

**ACHIEVING BUSINESS EXCELLENCE WITHIN THE AUTOMOTIVE
INDUSTRY: A QUALITATIVE STUDY ON A VOLKSWAGEN RETAILER**

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ABSTRACT

Recently, organizations have begun to improve their emphasis on service quality and organizational sustainability owing to the hyper-competitive business processes and conditions. In this frame, organizations, regardless of its business orientation, strive for achieving organizational goals and exploring new and different ways to make a profit. Therefore, business excellence, which is appropriately described as simultaneous satisfaction of both customers, employers, business partners, and stakeholders, has been drawn attention to gain prestige and achieve success for organizations particularly actors within the automotive industry. From this point, considering the business excellence that concentrates on abilities, practices, and engaging with the customers within the automotive industry, the present study aims at contributing the related literature and examining the business excellence practices in Volkswagen's Mersin retailer and for this purpose, the in-depth interview has been conducted with retailer's sales manager. Besides, the data obtained from the in-depth interview, has been analyzed by using qualitative analysis programme "NVivo 12". As a result of the analysis, it has been seen that the fundamental themes respectively consist of leadership, customer focus, people (internal customer) focus, organizational learning, innovation and improvement, strategic alignment, partnership development, and fact-based processes management.

Keywords: Business Excellence, Automotive Industry, Volkswagen, Strategy.

**İŐ MÜKEMELLİĐİNİN OTOMOTİV ENDÜSTRİSİNDE SAĐLANMASI:
VOLKSWAGEN BAYİ ÜZERİNE NİTEL BİR ARAŐTIRMA**

ÖZET

Son zamanlarda, organizasyonlar, yüksek düzeyde rekabetçi iş süreçleri ve koşulları nedeniyle hizmet kalitesi ve organizasyonel sürdürülebilirlik konusuna vurgu yapmaya başlamaktadır. Bu çerçevede, organizasyonlar, işletme alanına bakılmaksızın, kâr elde etmenin yeni ve farklı yönlerini keşfedebilmek ve organizasyonel amaçlara ulaşabilmek için çaba göstermektedir. Böylelikle müşterilerin, işverenlerin, iş ortaklarının ve paydaşların eş zamanlı olarak memnuniyetini ifade eden iş mükemmelliĐi, özellikle otomotiv endüstrisindeki aktörlerin yer aldığı organizasyonların başarıya ulaşmasında ve prestij kazanmasında dikkat çekmektedir. Buradan hareketle, otomotiv endüstrisinde organizasyonel yetkinlik ve uygulamalar ile müşterilerle yakın ilişki kurulmasına odaklanan iş mükemmelliĐi dikkate alındığında, bu çalışma, Volkswagen'in Mersin bayisindeki satış müdürüyle derinlemesine görüşme gerçekleştirilerek bayinin iş mükemmelliĐine ilişkin uygulamalarının incelenmesini ve bu bağlamda ilgili literatüre katkıda bulunmayı amaçlamaktadır. Yanı sıra, derinlemesine görüşmeden elde edilen veriler, "NVivo 12" nitel analiz programı kullanılarak analize tabi tutulmuştur. Analiz sonucunda ise başlıca temaların sırasıyla liderlik, müşteri odaklılık, insan (iç müşteri) odaklılık, organizasyonel öğrenme, yenilik ve gelişme, stratejik entegrasyon, ortaklık geliştirme ve olguya dayalı süreç yönetiminden oluştuĐu görülmüştür.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İş MükemmelliĐi, Otomotiv Endüstrisi, Volkswagen, Strateji.

