



Figure 4. Relationship between supply chain and product quality

b. Total Quality Management as a business improvement strategy

It was discovered from the case study that the studied furniture manufacturers (SMMEs) do not use the business improvement strategies and particularly the Total Quality Management. In their study (Seseni & Mbohwa, 2016) they have discovered that they do not use quality initiatives because those quality initiatives are not known to them. This is not a good indication because it merely means that these furniture manufacturing SMMEs are clueless about quality improvements and only 29 from 117 use quality improvement.

c. Good working relations with suppliers

It is evident in the case study that enterprises work closely with their suppliers of cupboards that they use to make furniture and the place where other enterprises cut their cupboards. They work well together and there are no major problems as they have stated during unstructured interviews.

B. Recommendations

a. Lobbying with enterprise's stakeholders

Stakeholders of the enterprise who are customers, employees (junior staff, senior staff and everyone who works there, be it permanent and contract) and suppliers of the manufacturing SMMEs should make sure that they lobby with all stakeholders as this will help them improve their processes. This can be improved because the customers' needs will be known by the enterprise as customers will inform the enterprise about what they want and the enterprise will, in turn, deliver what is expected by the customers as they will know what to deliver and they will also purchase the right material from their suppliers. The material that is required by the end-user of the products which in this case is furniture. Be it for office use or for the household. Their customers will buy from them because they will be providing the products that are of the quality that they desire. The following figure illustrates the relationship between the enterprise's stakeholders, and how they are all interlinked to the enterprise.

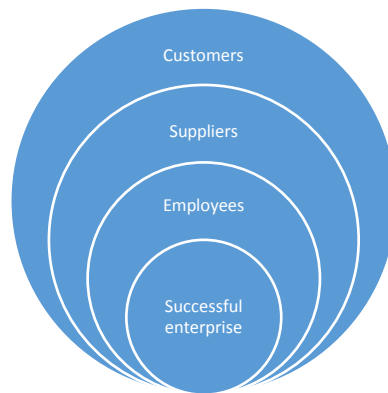


Figure 5. Lobbying with enterprise's stakeholders

b. Good working relationship with suppliers

Working and having a very good relationship with their suppliers and other organizations that surround their enterprise will make them learn a lot from their suppliers. However, these relationships can only last and be effective if there is trust amongst all stakeholders and collaboration amongst all parties that are involved. When the enterprise has a good relationship with its suppliers, they get the privilege of buying on credit and pay later if the Enterprise is stranded. Furthermore, they can also get discounts from their suppliers if they have an effective collaboration. Even their suppliers can also refer them to potential customers. This will make the business to grow faster and make more money. This is what is needed in enterprises especially in SMMEs.

c. Using Total Quality Management

The enterprise should consider producing and selling good quality products at all times. This can only be achieved if the needs and expectations of customers are known and fulfilled. This will make the organization to be competitive and have increased inflow of cash. In order for furniture manufacturing SMMEs to achieve this, it means that they need to adopt the TQM which is a business improvement strategy because it focuses on the customer and it involves all the stakeholders in the enterprise.

V. Limitations and Future Studies

This research only studied furniture manufacturing SMMEs that are located in Gauteng province, South Africa. Generalizing the findings and recommendations to all SMMEs will not be practical because the studied industry has its own challenges that it is facing that are not necessarily the same challenges that are faced by SMMEs who trade in other industries. Further research must be done on the effectiveness of Total Quality Management on furniture manufacturing SMMEs. This will help realize if TQM is an effective business improvement strategy that can be used by furniture manufacturing SMMEs. The second future study will look at the relationship between supply chain management and product quality. The primary objective of this study will be to test this relationship scientifically. This will be the second study because this study did not test the relationship scientifically. The discussions were based on questionnaires answers and case study.

VI. Conclusion and Implications

This research looked at the role of supply chain management and it was discovered in this research that it is of paramount importance in the organization. Total Quality Management in SMMEs was also looked into and findings state that it improves performance enterprise. Findings indicate that the furniture manufacturing SMMEs play a pivotal role in the economy. Some of these SMMEs even exports their products (furniture) to the SADEC region. However, these furniture manufacturing SMMEs do not invest heavily in ensuring quality in their products and services. Moreover, furniture manufacturing SMMEs should understand that failing to ensure quality is not only costly but the enterprise can lose customers due to them switching suppliers. Should furniture manufacturing SMMEs ensure quality, their cash flow will be favorable. They must also work on strengthening their relationships with all of their stakeholders as this has a positive impact on the quality of the products and service.

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Biography

Mr. Lawrance Seseni is a University of Johannesburg student. Currently doing a Masters of Technology degree in Operations Management. His master's study is on Quality Management within SMMEs. In 2014 he was appointed as an academic tutor tutoring Entrepreneurship to National Diploma students who were in their second year of study. In 2016 he was appointed as an assistant lecturer in the first semester (5 months), his role was to lecture Entrepreneurship to first year National Diploma students in Small Business Management. He is now serving as a board of director with a portfolio of co-secretary of the IBASA YC (Institution of Business Advisers South Africa Youth Charter). He is also serving as a Strategic Adviser for Projects in the student organization called ENACTU University of Johannesburg. He served at Enactus University of Johannesburg since 2012 holding different portfolios. His research interests are on Knowledge sharing in SMMEs, service and product quality within SMMEs.