in-depth information to supplement what was in the questionnaire. It was also necessary because the information sought was very specific and could not be addressed to the respondents in the questionnaire. The interview lasted for about an hour.

### 3.6.8. Secondary Data

Secondary data was collected to enrich this research and supplement what was collected from the questionnaire and interview. Secondary data was drawn to augment the primary data and help triangulate findings based on other data. Secondary data refers to data that was originally collected for other purposes (Saunders et al., 2007). Secondary data includes documentary data, survey-based data and data compiled from multiple sources (Saunders et al; 2007). In this research, secondary data was used from publicly available sources such as Kaizen Implementation progress Report, internal publications, journals and electronic databases including the Academic Journals Database, JSTOR, and Social Science Research Network were searched. In addition, the AUC Strategic Plan 2014-2017, process mapping documentation (AUC, 2010) was also used. The researcher was granted access to the appropriate sources.

### **3.7. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY TESTS**

It is believed that using different types of procedures for collecting data and obtaining that information through different sources can augment the validity and reliability of the data and their interpretation. The process of developing and validating an instrument is in large focused on reducing error in the measurement process. In this regard, numerous frameworks have been developed to evaluate the rigor or assess the trustworthiness of quantitative and qualitative data (e.g. Guba, 1981; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and strategies for establishing credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability have been extensively written about across fields (e.g., Krefting, 1991; Sandelowski, 1986). For case studies that apply both qualitative and quantitative tools (mixed approach), pilot survey is an effective and realistic method to test reliability and validity. As such, the researcher conducted a pilot survey to ensure the content, sequence, friendliness, and quality of the questionnaire.

#### **3.7.1. Pilot Survey**

A pilot study is the pre-testing or 'trying out' of a particular research instrument (Baker, 1994). Pilot studies give advance warning about where the main research project could fail, where research protocols may not be followed, or whether proposed methods or instruments are inappropriate or too complicated (Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001).

A pilot survey was conducted to test the reliability and validity of the measurements. The questionnaire was administered to 35 randomly picked cases. The feedback received from this survey was analyzed and taken into account prior to launching the survey. Apart from correcting a few grammatical errors, the survey confirmed that it was not necessary to change much of the substance in the questionnaire. Through the pilot survey, the respondents also confirmed that it was user friendly, easy to understand and quick to fill.

#### **3.7.2. Reliability**

The survey questionnaires collected from 111 respondents were processed in the reliability and consistency test. The test focused on the questions included from Part II through Part VII. For reasons of balance, the questions (all rated on 5 point Likert Scale) are organized. Reliability refers to the extent to which data collection techniques or analysis procedures will yield consistent findings. The researcher ensured that the data collection instruments were consistent and standardized in order to avoid risks such as subject or participant error or bias, observer error and bias, by using the appropriate data collection techniques and analysis

procedure. The feedback received from the pilot survey was used to ascertain and improve reliability. Generally, Cronbach's Alpha was computed to assess the internal consistency of the research instrument, which is the survey questionnaire.

Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.84 shows good internal consistence of the items in the Scale used (George & Mallery 2003). The below reliability measures show that the internally consistent measure results are greater than the acceptable level, which is 0.70. The result of five scales (measurement units) is well above the minimum range. The reliability test is depicted below:

#### **Reliability Statistics**

Question Group	Measurement Units (Variables)	Cronbach Alpha
II	Organizational Policy & Awareness	0.966
III	Education & Training	0.944
IV	Cultural Factors	0.917
V	Internal Processes	0.931
VI	Monitoring, Assessment & Recognition	0.885

**Table 3.1.**Outcome of Reliability Test

#### **3.7.3. Validity Test**

Validity refers to how well a test measures what it is purported to measure. In other words, it is concerned with the extent to which researchers access the relevant data that is, whether the collection method results in what one actually was supposed to measure (Saunders *et al.*, 2003). In order to achieve this, the researcher conducted pilot survey to ensure the content, sequence, friendliness, and quality of the questionnaire. In addition, Pearson's Chi-Square test was used to determine the significance and consistency of response from various categories of respondents.

#### **3.7.4. Data Analysis and Presentation**

Data was automatically recorded into an Excel sheet, which was then loaded into an in-built Google Forms spreadsheet as respondents filled the online questionnaire. For analysis, the data was exported to SPSS version-20. The variables were then subjected to univariate and bivariate analysis. Data was displayed through tables.

To enhance the overall quality or trustworthiness of the study, data triangulation strategy was used so that the phenomena can be viewed and explored from multiple perspectives.

Triangulation refers to the use of different data collection techniques within one study in order to ensure that data are ‘telling you what you think they are telling you’. The collection and comparison of this data enhances data quality based on the principles of idea convergence and the confirmation of findings (Knafl & Breitmayer, 1989)

### **3.8. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Ethics refers to the appropriateness of behavior in relation to the rights of those who become the subject of your work, or are affected by it. (Blumberg, Cooper& Schindler, Brain, 2005) define ethics as the “moral principles, norms or standards of behavior that guide moral choices about our behavior and our relationships with others”. Bryman & Bell (2007) consider that ethics in business research deals with the following areas: confidentiality, anonymity, informed consent, invasion of privacy and deception. Anonymity refers to concealing the identity of participants in all documents resulting from the research; and confidentiality is concerned with the right of access to the data provided by individual participants and, in particular, the need to keep the data secret or private. With this appreciation of the value of ethical considerations in field work practice, the researcher was guided by benchmarked professional and moral standards associated with good research practice.

This author took cognisance of her role as a researcher, being that of ‘Privileged Observer-Judge’ (Fisher, 2004) in that this researcher was studying an organization in which she is involved, hence careful consideration was taken with regard to the ethical principles of business research. The researcher carried out the research assignment in ways that protect informant identity, promote and protect academic integrity and show readiness to develop ethical considerations with respect to sensitivity and alertness to avoid causing harm to informant, reputation, image, emotions, confidence and relationships through reckless disclosures or irresponsible handling of volunteered informant data. Participation in the study was voluntary and the research objectives were explained to all informants who participated in the research project. Responses were difficult to trace back to individual informants. Informed participant consent and exclusive use of research information provided were upheld in all data gathering processes. In doing so, this author requested for and was accorded access by the AUC (**See Appendix F**) subject to confidentiality of the information. Furthermore, in the design of SAQ, care was taken to assure the confidentiality of information provided by the respondents.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### INTRODUCTION

This section focuses on the analysis of the collected data and generating relevant findings. The entire process of analysis and detailed explanation of the findings has been handled in relation to the research topic in general and the research questions/objectives in particular. As such, the questionnaire data serves as the primary base of analysis while the data generated from other sources are triangulated to the questionnaire generated data. The Chapter therefore starts with a brief description of the questionnaire respondents. By highlighting the personal and job related characteristics of the respondents, this section helps to provide accurate context/perspective for the research findings. The Chapter then provides a detailed presentation of the analysis of results and discussions of findings regarding the research questions/objectives.

#### 4.1. MEASUREMENT UNITS/STUDY VARIABLES

The researcher summarized the study variables in a way that would enable answer the “Research Questions” (see 1.4.1). The questionnaire that has been distributed to the staff members of the AUC is divided into two major parts. The first part seeks information about the respondents’ personal and regional backgrounds. The second part consists of five categories focused on the respondents’ experiences and views on the successful implementation of Kaizen in the AUC. These categories (see the list below), therefore are used as primary measurement units/variables.

- **Organizational Policy and Awareness** to test the general awareness of the Kaizen concept and practices in AUC as a function of participation, motivation and communication.
- **Education and Training** in AUC as a function of team empowerment, individual empowerment, quality orientation, Feeling of ownership.
- **Cultural Factors in AUC** as a function of Employee Commitment, information sharing and Team work.
- **Internal Processes (Consolidation, Planning, Problem Identification & Solving)** in AUC as a function of understanding the objectives of AUC, definition of process, Planning, and defining customer expectation.