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INTRODUCTION

The fundamental component of organizations, regardless of its business orientation, strives for achieving success that can be dependent on earning profits (Vartiak and Jankalova, 2017: 917). In other words, organizations endeavor better business performance and efficiency has been using definite quality improvement methods that guarantee the improvement of business results. In this regard, the business excellence model is one of the key instruments adopted by the organizations with the aim to succeed (Veselova, 2019: 436). Business excellence is directly related with improving and strengthening the management systems and organizational processes to enhance performance and create value for business partners and stakeholders. Namely, it refers much more than having a quality system in the organizations. In this sense, business excellence points out achieving excellence in every process that an organization does (including leadership, strategy, customer focus, information management, people and processes) and most importantly achieving superior business results (Mann, Mohammad & Agustin, 2012: 1).

In recent years, from the perspective of challenging customer satisfaction and intensely experiencing high-level competition, it has been assumed that the business environment within the process such as concept of business excellence and its components involving leadership, strategy, customer focus, information management, people and processes have been particularly drawn attention in the automotive industry. From this point of view, on one hand, Volkswagen (VW), a German auto giant and one of the biggest automobile companies in the world and on the other hand the concept of business excellence which is a key component of achieving success, are at the core of this study. In this frame, this study aims to contribute to the related literature and examine the business excellence practices in VW retailers. For this purpose, in-depth interviews technique is conducted face-to-face with the VW retailer's sales manager. In light of the data obtained from face-to-face interviews, content analysis is used with the computer-assisted "NVivo 12" qualitative analysis programme.

1. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

1.1. Business Excellence

The business environment has started to be aware of the significance of prosperity, profitability and shareholder value for organizations' sustainability. The organizations' ability to grow and incessantly improve has been defined by its social competencies, ethical responsibilities, and business contributions. This main point leads to understanding of the concept of excellence (Hardjono & Van Marrewijk, 2001: 223). In other words, organizations have drawn attention to be engaged in incorporating excellence practices in their business activities in order to gain prestige as pioneers in their respective fields in recent days (Metaxas & Koulouriotis, 2019: 1189).

Excellence refers to taking steps to ensure that the methods and business strategies that work today will be implemented in an even better and wiser way tomorrow. In an organizational context, excellence implies itself through leaders, who are devoted to the continuous improvement of the organization's crucial processes, working conditions, morale and ethics, and general organizational culture. While a "good" organization uses sustainability, innovation, diversity, and risk management to provide product and process quality, a truly excellent organization goes above and beyond by satisfying its customers, employees, and any other stakeholders while at the same time presenting a clear vision for achieving the same or greater outcomes in the future (Lasrado & Pereira, 2018: 2). From this point of view, the business excellence refers that simultaneously satisfaction of customers, employers, and shareholders within the organization (Kanji, 1998: 633). Additionally, business excellence has been defined to be a long-term process, regarding fundamental strategic themes such as improving core functional processes, better employee performance and to enhance a quality model for contributing notable customer service (Jaeger, 2017: 1613). Also, business excellence is directly related with developing and strengthening the organizational management systems and processes to enhance performance and create value for business partners and stakeholders (Mann et al., 2012: 1). Likewise, the business excellence is engaged with leadership and management system that identifies the components vital to sustain organizational business excellence. Therefore, it is used to develop any point of an organization, involving leadership, strategy and planning, people, information and knowledge, safety, service delivery, product quality and bottom-line results (Sai, 2007: 4).

As Ebel (2019: 2) highlights that business excellence consists of a systematic approach that transforms the attitudes of the people in the organization, improves an integrated set of advanced mechanisms which provide for a never-ending organizational performance, controls the quality of products, services, and activities, and creates strategic quality management. As Janjić, Todorović & Bogićević (2019: 242) stress that business excellence requires better products and services, cost flexibility, satisfied clients, suppliers, and stakeholders, and global prestige, recognition and image. In addition to that, it is based on main principles that ensure and involve balancing and meeting the interests of all stakeholders, as well as the integration of overall, both financial and non-financial business performance. Similarly, Bandyopadhyay & Leonard (2019: 183-184) argue that business excellence aims at satisfying the demands and expectations of all business partners and stakeholders, the rights of the contract employees must also be considered while designing the processes and during the assessment process. Besides, the business excellence demonstrates the origin and consequence relationships between the drivers of performance and the outcomes succeed. The features of excellence define the core traits of high performing organizations and are embedded throughout all the critical drivers of the model. The organizational profile specifies the context for the way the organization manages and serves as an overarching guide for how the framework is implemented (www.enterprisesg.gov.sg, Date retrieved: 13.09.2019).

