

Requirements for Applying the Gemba Kaizen Methodology in Improving the Economic Performance of Sports Clubs in Egypt

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Introduction and Problem Statement:

Recently, sports institutions have witnessed significant renewal and development, particularly in the field of management. Many modern management methods have been introduced to keep pace with the rapid and continuous developments of the times. Traditional management no longer meets the demands of this era and is unsuitable for the ever-changing knowledge society. In a fast-evolving, highly competitive world, only those capable of delivering and achieving sustainability can succeed. This world is characterized by speed, quality, precision, and achievement, making it imperative to adopt new and innovative management methods that enhance the skills of employees, increase their motivation to work and achieve, and make them more effective and creative. They need to race against time, surpass current realities, and foresee the future.

The Gemba Kaizen methodology is one of the modern management trends that emerged in the 1980s, developed by the German expert Masaaki Imai. It is a Japanese philosophy of continuous process improvement applied to many Japanese companies, proving successful. The methodology emphasizes encouraging continuous innovation and change, showing confidence in employees' abilities, involving them in setting the organization's goals, and empowering them administratively. This approach helps them become more knowledgeable about the tasks assigned to them and more capable of accomplishing them, thereby increasing productivity and competitiveness, which ensures enhanced efforts in this field (Thessaloniki, 2006: 50).

Undoubtedly, the Kaizen philosophy, at its core, aims to improve all factors related to transforming inputs into outputs on a continuous basis, referred to as "continuous improvement that never ends" (Joshi, 2013: 22). As a result, every task can be improved, and every process within the organization should be free from any waste, whether material, moral, or intellectual. Reducing waste adds value to the process and benefits those who use the results. The idea of eliminating waste in processes is the main focus of change through Kaizen, making it a sustainable improvement process (Imai, 2012: 17).

Kaizen consists of two words: "Kai," which means change, and "Zen," which means for the better or for the best. Combined, they translate to "continuous improvement" (Thessaloniki, 2006: 2). The Kaizen methodology indicates that management's duties are divided into two functions: maintenance and improvement. Maintenance refers to "setting standards and ensuring they are followed," while improvement involves "developing standards and raising them to higher levels." Applying the Kaizen methodology typically requires commitment to development, fostering culture, providing incentives, enhancing communication, and improving performance methods (Al-Ananazah, 2013: 23).

There are many Key Concepts in the Gemba Kaizen Methodology:

Gemba: This refers to the actual workplace within the organization where events occur, problems arise, and deviations and improvements take place. Gemba Kaizen is a set of management tools used to elevate the operations within an organization to a high level, essentially transforming the organization to become the best (Abdel Aal, 2009: 52). It is also described as the place where all activities that create added value in performance occur (Daiya, 2012: 31).

Gembutsu: This term refers to tangible objects in the workplace, such as tools, devices, machines, and equipment (Joshi, 2013: 15).

Muda: A Japanese term meaning non-value-adding activities. Kaizen focuses on attacking every form of "Muda" present at the Gemba, or the workplace. In simple terms, it means waste or activities that do not add value to the organization. Therefore, all forms of waste within the organization must be eliminated to improve productivity and reduce operating costs (Al-Mahzari, 2015: 38).

The Kaizen methodology aims to change the office work culture of managers who know nothing about their products and services except

through paperwork and reports. These managers do not think about their employees and do not visit the actual production sites within their organizations (Imai, 2012: 4).

The findings of Al-Harbi (2017) also emphasized that the Gemba Kaizen methodology is a key requirement that universities must adopt and commit to in order to improve university leadership methods. The methodology can contribute to improving university leadership through the following steps: leadership from the site of events, employing modern trends in university leadership, adopting modern strategies and models for planning and improvement, reducing waste, and adhering to the principle of continuous gradual change.

The researcher believes that there is no doubt that the productive capacity of the work system, including activities, services, products, and operational processes, through the optimal use of available resources, can directly influence its economic performance.