- **Monitoring, Assessment & Recognition** practices in AUC as a function of tracking, review, and regulate progress, selection and installation of appropriate tools as well as designing appropriate reward system.

Most of these variables were measured on nominal and ordinal measurement scales. Questions in Part I (information related to demographic and regional distribution of the respondent) were collated correspondingly to questions of Part II - VII. Respondents' levels of experiences, feelings, and views regarding the Kaizen implementation practices were measured mainly on ordinal scales anchored on Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5, denoting the level of disagreement to agreement on the above mentioned main points. The key informant interview conducted was also along the same points mentioned above and the responses were grouped together, analyzed, and interpreted in cross reference to the response of the staff.

#### 4.2. REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

As indicated in the methodology section (see 3.5.3 above), of the selected sample size of 131 respondents, (all of whom are employees of the African Union Commission located in Addis Ababa), 111 respondents returned fully completed questionnaires. Due to its relevance to the direction adopted in the data analysis and interpretation process, their regional distribution has been used as the primary factor to categorize their responses. As a result, , the analysis indicates that the respondents were drawn from the five regions of Africa namely, North Africa, East Africa, West Africa, Central Africa and Southern Africa.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	North Africa	2	1.8	1.9
	West Africa	15	13.5	13.6
	Central Africa	12	10.8	10.9
	East Africa	70	63.1	63.5
	Southern Africa	11	9.9	10.0
	Other	1	0.9	0.1
Total	111	100.0		

**Table 4 -1: Respondents Regional Distribution**

As depicted in Table 4-1, the East Africa Region had the highest number of respondents comprising 63.5% of the total respondents (n=70) followed by West Africa with 13.6% (n=15), Central Africa had 10.9% of the total respondents (n=12). Southern Africa represents 10% (n=11) followed by North Africa with 1.9% (n=2). 1% (n=1) of the respondents

indicated that they came from both West and Central Africa and were therefore classified under the category “Other”. One possible reason for this distribution could be that the questionnaire was administered in English and there are more English speaking countries in East and Southern Africa. Furthermore, the response rate may also be indicative of the statistics from the Kaizen Institute that it has presence in countries mostly from Eastern and Southern Africa (Kaizen Institute, 2012) and hence the respondents may be likely more sensitized on the Kaizen concept.

### 4.3. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS

Part I of the questionnaire consists of the demographic information of the respondents. These include Gender, Educational background, and year of service in the AUC. The following table depicts Respondents Gender.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Male	78	70.0
	Female	33	30.0
<b>Total</b>		111	

**Table 4-2 Respondents Gender**

As shown in Table 4-2, of the total respondents, 70% (n = 78) were male and the remaining 30% (n = 33) were female. This indicates that the ratio of male to female employees in the organization is not proportional. Within the framework of efforts to promote gender mainstreaming in the AUC as well as in all AUC Member States 2016 was declared, the “Year of Women’s Empowerment and Development towards Africa’s Agenda 2063”. (27<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union).

### 4.4. THE ORGANIZATIONAL LANDSCAPES OF AUC AS INTER-GOVERNMENTAL CONTEXT

As described in Section 1.5 above, the general objective of this study is to assess the implementation of the Kaizen project in the AUC. A supportive environment (leadership, structure, culture) is needed to make Kaizen implementation successful. It is therefore imperative to begin by assessing the social, political and economic characteristics of inter-governmental, multi-national and multi-cultural organization like the AUC and to what extent they influence on Kaizen implementation. Inter-governmental in this context means the governments of multiple nations coming together to form an organization to spearhead their

common interest. This enables the study to address the first research question whose key objective was to understand the broader context of the AUC as an intergovernmental, multi-national and multi-cultural organization and assess the implantation of Kaizen. As derived from the literature, understanding the context in which Kaizen implantation takes place not only facilitates the interpretation of certain behavior and practices but, is also a key prerequisite for any Kaizen process (Ferris et al., 1992). Therefore, in order to understand the context of successful Kaizen implementation at the AUC, this section has focused on reflecting the Social, Political and Economic Landscapes of the organization.

#### **4.4.1. Social Landscape**

In order to better understand the social landscape, key attributes defining the social landscape were considered for this study. These were: size and structure of the organization, diversity, language of communication, and existing communication systems or structures which were discussed under Section 1.3.

##### **4.4.1.1. Structure and Size**

As discussed in the Research Environment/Context (See 1.3), the AUC is one of the 12 Organs and the Secretariat of the African Union, which comprises 55 Member States from the African continent. As such, the AUC is responsible for all the day-to-day management of the Union's affairs and performs key functions like organizing and managing meetings of its Member States and the other Organs; representing the interests of the Union; and strengthening cooperation between the various Member States (AU Handbook, 2017).

In order to carry out its functions, the AUC is governed by members of the Commission. The senior management structure of the AUC is composed of a Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, a team of eight (8) Commissioners and nineteen (19) Directors. The Structure represents several reporting lines and decision-making hierarchy. The success of Kaizen initiative depends on its fit with organizational structure (Douglas & Judge, 2001; Hackman & Wageman, 1995; McNabb & Sepic, 1995). Excess layers of management quite often lead to duplication of duty and responsibility. This has made the lower employees of an organization to leave the quality implementation to be a management's job. In addition, quality has not been taken as a joint responsibility by the management and the employees. Coupled with the notion that management is infallible and therefore it is always right in its decisions, employees have been forced to take up peripheral role in quality improvement. Mechanistic, bureaucratic and authoritative structures, risk aversion and complexity impede successful

Kaizen implementation (Jabnoun, 2005). A suitable infrastructure is required to support this initiative.

As of August 2016, The Commission had 1,743 employees (720 regular and 1023 short-term) spread across the Headquarters and the various Regional Offices in Africa, as well as Representational Offices in United States of America (New York and Washington) and Europe (Brussels and Geneva). However, the majority of staff are located at the Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Staff recruitment takes into account the quota system to ensure each Member State is fairly represented. This explains the large diversity that exists at the AUC. The AUC operates in four working languages namely, French, English, Portuguese and Arabic.

The above findings on the structure and size of the AUC have an influence on the implementation of Kaizen. Juran (1988) sees organization for quality in terms of structure and people. This requires the determination of activities to be performed, the responsibilities associated with the activities, determining job responsibilities and authorities, inter-job relations and communications channel. Kaizen focuses on studying, understanding and improving the processes. Determining critical processes, understanding customers' needs and expectations, developing effective and efficient procedures, clarifying the standards and monitoring quality activities are helpful for the success of the implementation of Kaizen. The employee composition of the AUC denotes diversity in the employee population. Therefore, it is imperative that the existing cultural backgrounds should be taken into consideration because of the attitudes, values and behavior, which influence the responses to new initiatives such as Kaizen by recipients. Managing Kaizen also incorporates an element of managing diversity (Michalak, 2010 & Savolainen, 2013).

#### **4.4.1.2. Communication Practices at the AUC**

Organic structures with low centralization and formalization are more conducive to the successful implementation of Kaizen (Jabnoun, 2005). It is understood that social and structural context of an organization have significant influence on its formal as well as informal communication practices. This in turn affects the process of Kaizen and its effectiveness. Consequently, this section attempts to assess the communication practices of the AUC within the context of its social and structural background. The proposals made in this regard are summarized below.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Chi Square	Sig
Management communicates and shares information on new reforms like Kaizen in good time.	111	3.25	.890	26.85	.027
Where consultants are brought in, they help explain what is happening throughout the process.	111	2.55	.983	24.40	.072
I am given an opportunity to give feedback on reforms that are being implemented at the AUC.	111	2.40	.911	25.53	.099
When there are new initiatives such as Kaizen at the AUC, they are clearly communicated in all AUC working languages.	111	1.67	1.06	23.03	.117

**Table 4-3: Respondents' views and experiences regarding communication practices of the AUC**

Table 4-3 above summarizes the mean value of the views and experiences of employees regarding communication practices of the AUC. The above results indicate that respondents do not have significantly positive views on most issues regarding the communication practices in AUC. However, they also do not have strong negative views on the matter.