1.1.1. Core Themes of Business Excellence

Organizations generally consider the business excellence to succeed organizational goals, stronger financial performance, create visionary and inspirational leadership, drive innovation in products and services, concentrate on customer service and satisfaction, increase market penetration and revenue, create effective business planning processes, raise productivity and reduce operating costs, engage teams in the process of improvement and give importance of internal customer satisfaction, improve its decision-making capabilities, increase its capacity to manage change, be recognized for its achievements in excellence and demonstrate to key stakeholders (i.e. customers, shareholders, boards, community, employees) that it has a structured and a systematic approach to improving and achieving best practice and excellence (Sai, 2007: 6). Furthermore, business excellence includes not only having a quality system in the organizations, but also gaining excellence in every process involving leadership, strategy, customer focus, information management, people and processes and most significantly achieving notable business results and outputs (Wahab & Yaakub, 2018: 111).

In terms of the components of business excellence (see Figure 1) “leadership” enables the strategic guidance for the organization and motivating the mindset of business excellence. Likewise, “customers” are assumed after leadership to show the focus on customer-centricity. Besides, the element of “strategy” is argued based on understanding interior and exterior stakeholder demands that direct the improvement of “people and process” abilities to acquire desired “results”. “Knowledge” is a segment of the feedback loops of “learning and innovation”, which strengths decision-making and drives improvements (www.enterprisesg.gov.sg, Date retrieved: 13.09.2019).

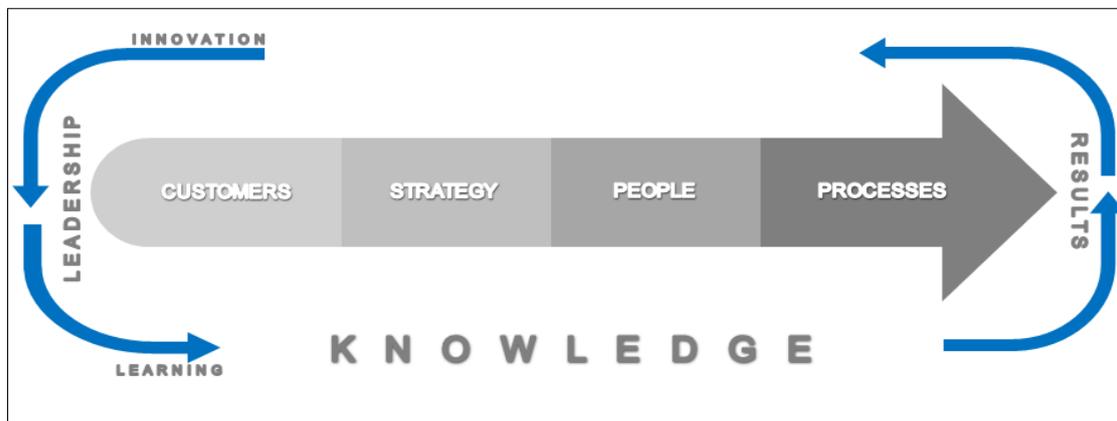


Figure 1: Business Excellence Implementation

Source: Adapted and created by the author from www.enterprisesg.gov.sg/-/media/esg/files/quality-and-standards/business-excellence/be_framework_for_the_public_sector_interpretation_guide.pdf?la=en, Business Excellence Framework: Public Sector Interpretation Guide 2019, Date retrieved: 13.09.2019.