In recent years, the term "economy" has become linked to sports, especially when the need for an economic entity in the sports industry emerged. This, in turn, revealed related problems, leading to the study of the complementary relationship between sports activities and economic interests. The sports system relies on economic foundations such as budgets for activities, programs, equipment, and wages. Financing these various activities always necessitates establishing an economic system, ensuring its success, and linking it to the sponsorship of commercial and consumer interests as a source of profit and a successful advertising means for beneficiaries (Darwish et al., 2013: 54).

In Light of the Above Discussion:

Based on the theoretical readings and previous studies, which emphasized the urgent need to use innovative, non-traditional management methods, the application of the Japanese Gemba Kaizen methodology in improving the economic performance of sports clubs in Egypt can significantly enhance their economic returns. This is driven by global transformations that have made sports an attractive commodity for beneficiaries and investors. Consequently, sports institutions are increasingly viewed as productive rather than consumptive entities, ensuring they are not a burden on the state but rather a vital contributor to economic growth.

To achieve this, modern methods must be utilized to improve the economic performance of sports clubs in Egypt. Management from the actual site of operations plays a crucial role in enhancing and increasing economic returns. It influences decision-making, marketing capabilities,

strategic planning, and foresight for realistic development. Furthermore, it helps eliminate all forms of waste within the organization, aiming to improve productivity and reduce operating costs. Being present at the actual workplace, where events occur, problems arise, and deviations take place, leads to a higher likelihood of achieving economic returns.

Therefore, the researcher sought to identify the requirements for applying the Gemba Kaizen methodology to improve the economic performance of sports clubs in Egypt. The researcher believes that the Gemba Kaizen methodology, with its focus on gradual continuous improvement, waste elimination, optimal resource utilization, and on-site work management, can help meet the needs of beneficiaries. This, in turn, can play an effective role in maximizing the productive and economic performance of sports development centers.

Key Words:

1. **Gemba Kaizen:** A simple Japanese management approach that aims to implement small, continuous, incremental improvements, which reduce waste and costs while increasing productivity. It can be translated as "management from the site of action" (Imai, 2012: 11). The term "Gemba" means "managing the place," indicating that management must be directly connected to the actual site of events. "Kaizen" means "managing the time," which refers to continuous improvement in work to reduce costs and increase productivity (Imai, 2012: 11-12).
2. **Economic Performance:** The ability of an organization's top management to achieve profits by utilizing various means of production and conducting operational activities that lead to increased economic growth rates, investment rates, and financial developments within the organization (Operational Definition).

Study Aim:

The study aims to identify the requirements for applying the Gemba Kaizen methodology to improve the economic performance of sports clubs in Egypt.

Study Questions:

In light of the study's objective, the researcher poses the following questions:

1. What is the economic performance level of sports clubs in Egypt?

2. What are the requirements for applying the Gemba Kaizen methodology to improve the economic performance of sports clubs in Egypt?

Study Methodology:

Research Method: The researcher employed a descriptive methodology (survey studies) due to its suitability for achieving the research objectives.

Population and Sample: The research population consists of sports clubs in Egypt, totaling 635 clubs, including members of the board of directors, club managers, and those responsible for marketing and investment in the clubs. Egypt was divided into five sectors, and a stratified random sampling method was used to select the research sample. A random sample was chosen from each sector, with 224 clubs selected, representing 35% of the original population.

When selecting the sample clubs, the researcher ensured that the following criteria were met:

- The club must be a major club with more than 5,000 active members.
- The club must participate in at least five teams in the first division of Egyptian sports federations' activities.
- The club's revenue from existing investment projects must not be less than 500,000 EGP per month.

The final sample size consisted of 82 individuals. The following table provides a summary of the sample selection.

Data Collection Tools:

1. **Document and Record Analysis:** The researcher reviewed and analyzed the documents and records of sports clubs to understand their operational methods and to develop a proposal for applying the Gemba Kaizen methodology to improve the economic performance of sports clubs in Egypt.
2. **Personal Interviews:** The researcher conducted several interviews with members of the boards of directors, managers, and marketing and investment officials of sports clubs. These interviews aimed to gather insights on how to propose the use of the Gemba Kaizen methodology to enhance the economic performance of sports clubs in Egypt.

