GAP ANALYSIS OF APPROACHES TO IMPLEMENTATION OF MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The implementation of management systems into an organization pursues various objectives according to motives of the management. These most frequently include obtaining a certificate which will enable access to contracts requiring the supplier organization to hold a certificate for a specific management system. Aims of the implementation related to the improvement of organization functioning in the given area of management are, according to opinions of leading employees of organizations, not always achieved. This is largely caused by the approach to the management system implementation by the organization, or, better said, its managers and employees.

Methodology/Approach: The article presents GAP analysis and its results, which reveals problems and issues of the process of implementation of quality management system. Basic precondition for the success of application of the quality management system application is the understanding of the quality management system standard as the tool for achieving the vision of the organization. The structure of introduced form of GAP analysis is retrospectively aimed at filling differences in how the process of implementation of the management system should have been performed in order to be linked to the vision and policies of the organization, which are based on own research and experience of the author.

Findings: When the case concerns an external support of implementation, consultancy companies pursue one major aim - to meet requirements set forth in standards, whereas the crux is placed on formal creation of evidence of meeting the requirements. Certification bodies focus on such evidence, whereas a deeper examination of efficiency of the management system functioning is not always thoroughly performed. The results highlighted the key gaps in the process of management system implementation, which are underestimation of engagement of all relevant processes and their owners into tasks for the achievement of aims.
and difference between how was the fulfilment of aims actually reflected in the fulfilment of all attributes of vision and policies of the organization.

**Keywords:** quality management system, implementation of management systems, GAP analysis.

### 1 INTRODUCTION

Management systems represent a key element within an organization, enabling the organization to achieve sustainable success. It is the maturity of the management system that matters for, competitive success of the organization with its products, processes and development of quality culture through utilising knowledge and experience. Figure 1 points out the significance of the management system for achieving a strategic advantage, reflected in innovations in various areas of the organization.

![Figure 1 – Relation of the strategic advantage of an innovation to the management system of an organization](image)

Quality management standards provide organizations with a set of principles and requirements, by following which the organization can achieve the desired effect of continuous improvement and sustainable success. The full effect of applying quality management standards will be seen only through an implementation that is able to utilise such potential. The system of both internal and external audits represents a basic tool for determining the degree of compliance of the organization’s management system with set criteria and revealing the potential for improvement. Internal audits are in practice aimed more at specific fulfilment of the management system standards requirements through obtaining evidence than to assessment of implementation and efficiency of the respective management system and to explore opportunities for continuous improvement (Nanda, 2005). Inconsistent performance of audits can only deepen gaps created
by a superficial implementation of the management system. That can result in doubts with regard to benefits of quality management system standards for the organization (Reid, 2010). According to a study, managers of as much as 35% of organizations holding the certificate of quality management system express a certain disappointment resulting from unachieved expectations and benefits of the respective standard application. At the same time, the organization’s management failed to clearly specify within its goal and objectives any expected benefits from the implementation of the management system in advance (except for expecting the acquisition of the certificate).

The European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA) covering the implementation of the CAF model in EU countries, addressed similar problem (EIPA, 2013). Model CAF, being in fact a version of the EFQM model for public authorities, has already been implemented by more than 3000 organizations of public administration in Europe. CAF External Feedback has been created to further support organisations in using the CAF most effectively in their future quality management journey (CAF, 2013).

While the CAF Model evaluates assumptions and achieved results in an organization, the tool "CAF External Feedback" evaluates the approach to CAF model implementation and the maturity of organization in adopting principles of excellence. It facilitates the full utilisation of a cycle consisting of periodic performance of self-assessment processes and performance of improvement action plans in the organization by revealing the potential for improvement in implementation itself.

There are obvious differences between the implementation of the management system based on ISO standards and implementation of the CAF model, but it is nevertheless possible to find inspiration which will make the examination of suitability of the quality management system application in organization meaningfully.

2 METHODOLOGY

Audits serve for examination of suitability of an approach to the implementation of management system. The ISO 19011 standard presents a guideline for auditing management systems, but it does not specify explicitly any approach to the assessment of the implementation process itself.