Similarly, business excellence in the organizations has been highlighted and analyzed in close connection with decisions and strategic management, customer care, quality, ethics in management and organizational culture, social responsibility and environmental actions (Ghicajanu, Irimie, Marica & Munteanu, 2015: 446).

Thus, the effect of business excellence with those crucial components can be a tool for the organizations to exploit opportunities and access the knowledge. Also, it will assist the organizations to figure out how to assume superior performance and accomplish competitive advantage (Masrom, Rasi & Daut, 2017: 1-3).

1.1.2. Business Excellence within the Automotive Industry

Organizations in particular, automotive industries try to explore new appropriate business strategies that especially based on quality management owing to difficult competition circumstances (Ažman & Gomišček, 2015: 889). In this regard, intensive competition in the automotive market is changing the face of the industry and the industry puts quality at the core of its production system management for achieving business excellence (Toma & Naruo, 2017: 566). Moreover, the matching and synchronization of customer requirements and needs, which are continuously changing in terms of the business environment, depend on managing excellent within the automotive industry (Gunasekaran, Putnik, Bennett & O'Kane, 2006: 12).

Besides, after-sale services are presumed as competitive priorities of the automotive industry to consider customers' requirements and needs. In other words, the automotive industry concentrates on the product, customer and service-oriented competitive strategy based on differentiation (Ulusoy, 2000: 70). As Deloitte (2014: 2) highlights that the six primary winning themes which involve product portfolio leadership, market-focused innovation, diversification, capacity demand alignment, cost and asset efficiency, and capital structure are consistently contributed to organizational performance in terms of achieving business excellence within the automotive industry.

2. RESEARCH DESIGN, PARTICIPANT AND METHOD

2.1. Recruitment and Participant

As one of the most valuable Automotive group, The Volkswagen AG, comprises twelve brands including VW Passenger Cars, Audi, SEAT, ŠKODA, Bentley, Bugatti, Lamborghini, Porsche, Ducati, Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles, Scania and MAN. (<https://www.volkswagenag.com/en/group.html>, Date retrieved: 09.07.2019). In this sense, VW, as a huge brand of the group has been drawn attention related to business excellence practices. Therefore, this study has been carried out in a VW retailer that is located in Mersin. In this regard, the retailer has been consistently awarded internationally several times owing to the consequences of practices based on business excellence. From this point of view, the myriad awarded retailer's sales manager have been recruited as a core participant of this study due to his 16 years of automotive experience in the related industry.

2.2. Design, Data Collection and Analysis

In this study, phenomenological methodology is employed by the researches in order to describe the phenomena and lived experiences. The participant has been informed about the aim and significance of the study and semi-structured interview questions, which prepared via exploring the automotive industry reports and related literature, have been thrice posed to the participant through carrying out the in-depth interviews at different times (265 minutes in total).

In the light of the data obtained from face-to-face interviews via asking semi-structured interview questions, recorded voice has been transformed to text format by using speech-to-text programme, “Voicedocs” and content analysis has been conducted with the computer-assisted qualitative analysis programme, “NVivo 12”.

3. FINDINGS

As a result of the content analysis by using the computer-assisted qualitative analysis programme, “NVivo 12” the codes and themes have been generated. In this sense, the themes respectively consist of leadership, customer focus, people focus, organizational learning, innovation and improvement, strategic alignment, partnership development, fact-based processes management (See Figure 2).