To start with a more positive perspective of respondents regarding the communication practices of the organization, the study established a mean score of 3.25 (SD = 0.890) to the statement that the Management communicates and shares information on new reforms like Kaizen in good time. However, their view shifts significantly more towards critical with regards to the other elements of communication practices of the organization. For example, on whether consultants help explain the reforms throughout the process, a mean score of 2.55 (SD = 0.983) is observed. The results imply the limited satisfaction of respondents with the performance of consultants in handling their role of helping to explain the reforms throughout the process. Nonetheless, the relatively high SD indicates that there are still some who appreciate the help of consultants in the process.

Concerning the opportunity for feedback, the view seems to be more skeptical, reflecting a mean score of 2.40 (SD = 0.911). This is an indication that employee feedback is not encouraged. On a similar note, whether changes/reforms are clearly communicated in all AUC working languages, the results reveal 1.67 mean value (SD = 1.068).

In general, the above summary of chi-squares and significance levels (df = 16) (See Table 4-3) the findings further implied that the regional background of the respondents have had significant relation to how they viewed communication practices in the AUC.

Smit, et al. (2002) warns that poor communication can lead to loss in momentum in the quality management initiative. Communication channels and forms are considered key aspects of Kaizen. In this study, the ground for investigating communication channels and forms at the AUC was based on two major factors. First, the fact that a communication policy is required to communicate Kaizen initiatives effectively (Andre, 2013). Secondly, it is pertinent to consider the communication behavior of Kaizen champions as a key determinant of people's attitudes towards the initiative (Gravenhorst *et al.*, 2005).

In the light of this study, the results show new initiatives such as Kaizen are clearly explained and communicated in a timely manner. Where consultants are brought in to help explain what is happening throughout the process the respondents did not agree that the processes are explained adequately by the consultants. The result is also indicative of the fact that employees were not given an opportunity to provide feedback during implementation of Kaizen. In addition, the Kaizen project was not communicated clearly in all four AU working languages. Employees were mostly comfortable with their national languages and lack of communication in all four working languages impacted negatively on training efforts, information-sharing and team-working.

The above results are an indicator that communication channels have not been well addressed at the AUC. However, this could be the case only when one looks at communication from a general perspective because when asked to comment on satisfactory levels of communication with specific reference to Kaizen, respondents indicated they were satisfied. Perhaps, this overwhelming satisfactory level could be attributed to the Project Manager and his team and can be treated as an isolated case.

#### **4.4.2. Political Landscape**

Like the social structure, the political landscape of an organization such as AUC has a great influence on the process and outcome of Kaizen management. Leadership has a crucial role in the success of Kaizen Programmes. Shortell et al., (1995) argued that leadership styles based on command and control were a major obstacle to the application of Kaizen in organizations. Therefore, in order to understand the political landscape of the AUC, the aspect of Leadership Style was examined.

#### 4.4.2.1. AUC Leadership

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Chi Square	Sig.
The leaders at the AUC encourage employees to make the most of their skills and capabilities to their job	111	3.41	.951	11.86	.775
The AUC Leadership has clearly communicated the vision and mission of the AUC	111	2.59	.805	18.77	.041
The AUC Leadership is open-minded and willing to listen to ideas from all categories of staff	111	2.57	.829	8.507	.964
The AUC Leadership is proactive in decision-making	111	2.77	.762	14.338	.495
The AUC Leadership makes difficult decisions	111	3.04	.753	12.28	.703
I am proud to be associated with my Leadership	111	3.69	.763	12.13	.739

**Table 4-4: Respondents' views and experiences regarding the implication of Leadership style and its influence on Kaizen implementation at the AUC**

As depicted in Table. 4-4 above, average mean score of 3.41 (SD = 0.951) of respondents agreed that the AUC leadership encouraged staff to make the best of their skills and capacity.

On whether the AUC Leadership had communicated the Mission and Vision of the Organization a mean score of 2.59 (SD = 0.805) was recorded. Similarly, below average mean score of 2.57 (SD = 0.829) is shown in relation to the Leadership's open mindedness and willingness to listen to ideas from all categories of staff. With regards to the proactiveness of the AUC Leadership in decision-making, the result shows a mean score of 2.77 (SD = 0.762). This is an indication of below average level of satisfaction by the respondents. On proposals 5 and 6, a mean score of 3.04 (SD = 0.753) and 3.69 (SD = 0.763) are shown. Based on the fact that a mean score of 3 is indicative of the average level of satisfaction on this scale, it can be concluded that respondents are moderately satisfied with the overall leadership style and its influence on Kaizen management at the AUC.

As shown on Table 4-4 above, there is a strong statistical evidence with chi square tests and level of significance as summarized above the findings further implied that the respondents' regional background were closely related to their views and experiences regarding the leadership style and its influence in Kaizen implementation in the AUC.

#### 4.5. ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE

Kaizen project is resource intensive which require team of individuals from affected area along with a support from a top management for the entire duration of the project. Failure to provide adequate resources is another cause for the failure of Kaizen (Bhat & Rajashekhar, 2009). Hence, companies struggling financially will not be able to sustain the benefits of Kaizen programmes.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Chi Square	Sig.
Funding or a strong financial base is important in the implementation of major initiatives such as Kaizen	111	4.40	.528	10.25	.035

**Table 4-5: Respondents' view on the importance of finances in successful Implementation of Kaizen**

The results indicate a mean score of 4.40 (SD = 0.528), showing that having a strong financial base is of paramount importance for the implementation of major initiatives such as Kaizen. The result is consistent with the information gathered through an interview with the Kaizen Project Manager who indicated that the initial approximate cost was US\$4,051,027.05.

With a chi-square of 10.25 (df = 8) and significance level of 3.5%, the findings further implied that the multi-cultural nature of respondents have significant impact on to how they view the importance of finance and there is strong statistical evidence that shows funding or a strong financial base is important in the implementation of major initiatives such as Kaizen.

The AUC's economic landscape was largely tested on the AUC's budgetary provisions and funders. According to the interview with the project manager, the project had consumed approximately US\$4.3 million since its inception in 2013. In addition to this, the survey showed that in implementing Kaizen, a strong financial base was a key (Table. 4-5).

This basically confirms the literature which states that the availability of strong financial resources has a direct effect on the successful implementation of Kaizen. (Kraatz & Zajac, 2001). (Jabnoun, 2005) asserts that the implementation of Kaizen involves high cost, effort and time.

## 4.6 MEASUREMENT UNITS (VARIABLES) AS FACTORS SUCCESS

The main objective of this study is to assess the impact of the measurement units on successful implementation of Kaizen within the African Union Commission (AUC). This objective was guided by the research question: How is the implementation of Kaizen project influence by an inter-governmental and multi-cultural environment. More specifically, measurement variables (units) such as Organization Policy and awareness, Education and Training, Cultural Factors, Internal Processes (Consolidation, Planning, Problem Identification and Solving) and Monitoring, Assessment and Recognition were assessed in terms of their potential roles in the successful implementation of Kaizen in the AUC. According to Zedatol (2008), cited by Oumar Mohammed (2012), mean score 3.80 is high, 3.40 – 3.79 is moderate and below 3.39 is low. Therefore, the measurement variables (units) in the study are considered according to the above thresholds.