3. **Questionnaire Form: Questionnaire on the Requirements for Applying Gemba Kaizen:** The researcher designed a questionnaire to identify the requirements for implementing the Gemba Kaizen methodology in sports clubs in Egypt. The questionnaire was structured around 11 key areas (Appendix 5) and was reviewed by a panel of 10 experts in sports management (Appendix 1). The experts provided feedback on the appropriateness of the areas, resulting in agreement on 9 areas, with agreement percentages ranging from 20% to 100%. Two areas were excluded due to agreement percentages below 70%.

The researcher then created a set of statements for each of the 9 areas, totaling 55 statements (Appendix 6). These statements were also reviewed by the experts, and statements receiving less than 70% agreement were removed. This led to a final set of 45 statements (Appendix 7).

Scientific Validity of the Questionnaire:

A. Validity:

To assess the validity of the questionnaire, the researcher employed the following methods:

1. **Content Validity:** The researcher presented the initial version of the questionnaire to a panel of 10 experts in sports management to evaluate its suitability for the intended purpose. This process ensured that the content of the questionnaire was relevant and appropriate for assessing the requirements for applying the Gemba Kaizen methodology. The feedback from these experts helped refine and validate the questionnaire. The validity of the content is detailed in Tables 6 and 7.

Top Management Adoption of Continuous Improvement Approach

Training Qualified Leaders in Continuous Improvement

Promoting a Culture of Continuous Improvement in the Workplace

Strengthening Teamwork Policies in the Workplace

Encouraging Employee Ideas and Innovative Initiatives

Reliance on Field Leadership

Establishing Operational Rules to Support Continuous Improvement

Supporting Purification Policies (Improving Work Environment)

Eliminating Waste in the Workplace

It is evident from Tables (6, 7) that:

- The percentage of expert opinions on the survey's dimensions ranged from 30% to 100%. As a result, two dimensions were removed because they received less than 70% agreement from the experts. Additionally, the percentage of expert opinions on the survey statements ranged from 30% to 100%, leading to the removal of ten statements (numbers 2, 5, 12, 14, 18, 21, 25, 37, 39, 50) due to receiving less than 70% agreement from the experts. The final version of the survey now consists of 45 statements.

(2) Internal Consistency Validity:

To calculate the validity of the survey, internal consistency validity was used. The researcher applied it to a sample of 20 individuals from the study population, excluding the original sample. Correlation coefficients were calculated between each statement's score and the total score of the relevant dimension, as well as between each statement's score and the total score of the survey, and between the total score of the dimension and the total score of the survey. Table (8) illustrates this.

Dimensions:

1. **Top Management Adoption of the Continuous Improvement Approach**
2. **Training Qualified Leaders in Continuous Improvement**
3. **Promoting a Culture of Continuous Improvement in the Workplace**
4. **Strengthening Teamwork Policies in the Workplace**
5. **Encouraging Employee Ideas and Innovative Initiatives**
6. **Reliance on Field Leadership**
7. **Establishing Operational Rules to Support Continuous Improvement**
8. **Supporting Purification Policies (Improving Work Environment)**
9. **Eliminating Waste in the Workplace**

The table value of r at 18 degrees of freedom and a significance level of 0.05 is 0.378.

From Table (8), the following can be observed:

- The correlation coefficients between each statement's score and the total score of the dimension it belongs to ranged from 0.50 to 0.89. The correlation coefficients between each statement's score and the total score of the survey ranged from 0.48 to 0.83. The correlation coefficients between the total score of each dimension and the total score of the survey ranged from 0.52 to 0.69. All these

correlation coefficients are statistically significant, indicating the internal consistency validity of the survey.

B - Reliability:

To calculate the reliability of the survey, the researcher used Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, applying it to a sample of 20 individuals from the study population, excluding the original sample.

Critical Value of rrr at 18 Degrees of Freedom and a Significance Level of 0.05 = 0.378

From Table (9), the following observations can be made:

- The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the survey dimensions ranged between 0.54 and 0.79, while the overall Cronbach's alpha for the survey was 0.65. All these alpha coefficients are statistically significant, indicating the reliability of the survey.