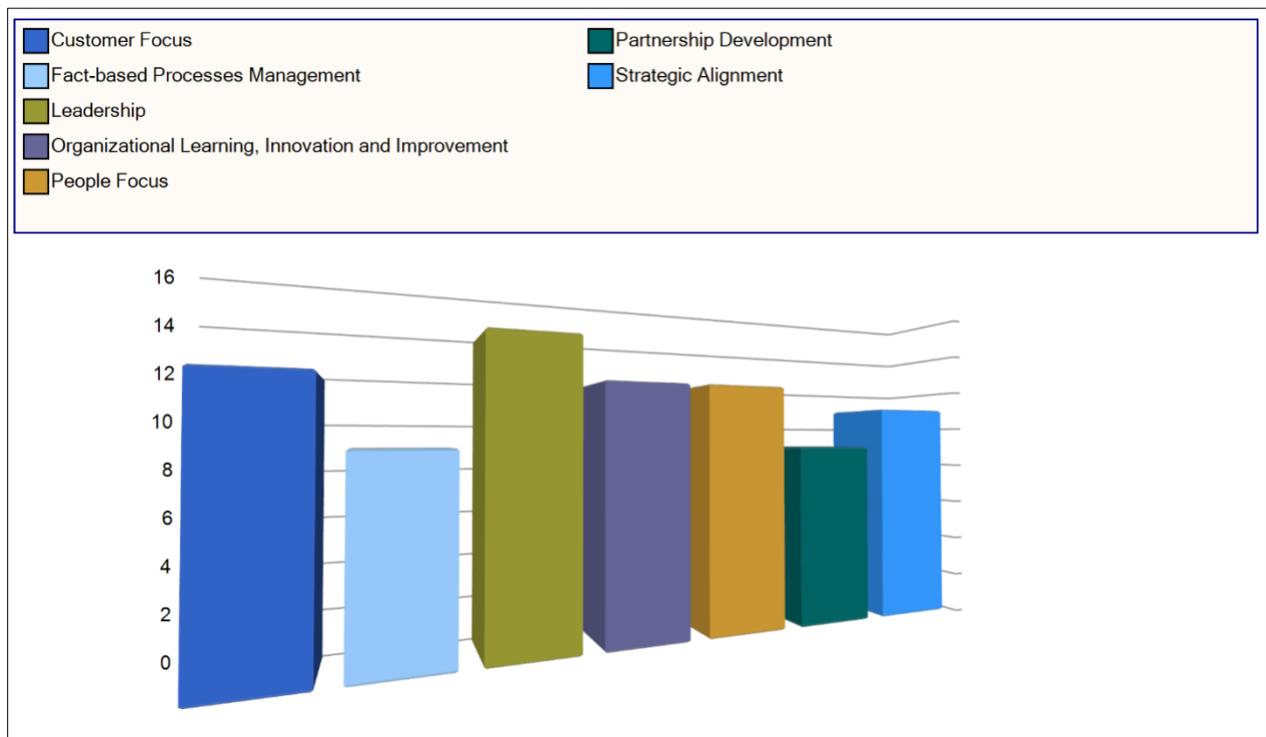


Figure 2: Generated Core Themes of the Study

3.1. Leadership

The leadership behaviors of setting a clear direction and values for the organization, creating customer-centricity, and empowering the organization and its employees in the pursuit of excellence are main focus to all excellence approaches (Porter & Tanner, 2012: 6). Leadership stands out as a concept that exponentially increases its significance in the business management process. Leadership competencies strategically are vital in terms of combining a special product with special customers by providing special services in a special atmosphere; on the other hand, represent being a leader and pioneer in the automotive industry (Özbozkurt, 2019a: 158).

In the future, the concept of strategic leadership has been foreseen to be more effective in the process of business management and it has been considered that the leaders who manage the business need to have strategic leadership competencies (Özbozkurt, 2019b: 1047). In this sense, the participant's views are stated below:

“The real leadership reveals in the circumstances that can be criticized and carried to forward by the team-member, and even trained the possible manager candidates and enabled of this. The leader should explore the high potential candidates and we have various examples related to VW at this point. Moreover, as a leader, we are responsible to both the distributor and the owner of the organization, our team and customers.”

“... an appropriately guiding of team members is one of the priorities. In this respect, we listen to customers in the best and most effective ways, understand them for creating value.”