### 4.6.1. Summary of Univariate Analysis Results of Measurement Units (Variables)

This section presents Descriptive Statistics in the form of Mean and Standard Deviation for the various components of measurement units and successful implementation of Kaizen.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Organization Policy & Awareness	111	4.48	.669
Education and Training	111	3.91	.526
Cultural Factors	111	3.61	.694
AUC Internal Processes	111	3.10	.644
Monitoring, Assessment & Recognition	111	3.69	.781
Successful Implementation of Kaizen	111	3.80	.886

**Table 4-6: Descriptive Statistics for Components of the measurement units and Successful Implementation of Kaizen**

Table. 4-6 shows the Mean and Standard Deviation of the measurement units such as: Organization Policy & Awareness; Education and Training; Cultural Factors; AUC Internal Processes (consolidation, planning, problem identification and solving) and Monitoring, Assessment and Recognition rated by respondents. The results indicate that the level of the existence of Organization Policy and awareness among AUC employees has a high mean result of 4.48 with 0.669 SD. Based on the fact that mean of 3.80 considered high, the results

of the study are indicative of the existence of organizational policy and high level of awareness on this scale. According to Zedatol (2008), mean score, the result of this study shows that the high mean result for Education and Training (M=3.91, SD=0.52), and Successful implementation of Kaizen (M=3.80, SD=0.88) and moderate mean scoring variables such as: Monitoring, Assessment & Recognition (M=3.69, SD=0.78), Cultural Factors (M=3.61, SD=0.69) and AUC internal processes (consolidation, planning, problem identification and solving) (M= 3.10, SD=0.644). The low SD indicates that the mean value is representative of the rate given by the majority of the respondents.

**4.6.2. Measurement Units (Variables) as Factors for Successful Implementation of Kaizen**

This analysis is used to assess the relationship between the measurement variables and success of the implementation of Kaizen. The measurement variables were guided by a consolidated model adopted from the research work of Joseph M. Juran, William E. Deming & Harold Kerzner. In this study, the following variables were considered: Organization Policy and Awareness, Education and Training, Cultural factors, AUC Internal Processes (Consolidation, Planning, Problem Identification & solving). Therefore, the researcher attempted to ascertain whether there are any identifiable critical success factors (CSF) that have a potential influence on the successful implementation of Kaizen. Using the Analysis of variance (ANOVA), the impact of the variables were investigated. The discussions on the theoretical as well as empirical implications of the results are presented under the tables of the respective measurement variables.

**4.6.2.1. Organizational Policy and Awareness**

ANOVA was used to test the effect of the measurement variables. Organizational policy and awareness was the first measurement variable that the researcher was interested in. As seen from the literature, Organizational policy and awareness signify the existence of management policy to support the continuous improvement efforts and to assess the level of awareness of the Kaizen concept among the employees.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.925	4	.231	.547	.702
Within Groups	44.362	105	.422		
Total	45.287	109			

**Table 4-7: Overall Facets of Organizational Policy & Awareness**

The results show that the above ANOVA test is not significant  $F(4,105) = .547; p > 0.05$ . This indicates that the level of organizational policy and awareness to support the continuous improvement efforts do not differ significantly. The organization policy and awareness variable essentially helps to understand the relationship between having a policy on continuous improvement initiative and awareness of such policy to the success of the implementation. Relating these findings to the Kaizen case study used in this research, this research has shown that employees were aware of the Kaizen concept as applied to the AUC. However, the findings show that a substantial number of respondents indicated that they were not aware nor not sure if there exists a policy supporting quality improvement initiative, adding to that they were not satisfied with the level of commitment by senior management. Lack of top management commitment to and involvement in Kaizen can lead to failure in as many as 80 per cent of the firms. Juran and Gryna (1993) attribute the failure of the quality management initiatives to lack of top managers' involvement. They related quality excellence of Japanese companies to top management commitment to continuous improvement. Since the benefits of Kaizen come gradually and its effects are felt usually on a long term basis, it is obvious that Kaizen can thrive only under top management that has a genuine concern for the long-term health of the organization. In addition, respondents did not agree with the statement that the Kaizen implementation methodologies fit for AUC are established through practices. Many of the failures of Kaizen projects are attributed to its implementation methods (Claver et al., 2003). Although many quality management gurus and consultants have contributed to the evolution of Kaizen, relatively few offered practical frameworks and methods for operationalizing its principles. Hence, there is a need for holistic, consistent and coherent methodology to achieve sustainable results. This goes to show how much importance the employees attach to the participative, consultative approach and has been a high factor for success in the implementation of Kaizen.

#### **4.6.2.2. Education and Training**

Then, the interest was whether or not the Education and Training variable is a factor for successful implementation of Kaizen. As drawn from the literature, poor education and training are obstacle to the development and implementation of Kaizen programmes (Huq, 2005). Successful implementation of Kaizen requires managers and employees to have the appropriate knowledge, skills and expertise. Education and training have important roles in securing commitment and behavioral change towards continuous improvement.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.439	4	.110	.388	.023
Within Groups	29.740	105	.283		
Total	30.180	109			

**Table 4-8: Overall facets of Education and Training**

The results show that the above ANOVA test is significant  $F(4, 105) = .388; p < 0.05$ . This indicates that education and training is significant and shows that the respondents needed additional education and training for them to be able understand the various Kaizen tools and techniques. As pointed out earlier in the literature review (Chapter 2), education and training have important roles in securing commitment and behavioral change towards continuous improvement. Education and training force employees to not only acquire the adequate knowledge and skills to perform their jobs, but also to possess specific values, knowledge and skills associated with Kaizen issues and activities. The results therefore show that respondents had a strong belief in undertaking training organized by the Kaizen consultants or Champions. Crosby (1989) highlights the need for employee commitment and involvement to make continuous improvement happen. This requires creating a common understanding of the initiative by all employees and showing the importance of employee involvement to keep and maintain the momentum. In a nutshell, this is an indication that employees' readiness to undertake the necessary education and training for successful implementation of the Kaizen activities. Empowerment and ownership are critical factors of Kaizen implementation. Douglas & Judge (2001) assert that organizations that empower employees to adapt their processes to environmental change are better able to use the Kaizen competitive advantage.

Consequently, intervention should be put in place to provide adequate education and training. This resonates with the interview of the Kaizen project manager who revealed that the number of trainings the Kaizen project team had to deal with during implementation were very minimal.

#### **4.6.2.3. Cultural Factors**

Cultural factors were the third variable that the researcher was interested in. Cultural factors are a function of employee commitment, information sharing and team work. In order to assess this variable respondents were requested to indicate how much importance they attach to work goals:

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3.623	4	.362	1.692	.093
Within Groups	21.407	105	.214		
Total	25.030	109			

**Table 4-9: Overall Facets of Cultural Factors**

Table 4-9 shows that the results of ANOVA test is not significant  $F(4,105) = 1.692$ ;  $p > 0.05$ . This indicates that the level of employee commitment, information sharing and team work does not differ significantly with respect to success of Kaizen. The cultural factors variable essentially helps to understand the employee commitment, information sharing and team work vis a vis success of Kaizen implementation relationship. The results of this study indicate respondent's perception that the Kaizen program could bring about improvements in service delivery in the AUC. This is confirmed by the results of the case study, which indicates that the Kaizen program will bring about improvements within the AUC.

Relating these findings to the Kaizen case study used in this research, this research has shown that a relatively significant number of the respondents agree with the statement that employees perception on the effects of the multicultural environment (MCE) on information sharing. In addition, respondents agree with the statement that the MCE has been an impediment to team work. A relatively significant number of the respondents stated that they were not satisfied with their level of involvement in Kaizen implementation. This goes to show how much importance the employees attach to the participative, consultative approach and how perhaps, information sharing and team work has been a high factor for success in the implementation of Kaizen.

#### **4.6.2.4. Internal Processes (Consolidation, Planning, Problem Identification & Solving)**

This variable was considered in order to assess the level of understanding of the objectives of AUC, definition of processes, planning, and defining customer expectation.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.866	4	.217	.440	.019
Within Groups	51.718	105	.493		
Total	52.585	109			

**Table 4-10: Overall Facets of Internal Processes**

The results show that the above ANOVA test is significant  $F(4, 105) = .440; p < 0.05$ . This variable was assessed to determine respondent's level of understanding in terms of their respective departmental as well as AUC's, definition of process, Planning, and defining customer expectation. To start with on a positive note, respondents are clear about their departmental objective as well as AUC's. On the other hand, when asked their involvement during planning, problem identification and solving, the results reveal to the contrary. On the issue of whether employees were conversant with the use of various Kaizen tools for problem identification and solving, the results shows that they had under gone the training on Kaizen, however, they are not clear on how to use the various tools.