Final Survey Format:

- The final version of the survey consists of 9 dimensions and 45 statements. The survey uses a binary rating scale: Agree (2 points) and Disagree (1 point). The total score for the survey ranges from 45 to 90 points.

Study Timeline:**A. Exploratory Study:**

- The researcher conducted an exploratory study of the data collection tool by applying it to a sample from the research population, which was not part of the main sample, from January 10, 2024, to January 25, 2024. This was done to assess the tool's appropriateness and its relevance to the sample.

B. Main Study Application:

- After selecting the sample and validating the data collection tool for its validity and reliability, the researcher administered it to all members of the research sample from January 26, 2024, to February 25, 2024.

C. Survey Form Correction:

- After completing the administration of the survey, the researcher corrected the forms according to the previously specified instructions. Following the correction process, the scores were recorded in preparation for statistical analysis.

Statistical Methods Used:

After collecting and tabulating the data, it was processed statistically. To calculate the research results, the researcher employed the following statistical methods:

- Percentage
- Pearson Correlation Coefficient
- Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient
- Relative Weight
- Mean Response Rate
- Confidence Intervals
- Regression Analysis

The researcher adopted a significance level of 0.050.050.05 and used the SPSS program to compute some of the statistical measures.

Presentation and Discussion of Results:

Answer to the First Question:

- What is the economic level of sports clubs in the Arab Republic of Egypt?

Table (10) Relative Weight, Mean Response, and Chi-Square of the Sample's Opinions on the Economic Level of Sports Clubs in the Arab Republic of Egypt (N = 82)

Axis 1: Economic Growth Rates: Present in Sports Clubs:

1. Quantitative Targets (Financial Figures) to Periodically Determine the Targeted Economic Return
2. Progressive Increase in Economic Returns Annually
3. Introduction of Programs and Activities Expected to Have High Economic Returns
4. Programs and Activities That Do Not Generate Economic Returns
5. Periodic Study of the Economic Returns of Provided Programs and Activities and Elimination of Those That Do Not Generate Economic Returns
6. The Economic Return of the Center Exceeds That of Other Centers

Axis 2: Investment Rates: Present in Sports Clubs:

1. Specific investment objectives for the center
2. Increase in the volume of investments in (facilities/equipment/programs/buildings) annually
3. Implementation of some modern investment systems (B.O.T)
4. Increased interest from investors
5. Growth in the volume of investment-attractive programs and activities
6. Gradual increase in the volume of investment projects annually
7. Increase in investment income compared to other centers

8. Facilities available for effective investment

Axis 3: Financial Developments: Present in Sports Clubs:

1. **Financial Indicators to Achieve**
 2. **Increase in Revenues:** Higher revenue growth rates compared to previous years.
 3. **Decrease in Expenses:** Reduction in expenses compared to previous years.
 4. **Increase in Revenue Sources:** Growth in the number of revenue sources compared to previous years.
 5. **Increase in Financial Liquidity:** Rising financial liquidity in the bank account annually.
 6. **Self-Funding Adequacy:** Self-generated revenue should adequately cover the center's expenses.
 7. **Budget Deficit:** Presence of a deficit in the estimated budget.
- The critical value for χ^2 at a significance level of (0.05) = 5.99.

From Table (10), the following observations can be made:

- The response means of the employees in the sports clubs regarding the economic level questionnaire ranged from (0.37 to 0.89). The response means for the various dimensions ranged from (0.40 to 0.48), while the overall response mean for the entire questionnaire was (0.44).
- The χ^2 values at a significance level of (0.05) for all items in the economic level questionnaire were significant, indicating statistically significant differences between the responses of the study sample in favor of higher frequencies, with the response "No".
- All response means for the total score, dimensions, and items of the economic level questionnaire were below the minimum confidence level, indicating a weak economic level, except for Dimension Three: "Financial Developments," where item (21) was above the maximum confidence level, suggesting its significance for the economic level in sports clubs.