One of suitable approaches is provided by the GAP analysis, which is generally aimed at retrospective evaluation of processes and interactions between processes. An appropriate usage of the GAP analysis should result in revealing the potential for improvement, which is present in processes and their interface, and its purpose is to fill identified gaps through reasonable measures. (Kaplan and Norton, 2008).
2.1 Process of the Quality Management System Implementation

ISO 9001 standards contain implementation standards created for some specific areas, which are intended for facilitating the application of the respective standard. Such standardisation documents are aimed at the interpretation of terminology and requirements for a specific area and they fail to specify actual approach to the implementation.

The aim of the process of management system implementation complying with standard’s requirements should be the full utilisation of the standard potential for the improvement of the management system in the organization and the creation of preconditions for a sustainable success in the organization. Literature (Westcott, 2013) specifies following basic parts of the quality management system implementation process based on the standard laying down requirements:

- management’s decision together with its statement of what they expect from the implementation, formulation of a commitment related to allocation of sources and engagement of the management;
- decision about the method of implementation through a project and creation of mandate for management’s representative;
- communicating the intention of the management system implementation to stakeholders;
- creation of the implementation team, training of employees and members of the project implementation team;
- defining relationships and requirements including frameworks and responsibilities for the delivery of outputs in the implementation process;
- detailed examination of the current status of fulfilling requirements of the standard;
- specification of measures for the provision of efficient harmonization of the standard’s requirements in the organization;
- performance of measures for the provision of fulfilment of standard’s requirements, efficiency and permanent improvement of the management system in the organization.

Aforementioned steps are general and do not sufficiently describe the essence of utilising the standard for the management system. In practice, an incorrect idea that the application of the management system means primarily the preparation of documentation can be encountered (Paulová and Míkva, 2011:33). This fundamental mistake should be treated by the engagement of the management which will understand the management system standard as a tool for achieving the vision of the organization. The first step from the introduced structure of
steps, i.e. the decision of the management, is therefore a key one and inadequate performance of this step often results in inadequate effect of implementation (Stokes 2008). It is the basic precondition for the success of application of the quality management system application, which is the understanding of the standard as the tool for achieving the vision of the organization. The total GAP therefore represents a difference between the understanding and utilising the potential of the implementation of the management system standard for the achievement of vision and provision of sustainable success of organization.

### 2.2 Structure of GAP Analysis

The GAP analysis is aimed at the role of the management within the process of implementation of the management system with regard to the achievement of organization’s vision. The structure of introduced form of GAP analysis is retrospectively aimed at filling differences in how the process of implementation of the management system should have been performed in order to be linked to the vision and policies of the organization. Figure 2 was created in order to show gaps that should be analysed and solved with the aim to achieve required benefits from the implementation of the management system standard.

![Figure 2 – Structure of GAP analysis for achieving objectives of the organization through the management system using process approach](image-url)
**GAP 1**: Difference between how the vision and policies of the organization are set and how adequate objectives are determined for the fulfilment of all their attributes.

**GAP 2**: Difference between how objectives are formulated and how is the measurability of all aims provided.

**GAP 3**: Difference between how objectives are set in the organization and how are all these objectives actually developed into specific tasks with allocated resources, determined dates and assigned responsibility.

**GAP 4**: Difference between which tasks for the achievement of objectives are solved and how all processes and their owners, who should be actually concerned by task solutions, are included in the solution.

**GAP 5**: Difference between which processes and their owners are included in the task solutions and how are all such processes monitored and measured from the perspective of efficiency and effectiveness in order to enable the evaluation of task fulfilment.

**GAP 6**: Difference between how tasks are fulfilled and how it is reflected in the achievement of all set objectives in the organization.

**GAP 7**: Difference between how was the fulfilment of objectives actually reflected in the fulfilment of all attributes of vision and policies of the organization.