#### **4.6.2.5. Monitoring, Assessment & Recognition**

Monitoring, Assessment & Recognition was the final variable that the researcher was interested in. One of the cardinal components of the Kaizen concept is the selection and installation of appropriate tools for monitoring and assessment of its progress. In order to assess this variable respondents were requested to indicate whether they were aware of such tools, and if they were being utilized in practice:

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.888	4	.722	1.368	.039
Within Groups	55.411	105	.528		
Total	58.299	109			

**Table 4-11: Overall Facets of Monitoring, Assessment & Recognition**

Table 4-11 presents the results of ANOVA test, which is significant  $F(4, 105) = 1.368; p < 0.05$ . The result shows that a majority of respondents did not know about the tools and system for monitoring and evaluation is in place and utilized. On a similar note, when asked if there is a system for recognition and reward, a negative response rate was recorded. As discussed in the literature review, Morgan et al., (1994) lack of incentive to support the Kaizen programme and failure to design reward system to link employees' earnings with achieving quality objectives are obstacles to employees' commitment to and involvement in Kaizen programmes.

## **4.7 ATTITUDES TOWARDS SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF KAIZEN**

This serves as the final reflection of the analysis and discussion of results regarding the change process and environment in the AUC in the context of Kaizen. It summarizes the

views of respondents on the implementation of Kaizen and its perceived benefits to them and the organization at large.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Chi Square	Sig.
The introduction of Kaizen has been of significant benefits to the Commission.	110	4.45	.568	24.00	.991
The am satisfied with the degree of communication and information sharing on the concept of Kaizen as a whole ( <i>The reasons for/purpose of its introduction and its benefits</i> ) by AUC Leadership and Project management team prior to and during implementation?	110	2.94	1.265	18.80	.776
Staff members were receptive to the introduction of Kaizen.	110	3.80	.886	10.32	.658

**Table 4-12: Respondents' views and attitudes towards successful implementation of Kaizen and their involvement in the change process at the AUC**

As depicted in Table. 4-12 above, a mean score of 4.45 (SD = 0.568), which is indicative of the fact that the introduction of Kaizen has been of significant benefit to the Commission. Reacting to the degree of communication and information sharing during the implementation of Kaizen, a below average mean score of 2.94 (SD = 1.265) is reported. On staff receptiveness to the introduction of Kaizen, a mean score of 3.80 (SD = 0.886) is reflected.

As shown in the above Table. 4-12, there is strong statistical evidence with chi square test  $P = 24$ ,  $df = 8$  and significance level of 99.1% that shows the introduction of Kaizen has been of significant benefits to the Commission. Similarly with a chi square of 10.32 ( $df = 12$ ) and significance level of 66% the findings further implied that staff was receptive to the introduction of Kaizen. Nonetheless, as to the level of satisfaction with the degree of communication and information sharing on the concept of Kaizen as a whole a chi square of 18.8 ( $df = 12$ ) and significance level of 77.6% is indicative of low level satisfaction on the degree of change in the working culture.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This Chapter of the study sets the Conclusions and makes Recommendations based on the findings of the research. The Conclusions are drawn in line with the objectives of the study and in an attempt to answer its main research question. The Chapter ends by giving some reflections on the entire research process.

#### 5.1. CONCLUSIONS

Successful project management has always been a challenge in many organizations and as noted earlier in the literature, the failure rates are high the degree of which depends on the type of transformation (Michalak, 2010). Managing new initiatives such as Kaizen in an inter-governmental, multi-cultural organization becomes even more complex as studies have shown that process management is largely determined by behavior and attitudes which vary from one country to another (Savolainen, 2013). Changing processes and redesigning work are just part of the Kaizen management. The real essence of Kaizen lies in its ability to change cultures and attitudes. Changing the way that the things are being done is one of the biggest challenges because breaking old habits implies to forget the old concept and to find more creative ways of doing things. In a continental organization such as the AUC, this would even be more complex because it is hard to generalize nationalities as each country is dominated by smaller tribes with cultural differences at tribal levels. The following conclusions can be drawn from this study:

This study has clearly highlighted the existence a number of challenges which have been faced by the AUC as an intergovernmental, multinational institution. The challenges range from those common to public sector organization to specific challenges faced as a multi-national and multi-cultural institutions.

#### **RQ.1 What are the major contributing factors to the effective implementation of Kaizen?**

According to Imai (1986) one of the best approaches that can help companies to effectively implement Kaizen is through benchmarking. This is because through benchmarking firms can learn and adopt certain business process that they might consider as beneficial to be

implemented at their place. Therefore, many of the Kaizen activities, also known as Toyota Production System (TPS), were benchmarked based on the initiatives done at Toyota Motor Company. The work of Kaizen which involves incremental changes rather than radical changes has enabled people involved in the Kaizen activities to be easily adaptable to those changes, thus, formalized those changes into their daily routine activities. Analysis by principal components was applied for finding the critical success factors for Kaizen; results indicate that seven factors are the most important: education and training in operators, communication process, documentation and evaluation of projects results, human resources integration, management commitment, and customer focus.

## **RQ2. What are the challenges faced by AUC in the implementation of Kaizen?**

The findings have shown implementation challenges that exist in the Inter-governmental institution under study. To begin with they all suffer from the inherent problem of being service organizations whose products are intangible. The communication aspect and deployment or dissemination of policy was found to be weak meaning that even well intended projects could result in being resisted by staff. Adequate awareness of the Kaizen program was not done resulting in the organization not being ready for the Kaizen program.

Management commitment to the Kaizen program was weak creating a major weakness in the implementation process as this is a critical prerequisite for success of Kaizen implementation (Kesavan et al., 2007). Whilst Kaizen emphasises on efficient system, the problem created by the many layers of bureaucracy also referred to as the ‘Auditor problem’ was also found to exist in the AUC exacerbated by the excessive pre-audit checks.(European Union Commission, 2015). Appropriate measures for processes had not been developed to meaningfully measure and access improvement on key processes and enable benchmarking to be done. This includes the unavailability of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and Operational Master Plan (OMP). The battle for resources was evidenced and many process owners were not clear on the definition of customers to the processes under their execution. The problem of inadequate funding was also found in the AUC and closely linked to it was the problem of inadequate staff training. There was also the problem of inadequate structures for coordination, existence of silo operations, insufficient integration of operations between Directorates, and the lack of a reward and recognition system. In summary other problems found were general resistance to change, lack of staff commitment, resistance to team-work and lack of professionalism due to political influence.

In conclusion despite some problems pertaining to conditional political support, over specialization, poor planning, inadequate information systems and vague rules and standards highlighted in the literature review were not found in the AUC, it can be concluded that most of the challenges of Kaizen Implementation in the single-government public institutions are also evident in the Inter-governmental set-up of the AUC.

### **RQ.3 Does the multi-national (multi-cultural) environment pose a barrier to implementation of Kaizen?**

The findings of the research indicate that there are challenges to the implementation of the Kaizen program created by the multicultural environment (MCE) of the AUC. First and foremost there is the communication barrier created by having multi-national employees coming from nations with different official languages negatively affecting information-sharing and team-working. Then there is the problem that people are coming from different education systems, working styles and methods which they believe are better than others resulting in bad team-working relations. A general negative attitude towards team-working and information sharing was evidenced from respondents with North-African ethnic and cultural origin. Other challenges found in the multicultural environment were, egoism- i.e. feeling by some people from certain regions they were superior to others and their views are always correct, ethnocentrism i.e. the tendency to relate only with people from same ethnic and cultural origins, lack of respect for diversity. Needless to say, the distribution of the responses, with only two respondents from North Africa despite so many reminders is itself an indication of the cultural divides existing in the organization. All these factors lead to bad team-working relationships and hence it can be concluded that the multi-cultural environment poses a barrier to the implementation of the Kaizen program.

### **RQ4.Are the processes well defined to facilitate the successful implementation of Kaizen?**

The majority of respondents indicated either that they are not clear about the processes under their execution or the processes are not well defined from the start to the end. As mentioned in the literature review, Kaizen focuses on improvements to the processes that lead to delivery of the service and hence the processes need to be well defined and clear if any meaningful improvement is to be made. In conclusion the processes in the AUC are not clear enough and well defined to facilitate the successful implementation of the Kaizen program.