The researcher attributes these results to the weak productive capacity of services and activities within sports clubs, which reflects on the economic efficiency of these centers. Additionally, there is a lack of adequate knowledge and experience among those managing the sports clubs to improve the economic level of services and activities through maximizing work productivity, despite the global and local economic shift towards sports and its investment potential, which could contribute to higher

economic, investment, and financial growth rates within various institutions.

In this context, Ibrahim (2000) mentions that economic problems can be solved by improving economic efficiency, i.e., using all available resources to achieve the maximum possible material or moral production, provided it is desired. This means that good economic systems are those that utilize all available resources to meet or satisfy the needs of their members or beneficiaries (Ibrahim, 2000: 33).

The researcher sees an urgent need to improve the economic level of sports clubs by offering activities that are characterized by quality and satisfaction from beneficiaries. The main goal behind providing sports activities and services in sports clubs should be financial profit.

Additionally, the study by Al-Ma'arri and Al-Mawly (2010) highlighted the necessity of continuous evaluation of the economic efficiency of institutions to identify the actual reasons for the decline in economic efficiency and to work on improving it in the future. Similarly, the study by Al-Shabrakhti (2006) emphasized the importance of focusing on the investment of Egyptian clubs in football activities.

The study confirms the inadequate ability of sports club management to achieve an economic performance that matches the scale of activities, services, and available resources within the center. This is reflected in the decline in economic returns, which could be improved by setting quantitative financial targets for the activities, programs, and services provided within the centers. There is also a lack of innovative programs and activities expected to generate high economic returns, leading to an incremental increase in economic returns annually, and the need to eliminate programs and activities that do not yield significant economic returns. This approach aims to enhance the economic returns of the center compared to other centers.

This was corroborated by Matheson (2002), whose results indicated that economic studies often exaggerate the economic impact of sporting events and neglect the replacement and opportunity costs of spending in sports versus other areas. Additionally, the study by Al-Ma'arri and Al-Mawly (2010) emphasized the need for continuous evaluation of institutional economic efficiency to identify the actual causes of economic inefficiency and to work on improving it in the future.

The results for the second axis, "Investment Rates," as shown in Table (10) and Figure (2), highlight the shortcomings of those managing sports clubs in terms of investing in the activities, programs, and services provided by

these centers. This is evident from the lack of specific investment goals for the center, insufficient investment in facilities (such as fields, equipment, programs, and structures) annually, and the absence of attempts by decision-makers to implement modern investment systems like B.O.T. This lack of investment capability leads to a reluctance among investors to invest in sports clubs, despite the numerous available resources and facilities that make them ripe for investment.

Investment is a vital area that positively impacts the economic level. Therefore, there is a need to increase the scope of investment-attractive programs and activities, and to effectively utilize available facilities, which would contribute to a progressive increase in the volume of investment projects annually, leading to higher investment income compared to other centers.

This was emphasized by the study of Al-Shabrakhti (2006), which stressed the importance of investing in Egyptian football clubs.

The results for the third axis, "Financial Developments," as shown in Table (10) and Figure (3), indicate a weakness in the financial performance of sports clubs. This reflects their inadequate preparedness in implementing procedures to improve financial performance, such as setting and achieving financial indicators. There is a need to increase revenues at rates higher than previous years by relying on realistic goals that must be achieved throughout the year and aiming to reduce expenses compared to previous years. Additionally, increasing revenue sources compared to previous years would contribute to a progressive increase in financial liquidity annually in the bank account, allowing sports clubs to rely on self-funding through achieved revenues.

Given the clear indication of declining economic performance, inability to invest, and weak financial performance, this has led to a deficit in the estimated budget, which explains why the result for statement number (21) exceeded the upper limit of confidence.

In this context, Darwich et al. (2013) stated that the sports system relies on economic foundations represented by budgets for activities, programs, departments, equipment, and salaries. Financing various activities always necessitates establishing an economic system and providing the conditions for its success, which is linked to commercial and consumer interests with a source of profit and a successful promotional tool for beneficiaries (Darwich et al., 2013: 54).