3.2. Customer Focus

The customers are the crucial factor of determining product and service quality. In this respect, it has been drawn attention to interiorize the customers' current and future needs and demands via understanding properly customer loyalty and retention. Additionally, the views of customers are significant in planning and designing the product and service “offer” (Porter & Tanner, 2012: 6). In this regard, the first step in exceeding customers' expectations is to know those expectations (KPMG, 2014: 47). Additionally, smart companies renew themselves continuously together with their smartest customers. They invest in developing their relationships with customers that are also looking for renewal. Success is highly dependent on a company's ability to invest in the right relationships (Storbacka, 2004: 19-20). In this frame, the participant's thoughts are stated below:

“Our customers are very precious and we pay more attention to their needs. As a matter of fact, our customers are our investments for the future hence our future is directly based on them. Furthermore, we keep all of the promises that we gave them and we pledge and provide the best service in Turkey. For instance, if we determine a price range before, we provide the same price range after customers come back again or if we promised about automobile accessory, we keep our promises in all circumstances.”

“... Customers opt brand that makes a difference in today's competitive environment. In this regard, customer satisfaction has exponentially drawn attention since a satisfied customer shares her/his satisfaction and unsatisfied customer shares her/his dissatisfaction with many people that those around. Besides, the data regarding customer relationships has a significant element in the automotive sector. Indeed, VW Turkey had the highest customer satisfaction level in Europe last year.”

3.3. People (Internal Customer) Focus

The successful organization is extremely contingent upon the knowledge, capacities, creativity, and motivation of its people. This “people potential” has been assumed via adopted values included by a culture of trust and empowerment. Namely, valuing people is the main component in an excellence approach. The engagement of employees in the progressively improvement and transformation of business activities is a crucial key that runs through all of these quality enhancements, process improvement and excellence approaches (Porter & Tanner, 2012: 3-7).

In this respect, internal customers that can be also identified as employees in the organizations, have significance as a beneficial model for achieving an excellence process approach to quality management on a continuous basis. The fundamental pillar of interior customer service indiscriminately presents that every department in an organization places to serve to other departments or external customers (Farner, Luthans & Sommer, 2001: 350-351).

From this point of view, it has been substantially assumed that internal customers are crucial actors in the organizations and successful internal customer service may conclude in more efficient internal exchanges between several organizational members and departments. In this frame, internal customer service quality enables internal customer satisfaction and in turn external customer satisfaction (Jun & Cai, 2010: 205). In this regard, the participant emphasizes the significance of people-oriented excellence below:

“My best customer is my own team members; namely, my internal customers. I have to listen to them carefully hence we spend most of the time with them in the same organization. I am responsible for their health, happiness, comfort, and for all future career goals...”

“If your brand is a pioneer, you have to reflect this to your team and be a pioneer. In this sense, it is the main point to create a self-managed team. All of the members of the team should have the capacity to meet the requirements of the job. Besides, these team members have been selected according to the results of the exams that they joined. Thus, it is necessary to empower people that have certain competencies. If you don't accomplish this, you cannot be successful.”

3.4. Organizational Learning, Innovation and Improvement

Stimulating both individual and organizational learning, innovation and enhancement via the notable disseminating of knowledge and information has a significant role in business excellence process (Porter & Tanner, 2012: 6). In addition to that approaches on organizational management values, mission and vision are fundamental management tools by which company management operates the act of employees and organization activities. In other words, it has been assumed that internalization of the organizational management values; mission and vision have a vital role in both employees and organizational performance (Dermol & Sachakamol, 2016: 1013). Therefore, this situation is close similar to the participant's views:

“It is a crucial factor to clearly comprehend of organization's aims and goals, today's conditions and tomorrow's position. At the same time, it is necessary to be adopted to the organization's aims, goals, vision, and mission by the team members...”

“In the new market, you should be situated with new strategic products and new strategic approaches. Before achieving the strategic goals, on one hand, it should be necessary to carry out the current situation analysis in detail; on the other hand, it should be taken opportunities while observing the failures.”