## **5.2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings and conclusion established in this study and in response to the research question, the researcher forwards some key recommendations for future action and to help address the problems identified so far.

The recommendations will aid all parties involved ( management, staff, suppliers, customers, and other stakeholders of the AUC) in general and senior management in particular, to build an environment where it is possible to maintain operational excellence, customer satisfaction and most importantly to promote a culture of continuous improvement in the entire the organization through effective implementation of Kaizen.

Similar to the conclusion part of this chapter, the recommendations are classified into seven sections. The recommendations proffer solutions for observed gaps related to the practices regarding communication, structure for coordination, commitment, team work and information sharing, staff training, generic departmental analysis, appraisal and feedback and reward system.

### **5.2.1. Communication**

The AUC should conduct adequate sensitization on communication of the Kaizen Project and the associated benefits, and for future quality improvement programmes, the sensitization should be carried out prior to implementation, in order to overcome resistance and achieve better results. Communication should go hand-in-hand with the dissemination of the relevant policies and how it relates to the attainment of the overall vision and mission of the organization. It is essential that the language barriers be eliminated and information disseminated in all the four working languages of the AUC (English, French, Portuguese and Arabic) which in turn would facilitate effective communication and reduction of resistance to the Kaizen Project and other change initiatives.

### **5.2.2. Structure for Coordination**

The Kaizen program needs to be well coordinated if the objectives are to be achieved. Hence a coordination structure on a full time basis needs to be put in place. This can be drawn from existing staff across the organization, hiring of outside experts or a combination of both. An example of a structure is contained in section 2.4.1. Organizational learning should be encouraged so that employees receive the necessary tools and knowledge.

### **5.2.3. Commitment, Team-Work and Information-Sharing**

#### **i. Management Commitment**

The AUC top management should demonstrate visible commitment and set the tone for the full implementation and roll out of the Kaizen. One way of achieving this is through visible presence and participation at the Kaizen training sessions and active participation in the Kaizen activities.

#### **ii. Staff Commitment**

The commitment of staff needs to be achieved through the sensitisation programmes and effective rewards and recognition systems. Furthermore, the visible demonstration of top - management commitment is one way of obtaining the commitment of other staff.

#### **iii. Team-Work and Information-Sharing**

The following are included in the statement of organizational values of the organization;

- Respect for diversity and team work;
- Efficiency and professionalism; and
- Information and knowledge sharing (Zuma, 2016).

The organization should actively promote and institutionalise these values through sensitisation programs, which will also explain to all staff the link between these values and the requirements of the Kaizen programme in line with the promotion of the service culture as a means to achieving the mission of the organization.

### **5.2.4 Staff Training, Tools and Techniques for Kaizen Programs**

It is also recommended that the AUC define the appropriate tools for use in the Kaizen Programmes, adopt the tools and consistently apply them to improve the key processes. Employees should be equipped with the knowledge and skills to use these tools through adequate training and education. This can be done adequately by training the champions who can then train other staff through in-house trainings sessions.

## **5.2.5 Generic Departmental Analysis**

### **i. Alignment of Departmental Objectives**

The AUC should conduct a generic departmental analysis at a macro-level to provide information to the micro-level analysis to ensure the departmental objectives are aligned with the organizational strategy.

### **ii. Definition of Key Processes**

The departmental analysis should also include a determination of the key processes which should then be clearly defined from beginning to the end. The processes owner should also be identified.

### **iii. Definition of Customers**

Having identified the key processes the AUC should then define the customers to these processes. These should be categorised into internal customers for those processes ending within the organization as well as the external customers. The results of the analysis should be documented in an implementation manual.

## **5.2.6 Appraisal and Feedback**

In order to access the progress of the implementation process the AUC needs to put in place an appropriate mechanism for appraisal and feedback. This should involve the development of internal and external performance measures to assess customer satisfaction.

## **5.2.7 Recognition and Reward**

Finally, the Organization should institute a programme to recognize and reward accomplishments made in quality improvement to serve as encouragement to all the staff. According to Morgan & Murgatroyd (1994, p.177) 'management commitment is also seen in the effective rewards and recognition strategies which reinforce quality initiatives'.

### **5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

The present study had some limitations. First, since the study was confined to the African Union Commission, the conclusions in this study cannot be generalized to all Inter-governmental organizations. Second, this report presents the preliminary results findings of the ongoing Kaizen project. Thus, other elements of Kaizen, such as Just-in-Time (JIT), Quality Control Circle (QC Circle), other quality control tools and Value Stream Mapping, and Material Handling remain unaddressed in the present study.

To complement findings of the present study however, further study covering different organizations with the same inter-governmental and multi-national context as the AUC could be studied. This would provide deeper and wider understanding of challenges in the implementation of Kaizen Project in this organizational context.

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**APPENDIX A: AFRICAN UNION MEMBER STATES ACCORDING TO REGION**

<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>West</b>	<b>Central</b>	<b>Southern</b>
Algeria	Comoros	Benin	Burundi	Angola
Egypt	Djibouti	Burkina Faso	Cameroon	Botswana
Libya	Eritrea	Cape Verde	Central African Republic	Lesotho
Mauritania	Ethiopia	Ivory Coast	Chad	Malawi
Tunisia	Kenya	Gambia	Congo	Mozambique
Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic	Madagascar	Ghana	Democratic Republic of Congo	Namibia
Morocco	Mauritius	Guinea	Equatorial Guinea	South Africa
	Rwanda	Guinea Bissau	Gabon	Swaziland
	Seychelles	Liberia	Sao Tome and Principe	Zambia
	Somalia	Mali		Zimbabwe
	Sudan	Niger		
	Tanzania	Nigeria		
	Uganda	Senegal		
	South Sudan	Sierra		
		Togo		

## APPENDIX B: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

**Addis Ababa University**  
**School of Commerce Distance Education**  
**Graduate Program**  
**Master of Arts in Project Management**

Dear Participants,

My name is Tefsehit Beyene Mulatu, a candidate for Master of Arts in Project Management postgraduate studies at Addis Ababa University School of Commerce. I am working on my Thesis titled: **Assessing the Implementation of Kaizen Project in a Public Inter-Governmental Context: The Case of the African Union Commission (AUC)**.

This instrument is sent to you in order to assess your experiences, views, and attitudes on the use and implementation challenges of KAIZEN project in the AUC. Your responses to questions in this instrument shall provide the study with the chance to generate balanced and objective findings on the subject matter.

I pledge that the responses you provide here will be used for no other purposes than those specified above; your anonymity shall be maintained; and that the outputs of the study will not be manipulated towards any end whatsoever. As a primary stakeholder, your cooperation shall be of great meaning to the process and outcomes of this study and is duly appreciated.

The questionnaire will take about ten minutes and it is organized in five sections:

**Introduction:** Demographic background and employment history,

**PART I:** The Social, Political and Economic Landscape of the AUC

**PART II:** Organizational Policy and Awareness,

**PART III:** Education and Training,

**PART IV:** Cultural Factors,

**PART V:** AUC Internal Processes (Consolidation, Planning, Problem Identification and Solving),

**Part VI:** Monitoring, Assessment and Recognition, and

**Part VII:** Success of the implementation of Kaizen

Should you have any queries on this questionnaire, please feel free to contact me at [btfehit@gmail.com](mailto:btfehit@gmail.com) or call me on Ext. 2759.

Thank You for Your Cooperation!

To proceed to the questionnaire, please click the link below and when you have completed it, simply click “SUBMIT” to return your questionnaire.

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1hko\\_8t3cZAzUGNmezNvOG7z24LIEEdGzVqH3QcxNNxM/edit](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1hko_8t3cZAzUGNmezNvOG7z24LIEEdGzVqH3QcxNNxM/edit)

Thank You for Your Cooperation!