To translate and provide context for the second research question:

Question:

- What are the requirements for applying the Gemba Kaizen methodology to improve the economic level of sports clubs in the Arab Republic of Egypt?

Table (11) Relative Weight, Average Response, and Chi-Square of the Sample's Opinions on the Requirements for Applying the Gemba Kaizen Methodology (N = 82)

Axis 1: Support from Top Management for Continuous Improvement Policies

1. **Allocating Financial Resources for Continuous Performance Improvement**
2. **Focusing on Operational Processes More Than on Results**
3. **Achieving Small, Continuous Improvements for Long-Term Stakeholder Satisfaction**
4. **Using Immediate, Partial Solutions Rather Than Complete Solutions That Are Not Implemented**
5. **Granting Employees the Authority to Make Immediate Decisions**

Second Axis: Preparing Qualified Leaders in the Field of Continuous Improvement

1. **Providing Consultants and Experts in Continuous Improvement Programs**
2. **Preparing Leaders Capable of Guiding Employees to Improve Operational Processes**
3. **Training Leaders in Discipline and Time Management Skills**
4. **Preparing Leaders Capable of Developing Employees' Skills and Motivating Them for Productivity**
5. **Creating a Leadership Environment Committed to Continuous Performance Improvement**

Third Axis: Promoting a Culture of Continuous Improvement in the Workplace

1. **Involving all leaders and employees in continuous improvement and development processes.**
2. **Making customer satisfaction a priority.**
3. **Emphasizing the constant need for continuous performance improvement.**
4. **Encouraging attention to operational processes.**
5. **Promoting the idea that no day should pass without making improvements.**

Axis 4: Enhancing Teamwork Policies in the Work Environment

1. Forming work teams to accomplish continuous improvement tasks for various activities
2. Preparing work teams to solve problems occurring within the work environment
3. Involving employees in setting the center's future goals
4. Reinforcing a culture of cooperation and working as a unified team
5. Reducing competition that arises between administrative levels

Fifth Axis: Encouraging Employees' Creative Ideas and Initiatives

1. Implement incentive policies for creative ideas and initiatives at work.
2. Encourage creative ideas for continuous improvement, even if they are simple.
3. Urge employees to shift from traditional thinking to creative thinking.
4. Transform creative ideas into practical, real-world implementation.
5. Move from centralization to granting employees the authority to develop and continuously improve their work, fostering creativity.

Sixth Axis: Reliance on Field Leadership

1. **Manage Events from the Work Site Rather Than from Office Settings**
2. **Improve Operational Processes Specific to the Work Site**
3. **Verify Tangible Items Observable at the Work Site**
4. **Quickly Move to the Location of Problems and Address Them Immediately**
5. **Prepare Leaders Capable of Managing Events from the Actual Site**

Axis 7: Establish Operational Guidelines to Support Continuous Improvement

1. Establish clear performance measurement criteria.
2. Define the actual workflow to complete tasks.
3. Identify tasks that employees need training on.
4. Provide means to prevent the recurrence of issues and errors.
5. Continuously engage in improvement and development to achieve zero waste.

Axis 8: Support Policies for Purification (Improving the Work Environment)

1. **Classify essential and non-essential tasks and eliminate non-essential ones.**
2. **Organize activities and items in their correct locations for easy access.**
3. **Clean the workplace, tools, equipment, and facilities daily.**
4. **Establish clear, simple, and standardized criteria and procedures for continuous task execution.**
5. **Commit to reinforcing established work habits and behaviors.**

Axis 9: Eliminate Waste in Work

1. **Eliminate prolonged waiting times for services and activities provided.**
2. **Remove unnecessary work procedures.**
3. **Eliminate recurring human errors.**
4. **Discontinue providing activities and services that are not desired by beneficiaries.**
5. **Address and eliminate overlapping responsibilities and authority in work processes.**

Results from Table (11):

- The average responses from employees in sports clubs to the items in the Gemba Kaizen (Gemba Kaizen) methodology questionnaire ranged between **0.84 and 0.98**. The average responses for the different axes ranged between **0.88 and 0.96**, while the overall average response for the entire questionnaire was **0.93**.
- The Chi-square values are significant at the 0.05 level for all items in the Gemba Kaizen (Gemba Kaizen) methodology questionnaire, indicating statistically significant differences between the responses of the study sample, favoring the higher frequencies.
- All average responses for the overall score, axes, and items in the Gemba Kaizen (Gemba Kaizen) methodology questionnaire were above the upper confidence limit, indicating that the proposed requirements for applying the Gemba Kaizen (Gemba Kaizen) methodology in sports clubs are considered suitable from the employees' perspective.

