Sustained growth through transformational leadership: A Case Study of a Leading Brush Manufacturing Company

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Abstract: This study focuses on Samtessi Brush Manufacturers (Pvt) Ltd. which investigates the effect of transformational leadership on long-term growth inside organisations. Samtessi, a division of the DSI Samson Group, has become one of Sri Lanka's top producers of brush ware, growing both domestically and abroad. In order to better understand how transformational leadership has improved quality management, marketing tactics, and overall business performance, the study will examine the company's growth trajectory from 2013 to 2023. Using a case framework, the study pinpoints important factors that contribute to long-term growth, such as strategic marketing campaigns, leadership impact, and quality management procedures. The study looks at how transformational leadership has promoted innovation, operational effectiveness, and employee engagement at Samtessi using a mix of qualitative techniques like 10 in-depth interviews and 5 focus groups sessions and secondary data analysis. The results show that Samtessi's capacity to adjust to changes in the market, preserve customer satisfaction, and boost production efficiency has been greatly aided by transformational leadership, which is defined by idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration. The report also emphasises the importance of market penetration and strategic quality planning as crucial components that support long-term organisational performance. The study highlights the significance of leadership-driven strategies for long-term growth and offers managers and policymakers in manufacturing and other industries useful insights. It also points up areas that require more investigation, especially when evaluating how leadership contributes to competitive advantage and sustainable business practices in changing market environments.

Keywords: *Marketing Strategies*, *Quality Management, Sustained Growth, Transformational Leadership*

Introduction

In a global environment, a company should have an ability to grow and prosper over an extended period of time in several markets across various geographies. Successful market entry, higher foreign sales and revenue, product and service diversity, effective global supply chain management, innovation, flexibility, and strategic alliances are all components of this expansion. Long-term success also depends on important elements including financial stability, talent acquisition, corporate social responsibility, and brand reputation.

Numerous strategic methods are responsible for Fortune 500 firms' long-term business success. By investing in research and development (R&D) and cultivating a creative culture, these companies are able to maintain their competitiveness through ongoing innovation. Access to cutting-edge technologies and market expansion are made possible through strategic alliances and acquisitions. While a customer-centric strategy increases brand loyalty through data-driven insights and tailored engagement, market diversification reduces risks and guarantees consistent growth. Resilience and long-term profitability are also influenced by good organisational culture, talent management, and operational excellence.

Theme of the Case Study

'Sustained growth through transformational leadership' has been identified as the theme of this case study and explains how Samtessi brushes leadership lead the company into success executing sustained growth. Transformational Leadership has often been associated with growth of the organization. Transformational leadership, quality management applications and marketing strategies. This topic is of great interest to scholars of humanities, social science, formal science and applied science. In other hand, this study will provide practical significance to emerging leaders/entrepreneurs on driving the business into success.

Objectives of the Study

1. To explain how the Samtessi Brushes was able to achieve sustained growth in the period 2013-2023.
2. To study the role transformational leadership has played in this case into sustained growth.

Scope of the Study

The subject scope of this case study is 'sustained growth'. There are number of factors that may have contributed to the organizational outcome of sustained growth. However, attempting to identify and analyze all of these variables falls beyond the breadth of this study. The focus of this case will be to analyze the three key drivers which have contributed to sustained growth: namely, demonstrating transformational leadership, improving quality management applications and executing marketing strategies. The unit of analysis of this case study will be limited to Samtessi brushes. Also, despite having a 52-year corporate history, this case study will only consider the recent ten years of Samtessi's business operation, since a majority of events showcasing the key drivers occurred during the period 2013-2023.

Literature Review

Sustained Growth

If a company performs well in the industry means that the company is growing rapidly. It is given that growth should be sustained without being fast or slow. As Delmar (1997) explains, revenue growth has been accepted as a good measure of analyzing organizational sustained growth. In other hand, production volume and employee count can also be taken as measures. Here mentioned sustained growth is a growth lays between 'no growth' and 'limitless growth' (Taylor & Consenza, 1997). It is given that there is a positive correlation between organizational resources and organizational growth. Above mention drivers drive to sustained growth and moderator moderates it. Organizational growth has multiple definitions. An organization was said to have grown when it had changed in size in relation to some measure of the past (Filley & Aldag, 1980) (Dobbs & Hamilton ,2007) defined organizational growth as a change in the size of a firm within a given time period. According to (Weinzimmer et al., 1998) organizational growth was a dynamic measure of change over time. Penrose (1959) stated that the size of a firm was a by-product of its growth over time. Thus, it can be surmised that organizational growth involved a change in the size of the firm over a given period of time.