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## APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRE

### Introduction: Demographic and Job Profiles/Background of Respondents

1. **What is your gender?**  
1. Male      2. Female
2. **What is your age category?**  
1. 18.-29      2. 30-45      3. 46-60      4. Above 60
3. **Which of the following regions are you from?**  
1. North Africa, 2. Southern Africa, 3. West Africa, 4. East Africa, Central Africa, 6. Other
4. **Please indicate your level of education**  
High School Certificate (10/12th grade completed)  
Certificate (technical/professional)  
Diploma  
First Degree  
Second Degree and Above  
Other (Specify)
5. **Please indicate your year of service at the AUC.**  
Up to 1 year  
Up to 5 years  
Up to 10 years  
Up to 15 years  
Up to 20 years  
>20 years
6. **Please specify your present employment type (form of employment)**  
Short - term contract (6 months - 2 years)  
Regular contract (Continuing)  
Consultant  
Other (please specify)

### PART I: RESPONDENT'S EXPERIENCES AND VIEWS REGARDING THE COMMUNICATION PRACTICES IN HIS/HER COMPANY.

Please rate your responses based on your views and experience regarding the **COMMUNICATION PRACTICES** in your organization. The highest score is 5 points and is selected if you "strongly agree" with the message conveyed in the statement. Subsequently 4 points imply that you "agree" while 3 points mean you are "neutral" on the issue. On the other hand 2 points represent the notion that you "disagree" with the assumption of that particular statement. The lowest score is 1 point and reflects that you "strongly Disagree" with the message conveyed in the statement. Depending on your level of agreement, click the box mark against each statement under the scale that represents your view. *For efficient space utilization and simplicity, the following acronyms have been used to represent your responses.*

*Strongly Agree=SA*  
*Agree=A*  
*Neutral=N*  
*Disagree=DA*  
*Strongly Disagree=SDA*

**Note:** the questions are provided in statement forms that convey a positive note. This approach is chosen for purposes of consistency & simplicity during analysis and interpretation of data. Please put your answers as fairly and objectively as possible.

	SA	A	N	DA	SDA
<i><b>The Social, Landscape</b></i>					
Management communicates and shares information on new reforms like KAIZEN in good time					
Where consultants are brought in, they help explain what is happening throughout the process					
I am given an opportunity to give feedback on reforms that are being implemented at the AUC					
When there are changes/reforms at the AUC, they are clearly communicated in all AUC working languages					
<i><b>Political Landscape</b></i>					
The leaders at the AUC encourage employees to make the most of their skills and capabilities to their job					
The AUC Leadership has clearly communicated the vision and mission of the AUC					
The AUC Leadership is open-minded and willing to listen to ideas from all categories of staff					
The AUC Leadership is proactive in decision-making					
The AUC Leadership makes difficult decisions					
I am proud to be associated with my Leadership					
<i><b>Economic Landscape</b></i>					
Funding or a strong financial base is important in the implementation of major initiatives such as KAIZEN					

### *II. Organizational Policy and Awareness*

	SA	A	N	DA	SDA
I understand the KAIZEN Concept and its application to the AUC					
I am aware of the existing organizational policy which supports the quality improvement of systems and processes in the AUC					
The KAIZEN concept has been effectively communicated to all staff in the AUC					
Your supervisor demonstrates visible commitment to the implementation of the KAIZEN Program					
Senior Management of the AUC has demonstrated visible commitment to the implementation of the KAIZEN Program					
My job involves execution of day-to-day financial or administrative processes					
I believe the KAIZEN implementation methodologies fit for AUC are established through practices.					
The ground work for introducing the KAIZEN approach throughout AUC is laid out.					

### *III. Education and Training*

	SA	A	N	DA	SDA
I believe it is important to undertake trainings organized by the KAIZEN Consultants or the KAIZEN Champions on the KAIZEN concept and its application to the AUC					
<b><i>Which one of the statements below would best respond to your situation in understanding the various tools and techniques involved in KAIZEN Program?</i></b>					
I need introductory training to understand the various tools and techniques involved in the Kaizen Program					
I need additional education and training to understand the various tools and techniques involved in the Kaizen Program					
Even if additional education and training is provided, it would be difficult for me to understand the various tools and techniques involved in the Kaizen Program					
My academic and professional background has enabled me to understand the various tools and techniques involved in the Kaizen Program					
I understand the various tools and techniques involved in the Kaizen Program regardless of my academic and professional background					

**IV. Cultural Factors**

	SA	A	N	DA	SDA
The KAIZEN Program can bring about improvements to service delivery in the AUC					
<b><i>Which one of the statements below would best respond to your situation in relation to the sharing of information in the context of the KAIZEN Program?</i></b>					
The multi-cultural environment has had no effect on sharing of information in the AUC					
The multi-cultural environment has negatively affected the sharing of information in the AUC					
The multi-cultural environment has assisted the sharing of information in the AUC					
The multi-cultural environment has positively affected the sharing of information in the AUC					
I do not believe in the sharing of information					
<b><i>Which one of the statements below would best respond to your situation in relation to teamwork in the context of the KAIZEN Program?</i></b>					
The multi-cultural environment of the AUC has been an impediment to team work					
The multi-cultural environment of the AUC has had no effect on team work					
The multi-cultural environment of the AUC has helped to develop team work					
The multi-cultural environment of the AUC is the driving force to develop team work					
I do not believe in team work					

**V. AUC Internal Processes ( Consolidation, Planning, Problem Identification & Solving)**

	SA	A	N	DA	SDA
The objectives of my department is clear to me					
The overall objectives of the AUC clear to me					
I am clear on how to use the KAIZEN tools for problem identification and problem solving					
<b><i>Which one of the statements below would best respond to your situation in relation to the processes to be improved under the KAIZEN Program?</i></b>					
The processes under my execution are not well defined from start to end					
I am not clear about what it meant by processes in the context of the Kaizen Program					
The processes under my execution are well defined from start to end					
Some processes under my execution are well defined from start to the end while others are not					
It is impossible to define the processes under my execution from start to end					
<b><i>Which one of the statements below would best respond to your situation in relation to the "Customer" in the context of KAIZEN Program?</i></b>					
I do not have "Customers" as my processes roles are entirely internal to the organization					

The “Customers” to my processes have not been well defined and their expectations are not clear to me					
The “Customers” to my processes have been well defined but their expectations are not clear to me					
The “Customers” to my processes have been well defined and their expectations are clear to me					
I do not expect “Customers” as the AUC is a not-for-profit organization					
During problem solving sessions, we make an effort to get the opinions and ideas of all team members' before making a decision					

**VI. Monitoring, Assessment and Recognition**

	SA	A	N	DA	SDA
I would say that the tools & systems for monitoring & assessment of the progress in the implementation of KAIZEN Program have been put in place and are utilized					
<i>Which one of the statements below would best respond to your situation in relation to the system for recognition and reward within the AUC in the context of the KAIZEN Program?</i>					
Though I have contributed significantly to the implementation of Kaizen project, my contribution has not been recognized by AUC					
There is no system for recognition and reward in the AUC related to the implementation of Kaizen project					
My contribution to the implementation of the Kaizen project has been adequately recognized and rewarded					
Though my contribution has not been recognized, the system for recognition and reward is in place and is adequate					
I am not sure if there is a system for recognition and reward in the AUC in relation to the Kaizen Project					
Management offers incentives or rewards when staff are reluctant to cooperate with a new program, such as KAIZEN					

**VII. Successful Implementation of Kaizen**

	SA	A	N	DA	SDA
The introduction of Kaizen has significant benefits to the Commission					
The am satisfied with the degree of communication and information sharing on the concept of Kaizen as a whole (The reasons for/purpose of its introduction and its benefits) by AUC Leadership and Project management team prior to and during implementation?					
Staff members were receptive in the introduction of Kaizen					

## **APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

### **SEMI –STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

#### **SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW AND RESPONSES**

### **CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE KAIZEN QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME IN THE AUC**

**Date:** 4<sup>th</sup> July, 2017

**Interviewees:** Shinichi Mori: Team Leader (JICA)

**Venue:** Office of the ITP Coordinator,  
AHRM Department, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Building C, AUC-HQ

#### **QUESTIONS**

*When was the KAIZEN “Pilot phase” launched?*

#### **Answer**

Late 2009, around December

*How was the idea of implementing the KAIZEN program in the AUC mooted? (Was it in response to a particular problem or not?)*

#### **Answer**

The program was the idea of the former Deputy Chairperson, H.E. Mwencha as part of the ITP [Institutional Transformation programme] and his idea was to start with HQ and latter roll out to the regional offices.