3.5. Strategic Alignment

All the excellence models highlight the importance of strategic improvement, alignment, and planning process. In this regard, an excellence approach can be separated from many TQM-type programmes, where a lack of strategic integration frequently results in bolt-on quality programmes (Porter & Tanner, 2012: 6). In addition to the adaptation of services provided, having standardized services constitutes a key point for competitiveness and excellence.

Keeping in mind that customer prefer the service provider that provides the best service (Akhtar, Zameer, & Saeed, 2014: 109), it is accepted that service quality is one of the main opportunities which help to run, to improve business and profit of the organization, and especially sustain the loyalty of its customers. Improved service is a consequence of organized corporate culture, which can be considered as a kind of social culture in general. Thus, the participant argues that:

“... for instance, if buying automobiles from Istanbul or Mersin, there should be no difference in terms of sales representative from the customer’s point of view. The team should be equal and the same standards owing to unchanging brand perception. Furthermore, the same music plays and the same fragrance uses in all showrooms of the brand. It should be created the same-standard perception.”

“When the customer decides to go VW, and meets with a sales representative, the customer’s view shapes with this meeting. In this frame, the sales representative should behave and communicate fully knowing that he/she represents VW AG.”

“... we have ISO (International Organization for Standardization) standards that include purchase and sales target, customer satisfaction target, etc. and they are checked in every year.”

3.6. Partnership Development

Organizations should predict, recognize and closely deal with changes in both internal and external business environment to grow and prosper (Ivančić, Mencer, Jelenc & Dulčić, 2017: 51). In this sense, organizations should create an excellent relationship for improving longer-term strategic mutually beneficial business partners with a range of external partners, involving customers, stakeholders, suppliers and education organizations, etc. Thus, successful strategic longer-term partnerships concentrate on delivering sustained value for the partners (Porter & Tanner, 2012: 6). In other words, transparency efforts of organizations build, maintain, and restore trust with stakeholders (Rawlins, 2006: 6). In this frame, the participant emphasizes:

“... our business partners are primarily distributors. Every process is run in the most transparent way to ensure mutual trust...”

“For example, we endeavor to create opportunity via meeting with Chamber of Commerce, Commodity Exchange or Organized Industrial Zone, etc. If there is an opportunity, you should enhance a strategy for achieving this.”

3.7. Fact-Based Processes Management

Business processes are emphasized as the “mechanism” that delivers every organization’s value proposal. The center of all accepted excellence ideas and approaches are foreseen as the processes to interiorize customer needs and demands, consistently managing processes on the principle of facts and improving processes on the basis of customer feedback and feedback from the process itself. Process capability is based on the ability of the organization’s processes to appropriately understand customer needs (Porter & Tanner, 2012: 7). Furthermore, in the competitive business environment, the disappointment of customers by the organizations constitutes a significant problem for organizations.

Therefore, it is of value to have a planned and well-organized process and substructure for obtaining feedback from the customers, not only as a basis for corrective action relating to current products, but also as crucial input to the new product development process. Hence, organizations cannot meet the customers' requirements and expectations both present and future unless organizations have an adequate feedback system that manages appropriate information (Fundin & Bergman, 2003: 55). The participant similarly highlights:

"... for instance, we have test-drive forms that include automobile performance, road-holding, adequate braking system items, etc. Herewith, we receive feedback and try to figure out how professionally the purchasing process is managed from customers to measure customer satisfaction. Afterward, the data is uploaded on the system and seen even in Germany. The aim of this is to give priority to these points mentioned above, for producing desired automobiles in the future."

In addition to the analysis, for purposing the enrichment of study evidence, the items in the assessment scale that consists of business excellence components and was developed by Mann et al. (2012: 2), have been posed to the sales manager of the retailer and expected to fulfill a self-assessment about business excellence level of their organization (0= Disagree, 1=Partly agree, 2=Mostly agree, 3=Fully agree). Based on a rating below (see Table 1), demonstrate his organization's level of agreement with the following statements.