Gaps that can be identified in individual analysed areas are caused solely by workings of the organization’s management. Each identified gap means that the management has a deficit in the successful control of the organization and that the organization is not utilising the full potential of the quality management system standard.

Feedback forming taken corrective actions going outside gaps are identified with dashed line in figure 2. Corrective actions form part of efficiently functioning management system which detects non-conformities in due advance and adequately reacts to such non-conformities.

### 2.3 Findings of GAP Analysis

Individual GAPs were examined by means of questionnaire addressed to managers of organizations holding the ISO 9001 certificate. Organizations were identified according to their size and functioning in the economic sector, as well as according to whether they have implemented the management system by their own employees or by an outsourced delivery.

Relatively small sample of organizations addressed so far has not enabled a thorough examination of the following hypothesis: "Organizations using the
management system as a tool for fulfilling attributes of their vision and policies feel higher benefits from the implementation of the management system standard”.

Preliminarily evaluated results showed that the average difference between expectations from the management system implementation and benefits felt by the organization’s management is at the level of as much as 36%.

Figure 3 shows also the average evaluation of individual differences of GAP 1 thru GAP 7. Data displayed on the y axis express statement of the management about the difference between the 100% performance and reality. The order of GAP 1 thru GAP 7 copies the sequence of activities in applying the management system standard only to a certain degree.

Closer look at the graphic depiction reveals obviously growing trend of the deficit, what with regard to work of the organization’s management means that:

- the perception of uncertainty of fulfilment of vision and policies attributes by the management grows with gradual demonstration of necessary activities in the implementation of the management system;
- the "breaking point" is in the GAP 4, when a large proportion of managers realized underestimation of engagement of all relevant processes and their owners into tasks for the achievement of aims;
- the highest deficit shows GAP 7, which expresses the difference between how was the fulfilment of aims actually reflected in the fulfilment of all attributes of vision and policies of the organization.

Figure 3 – Value of the differences in the process of quality management system implementation in terms of vision attainment as perceived by managers
Correlation analysis implied that there is a relatively strong dependence between the evaluation of general difference resulting from the evaluation of benefits and expectations and difference as identified in the GAP 1 and also GAP 3 (0.804 and 0.861, respectively); weak dependence was on the contrary identified in the GAP 6 (0.203) and GAP 5 (0.375).

The said preliminary research revealed also other areas that should be examined in more detail:

- Dependence between the method of quality management system implementation (solely internally or with external support) and benefits achieved by the fulfilment of attributes of vision and policies;
- Utilisation of experience from integration of management systems for the achievement of higher benefits in the fulfilment of vision and policies (Zgodavova and Bober, 2012:62).

The research will be in these areas effectuated further in order to examine the validity of hypothesis or to derive bases for more extensive quantitative research.

3 CONCLUSION

The implementation of quality management system standards should not at any rate be the aim but only the means or a toll for the achievement of vision and objectives formulated in organization’s policies. The management should declare so in its commitment when making decision about the implementation of the standard. Similarly, the engagement of stakeholders is not made for informing them that the standard is going to be implemented, but that stakeholders are engaged in order to achieve the objective declared in the implementation of the management system standard.

A precondition for achieving sustainable success with the help of the quality management system standard is that the organization’s management should correctly understand specifics and exceptionality of its organization and used the management system standard correctly in order to achieve the vision and objectives specified in individual organization’s policies.

Practical benefit of the paper lies in revealing the paradox manifested in this area in the difference between the perception of benefits from the quality management system implementation and perception of the management system standard as a tool for fulfilling attributes of vision and policies in the organization. From the theoretical perspective, the results of the preliminary survey presented in paper provided ground for further and deeper research of the issue of implementation including approaches to the engagement of stakeholders into the process of implementation of management systems.
Individual GAPs in the analysis should actually provide an impetus for deeper examination and taking corrective actions. The issue of examining the suitability of implementation of the quality management system into the organization through the GAP analysis can be generalised also to methodologies supporting management of the organization, such as Management by Objectives, Balanced Scorecard, Six Sigma, Opportunity Management, Agile Management and others.

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