*When was the KAIZEN “Implementation phase “restarted?”*

Back in October, 2014

*Is there any policy supporting the implementation of the KAIZEN program.*

#### **Answer**

The program is supported by the strategic plan of the commission as part of the ITP under the pillar enhancing the capacity of the Commission.

*How many staffs have been trained by the KAIZEN Champions?*

**Answer**

A total of 130 staff were trained (at the Pilot phase) as Kaizen champions by the consultants from India and presented with certificates. The last training was in March 2010.

*How many staffs have been trained by the KAIZEN Champions?*

**Answer**

The idea was that the champions trained by the Kaizen consultants would train other staff members but this has not been done. In March 2014, some champions were requested to submit processes which then could be used to apply the Kaizen tools to see how these processes could be improved, but there was little commitment shown by the champions and the exercise did not take off. Plans are there to request funding from the JAICA [Japan International Cooperation Agency] who has since shown interest in the program to fund the re-training of the champions and also training of some more staff.

*In your opinion, are the KAIZEN champions adequately trained on the application of the various KAIZEN tools to be able to train others?*

**Answer**

No. They are not adequately trained except for a few and hence the plan to request JAICA for the training.

*What is the total budget per year allocated to the KAIZEN program since its launch?*

**Answer**

Since the launch of the program, the project is said to have been financed by the Spanish contribution which was not received until late 2014, but even though these funds were not specifically allocated for the Kaizen activities and moreover most of the activities proposed under Kaizen were not approved for funding under this budget line for 2013. For 2014 a budget of about US \$175,000 is available but this is only enough for the emoluments of the Kaizen Assistant Coordinator and cannot fund any other activities.

*Is the budget allocated for the KAIZEN program adequate?*

**Answer**

No. Like earlier mentioned, this budget is inadequate.

***What is the structure which has been put in place to spearhead the implementation of the Kaizen Program and how has it been received by staff?***

**Answer**

We have also been trying to convince management to establish a Kaizen unit but our proposal has not yet been accepted. At the moment there is the Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator. I would not say how they have been received by staff as the unit is not yet there.

***What are the major implementation challenges you have faced with regard to the multi-cultural environment of the AUC?***

**Answer**

Everyone seems to have their own interpretation of the concept. Among the champions who were trained only a few have shown commitment. At first, all of them showed commitment most likely to see what was in it for them, but later, if you ask them to do something they do not respond. There was an idea to provide incentives to some staff but how can you give incentives without staff commitment. Moreover a request to have some incentives provided to some deserving staff was rejected by top-management on the basis that there was no budget provision for that. Also some sectors like the Francophone [former French colonies] were not happy with the training saying that the papers were only done in English. Also some cultural blocks have expressed tiredness over the Kaizen issue saying that it is wasting their time.

***Auditor Problem- What challenges to the efficiency of the processes being improved by Kaizen would you say has been caused by the bureaucracy of the organization and in particular systems put in place for the internal control system and the audit checks and balances.***

**Answer**

I do not think there is much of the problem at the moment as the program is just being implemented. However from the process mapping carried out during the training of champions most of the delays in processes identified is due to many redundant layers of bureaucracy in the name of internal control which could be done away with.

***Termed as 'Turfism' is a problem common to organizations whereby there are battles between one section and another within the same organization for resources, power and influence. Have you experienced any of this in relation to the Implementation of Kaizen?***

**Answer**

The common problem we have faced in this regard is whereby some staffs are allocated competing activities by their line supervisors coinciding with the same timings for Kaizen activities and hence are left with no time for the Kaizen activities.

*There may be concerns from staff like loss of jobs resulting from increased efficiency has the program gains ground which may cause some resistance from staff. Have you involved the staff association in the implementation process of the program?*

**Answer**

Yes, all the staff including the staff association shall be involved in the implementation process.

*KAIZEN means continuous improvement. What activities have been put in place to ensure continuity of the program? (Including setting of higher standards and revision once they have been attained)?*

**Answer**

Like we said in March, 2015, some staff from the pilot department namely Administration was requested to submit processes to be studied and only a few people did so. There was no commitment from the staff.

*What other major challenges have you experienced in the implementation of the KAIZEN Program?*

**Answer**

The major one is lack of commitment from the staff. Other problems have been lack of budget, non-acceptance by some cultural blocs and also competing activities allocated to staff when supposed to undertake Kaizen activities.

*Do you have a clear plan on the program implementation and the roll-out to the remote AU regional offices?*

**Answer**

There is a plan for the training programmes at the Head office but there is no plan on paper for the roll-out to the regional offices. This shall be considered when we have a fully-fledged co-ordination office and adequate resources are allocated to the program.

*In your opinion what is the future outlook of the program?*

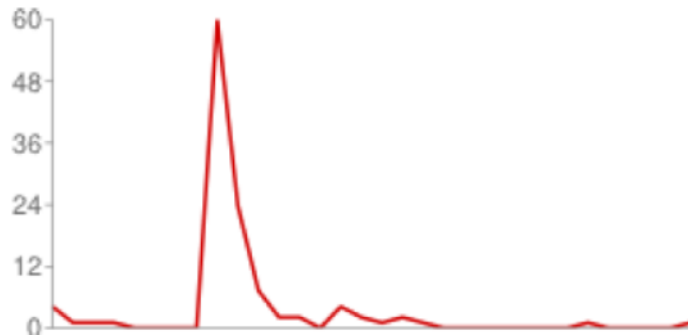
**Answer**

The future is optimistic. The resources are the major ingredients needed to face the various requirements and without adequate funds, the future is bleak. But partners like JAICA have shown interest in providing funds and one of the conditions they want is that the Kaizen unit be set up within the organization.

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## APPENDIX E: SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

### Number of daily responses



### PREFACE

This survey questionnaire studies the practical challenges to implementation of Kaizen in the African Union Commission (AUC) in its context as an Inter-governmental public sector organization. The implementation process is regarded as one of the most important stages of process improvement programs. Your contribution by completing this questionnaire is valuable as the knowledge gained from this research may indeed be utilized by the AUC in addressing the implementation obstacles as the Kaizen project shall be implemented in other departments and remote offices of the Organization were it has not yet been implemented.

All information provided shall be treated with confidence and the anonymity of the respondents shall be strictly up-held. This survey does not require your individual identity to be disclosed.

## APPENDIX F: LETTER OF AUTHORITY

AFRICAN UNION

الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE

UNIÃO AFRICANA

Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA P. O. Box 3243 Telephone: 517 700 Fax: 517844

Reference: **AHRM/22/4/4217.17**Date: **30 June 2017**

Ms. Tefsehit Beyene

E-mail: [TefsehitB@africa-union.org](mailto:TefsehitB@africa-union.org)

Dear Ms. Beyene,

Re: **APPLICATION FOR RESEARCH**

We are writing in reference to your application for conducting a study titled: **"Assessing the Implementation of Total Quality Management(TQM): The Introduction of KAIZEN AT THE African Union Commission (AUC) "**.

You have been approved to conduct your research **on the following conditions:-**

1. At the end of the research period, you will have to submit a brief report on the experiences gained and challenges encountered.
2. You have to exercise the utmost discretion in all matters of official business of the Commission and to not use under any circumstances any information about the Commission acquired during the research or to communicate it to a third party or to publish it even after the end of your research, expect with the formal written agreement of the Commission.
3. All results and findings of the research should be shared with the African Union Commission.

Yours sincerely,

*[Signature]*  
**HEAD, HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**