Analysis from Table (11) and Figures (4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10):

The results indicate a consensus among the study sample of employees in sports clubs on the necessity of providing the required elements to implement the Gemba Kaizen (Gemba Kaizen) methodology within the

centers. This is crucial for maximizing productivity and enhancing economic performance.

The researcher attributes this outcome in the Gemba Kaizen (Gemba Kaizen) methodology requirements questionnaire to the agreement among employees on the need for these requirements within sports clubs to achieve strong productive and economic performance. Effective transition and continuous improvement through the Gemba Kaizen methodology can only be achieved with support from top management and decision-makers. This includes allocating financial resources for continuous performance improvement and adopting the idea of making small, ongoing improvements over the long term.

This aligns with the findings of **Youssef (2013)**, which highlighted that development processes relying on accumulated small improvements and a commitment from top management to embrace continuous improvement are essential. Similarly, **Mohamed (2013)** emphasized the need for mechanisms to activate the role of management in enhancing institutional capacity in light of the Kaizen strategy.

The researcher also underscores the importance of preparing qualified leaders in the field of continuous improvement who can adopt the Kaizen methodology for performance enhancement. This involves creating a leadership environment committed to continuous performance improvement and providing consultants and experts in performance improvement programs.

This is confirmed by **Watanabe (2011)**, which highlighted the need to leverage the expertise of practitioners in planning and implementing all related processes of the strategy. The study recommended adopting gradual changes in administrative processes to achieve continuous improvement in the long term.

Furthermore, spreading a culture of continuous improvement among employees plays a crucial role in activating the Kaizen methodology. This involves encouraging all leaders and employees to participate in continuous improvement and development efforts and ensuring that no day passes without making improvements. This was emphasized by **Mohamed (2013)**, which stated that one of the key requirements for implementing the Kaizen strategy to enhance institutional capacity is "providing a team involved in applying Kaizen." Similarly, **Youssef (2013)** stressed that for the effective application of Gemba Kaizen, all employees at all levels must be involved in the development process and foster an internal desire for positive change.

The researcher also emphasizes the importance of providing and enhancing teamwork policies in the work environment, encouraging creative ideas and initiatives from employees, and relying on field leadership. This approach enables both employees and leaders to manage events from the work site rather than from offices, allowing them to verify tangible aspects observable within the work environment. **Al-Harbi (2017)** also confirmed that the Gemba Kaizen methodology is one of the key requirements that the university must adopt and commit to.

The researcher believes that one of the key pillars of the Gemba Kaizen methodology, which can contribute to achieving the desired performance, is the establishment of operational rules that support continuous improvement. This approach includes supporting and applying workplace organization policies and maintaining a constant focus on eliminating various types of waste in work processes.

Dysko (2012) developed a Gemba Kaizen framework based on four steps: "Planning, Work Procedures, Ensuring Human Resources Availability, and Execution." Additionally, **Al-Harbi (2017)** emphasized the importance of adopting modern strategies and models for planning and improvement, reducing waste, and adhering to the principle of continuous gradual change.

Conclusions

Based on the results of the study, the researcher has drawn the following conclusions:

1. **Weak Management of Resources:**
 - Sports clubs struggle with managing their available physical resources effectively, despite having adequate and suitable facilities (such as fields, equipment, tools, halls, swimming pools, etc.).
2. **Neglect of Human Resources:**
 - The leadership in sports clubs shows a lack of attention to human resource management.
3. **Focus on Small, Incremental Improvements:**
 - Continuous and small improvements are more beneficial than radical changes.
 - Involving employees in suggesting small improvements increases their commitment.
4. **Importance of Continuous Improvement at Various Levels:**
 - Implementing Gemba Kaizen at different administrative and functional levels.