Table 1: Business Excellence Self-Assessment

Rank	Item	Score (0-3)
1	Our organization has a clear vision and all managers and team members are understandably interiorized it.	2
2	Our leadership team is continuously looking for different and innovative ways to sustain and develop the organization.	2
3	We regularly arrange meetings to discuss how we can succeed to minimize the negative effect of our products, services, processes to the business environment and community.	2
4	We frequently track and evaluate our customers' needs and requirements, and their satisfaction levels.	3
5	We seek, monitor and record customer complaints and take appropriate action to ensure that problems do not occur again.	3
6	We seriously encourage individual initiative, innovation, rapid response, collaboration and effective and operative communication throughout our organization.	2
7	We precisely develop succession plans and consider and encourage our team members for leadership and management positions, and career progression plans.	2
8	We specifically decide and monitor the major components that impact on employee well-being, satisfaction and motivation for improving the work environment and circumstances.	2
9	We have several initiatives in place to enhance the quality of our processes, products and services.	2
10	We constantly track operations overall organizational performance using a full range of information (e.g. financial, customer satisfaction, employee satisfaction, environmental, suppliers, and key processes).	2

As a result of the Business Excellence Assessment, the total score was identified as 22 out of 30 refers that the retailer is showing sincere efforts in implementing improvement initiatives and is ready to achieve greater heights in business excellence. On the other hand, it has been seen that the business excellence practices stand out particularly considering the needs, expectations and complaints of the customers and in this regard, taking actions via eliminating deficiencies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The automotive industry is a fundamental industrial and economic force worldwide (Pehlivanoglu & Riyanti, 2018: 139) and increasing intensive competition in the automotive market are changing the structure of the industry that compels organizations to drive business excellence. In this regard, business excellence refers to a long-term process, related to main strategic themes including the improvements of core functional processes, better employee performance and to enable a quality model for contributing remarkable customer service (Jaeger, 2017: 1613). In other words, it means a high level of maturity of the organizations in terms of management and result achievement (Zdrilić & Dulčić, 2016: 147).

On the other hand, taking into consideration the significance and value of business excellence within the automotive industry, this study aimed at contributing to the related literature and exploring the business excellence practices in a German giant organization, VW's Mersin retailer. For this purpose, retailer's sales manager has been recruited as a core participant of this study due to his automotive experience within the industry and the in-depth interviews have been carried out to collect data. Analyzed data by using NVivo 12 has shown that fundamental themes that respectively include leadership, customer focus, people (internal customer) focus, organizational learning, innovation and improvement, strategic alignment, partnership development, and fact-based processes management.

As a result of the analysis, it has been seen that the guidance of team members in the appropriate ways, is an optimum method to increase organizational performance in general. Additionally, customers have been presumed as the most vital investments for the future and creating trust and reliability with customers have been drawn attention. Likewise, to listen carefully internal members have a significant role in achieving organizational goals and business excellence in addition to external customers. Furthermore, to succeed and achieve organizational goals, it has been precisely interiorized organization's vision and mission by the team members. The analysis also has shown that strategic alignment, integration and standardization has created the customer perception to preferably opt the brand by the customer. Besides, it has been highlighted that the disseminating of brand image contingent on engaging business partners and stakeholders based on mutual trust. Consequently, feedback from customers has been a crucial component and a priority of business excellence within the automotive industry.

Additionally, as a result of the business excellence self-assessment has been fulfilled by the participant and total score has indicated 22 out of 30 which means the retailer's sincere efforts in implementing improvement initiatives and is ready to achieve greater heights in business excellence. Moreover, it has been assumed that the business excellence practices stand out particularly considering the needs, expectations and complaints of the customers and in this regard, taking actions via eliminating deficiencies. From this point of view, further researches might comprise the examination of business excellence as well as other industries. Additionally, it is recommended for the researchers to study with an increased number of recruited participants to conduct more comprehensive research for contributing to the related literature.

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