- Coordinating between departments to achieve improvements across functions.
- 5. **Ineffectiveness and Inefficiency of Operational Activities:**
 - Weak effectiveness and efficiency in the operational activities related to production processes within sports clubs.
- 6. **Low Productive Capacity:**
 - The productive capacity of sports centers is insufficient.
- 7. **Weak Economic Performance Monitoring:**
 - There is a lack of adequate monitoring of economic performance within sports clubs.
- 8. **Inability to Achieve Economic Performance:**
 - The management of sports clubs fails to achieve economic performance that aligns with the scale of activities, services, and available resources.
- 9. **Inadequate Investment in Activities and Services:**
 - The ability to invest in activities, programs, and services provided by the centers is weak.
- 10. **Poor Financial Performance:**
 - Financial performance within sports clubs is lacking.
- 11. **Requirements for Gemba Kaizen Implementation:**
 - The study identified key requirements for implementing Gemba Kaizen in sports clubs, including:
 - Adopting a continuous improvement approach by top management.
 - Developing qualified leaders in continuous improvement.
 - Promoting a culture of continuous improvement in the workplace.
 - Enhancing teamwork policies in the work environment.
 - Encouraging creative ideas and initiatives from employees.
 - Relying on field leadership.
 - Establishing operational rules that support continuous improvement.
 - Supporting workplace organization policies.
 - Eliminating waste in work processes.

12. Proposed Vision for Gemba Kaizen Application:

- The study proposes a vision for using the Japanese Gemba Kaizen methodology to improve the economic performance of sports clubs in Egypt.

Recommendations

Based on the results of the research, the researcher recommends the following:

1. Adopt the Proposed Vision:

- Implement the proposed vision for using the Japanese Gemba Kaizen methodology to improve the economic performance of sports clubs in Egypt, contributing to the successful application of Gemba Kaizen and achieving the desired economic performance impact.

2. Gain Support from Senior Leadership:

- Obtain support and involvement from senior administrative and financial leaders in the sports clubs.
- Engage leaders in planning and prioritizing to ensure their commitment to the methodology.

3. Build Necessary Capacities and Skills:

- Develop comprehensive training programs to equip administrative and financial personnel with the skills needed to apply Gemba Kaizen.
- Identify training needs and allocate the necessary financial and human resources.

4. Establish Supportive Organizational Structures:

- Form specialized teams for Gemba Kaizen implementation at the club level.
- Clearly define responsibilities and authority for these teams.
- Link incentives and rewards systems to achieving continuous improvement goals.

5. Effectively Manage Change:

- Develop a comprehensive change management plan to overcome potential resistance.
- Communicate continuously with employees about the importance of transitioning to a Gemba Kaizen culture.
- Encourage employee participation and empower them to contribute to the improvement process.

6. Continuous Measurement and Evaluation:

- Define key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the outcomes of Gemba Kaizen implementation.
- Conduct regular reviews to assess progress and ensure goals are met.
- Use results to reinforce improvements and adjust plans as needed.

7. Investigate and Address Factors Affecting Economic Performance:

- Study the reasons behind the inefficiency in the economic performance of sports clubs and address them to maximize their economic returns.

8. Utilize Available Resources:

- Leverage the physical resources provided to sports clubs and support from the Ministry of Youth and Sports to offer activities, services, and programs that satisfy a broad segment of beneficiaries, thus improving economic performance.

9. Leverage Gemba Kaizen Methodology:

- Apply Gemba Kaizen methodology, strategies, tools, and ideas to eliminate waste and implement cleansing policies for continuous improvement, aiming to enhance the economic performance of sports clubs.

10. Conduct Similar Research:

- Carry out further scientific research on the application of Gemba Kaizen for continuous improvement in other sports institutions and organizations, as it positively impacts the development of the sports system.

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