Organizational growth should not be measured using a single dimension. Mentioned that the size of an organization was an absolute measure, whereas growth was a relative measure of size over time. Researchers also agreed that growth was a process and size was a state; one learned about the former by investigating the latter. For this reason, using a single dimension to measure the change in an organization's size and thus assess its growth, was criticized by scholars as they were proven to provide inadequate results. Organizational growth was dynamic and therefore analysing it in respect of a single dimension did not provide an accurate representation of the growth of the firm. Organizational growth should be measured using multiple dimensions which are best suited to the firm. Authors such as Child (1973), Davidsson (1989) and Delmar (1997) declared that the measurement chosen influenced the extent to which organizations were said to have grown. The results of their findings demonstrate that growth cannot be accurately measured using a single criterion.

Transformational Leadership

A leader with an ability to inspire and motivate people to perform beyond expectations. When it comes to the manufacturing industries, this transformational leadership should be executed along with the directive leadership style, which is a leadership style that targets goal setting and role clarification (Burawat, 2019). Research studies mentioned that transformational leadership style decision making is a combination of directive and participative decision style. For example, A manufacturing firm supervisor who supervise employees defining future goals may act as an effective inspiring leader who convince subordinates towards achieving future goals. This inspiring mechanism is not applicable only for operational level leaders who directly work with operational staff but should flow from strategic management level to managerial level and then operational level. Strategic decisions taken at the top of the organization hierarchy should be communicated to the bottom level as specified.

As manufacturing companies more focus on "best fit" approach, while large organizations more focus on "best practice" approach. "Best fit" approach suggests that management people should take contingencies to account (Boxall and Purcell, 2000). Such as effectiveness of leadership based on considering contingencies like employee characteristics, and the nature of the work. It says Small medium companies are different compared to larger organizations as leadership has different effects on employees within the organization. As an example, employees in smaller organizations are relatively more committed than larger organizations. Dimensions of organizational commitment can be identified as effective, continuance and normative organizational commitment. While demonstrating transformational leadership, it is important to consider on mentioned dimensions. Among 3 dimensions, affective organizational commitment is the best fit which excels highest employee relationship and organizational outcomes.

Quality Management Practices

Quality management is described as a management approach to improving firm performance, particularly in terms of quality aspects. Quality is an important strategy when comes to operation management in competitive business environment. Quality management comprises with human resources management, customer satisfaction, top management, process management, quality information and strategic quality planning (Ebrahimi & Sadeghi, 2013). Under Quality Management is focused on error prevention, continuing quality improvements, aligning with universal concepts, and establishing quality measurements. Manufacturing firms can focus on state-of-the-art production where machinery, tools and process controls for continuous or repetitive production operations, in order to deliver quality products. Researchers have identified 19 dimensions of QM under manufacturing industries (Huq & Stolen, 1996). In generally it covered organization mission statement, management commitment towards QM, communication within the company, performance appraisal system of the company, measures of cost of the quality, causes of quality variation, customer feedback, problem solving approach and training are few of them.

The main objective of QM is to achieve a reliable manufacturing system via attaining overall equipment effectiveness to improve productivity. There is a term called Total Process Management (TPM), which is mainly focused on processes while QM focuses on products. Implementation of continuous improvement practices, senior management commitment and support is highly important (Sahoo,2020). As mentioned under transformational leadership, it was mentioned that maintaining quality and process reengineering derived within the leadership. Good leaders should have capability to influence people to adopt new behaviours needed for strategy implementation to attain organizational goals.

Marketing Strategy

Marketing strategy as ‘a pattern of decisions, both structural and infrastructural, which determine the capability of a marketing system and specify how it will operate to meet a set of marketing objectives which are consistent with overall business objectives’ (Platts, 1990). Marketing objectives should align with goals of the marketing system and need to align with competitors’ capability. All capabilities must be aligned with marketplace requirements.

According to the Ansoff (1965), growth opportunities can be segregated into four categories. (1) Market penetration. Market penetration consists of the firm seeking increased sales for its current products in its current (international) markets. (2) Market development. The firm seeks increased sales by taking its current products into new (international) markets. (3) Product development. Product development consists of the firm seeking increased sales by developing new or improved products for its current (international) markets. (4) Diversification growth. The firm seeks increased sales by developing new products and taking these into new (international) markets. In turn, three broad types of diversification were identified: (a) concentric diversification, (b) horizontal diversification, and (c) conglomerate diversification.

International Market Competition

Industry competition is an opportunity where company growth moderates. When comes to the brush manufacturing industry, companies should perform along with the competitors and that how company will remain on the industry. Otherwise, company won’t be aware about the level of growth company should attain under specific time period. Competitive pressure can come from five forces, competing sellers, buyers, sellers, potential new entrance and firms offering substitute products (Porter, 1979). With respect to the competition, market prices will change to attain highest market segment within the industry. There are market strategies to face market competition, such as cost leadership, differentiation, and focus (Porter, 1980). Most commonly there is one cost leader in the industry, so rest of the companies should mainly focus on differentiation and focus. These companies should keep costs similar to the competition while supplying products or services with more value addition.

Market competition is the process of competing with other companies in the same industry for customers and resources (Porter, 2008). In a competitive market, companies must constantly improve their products and services to stay ahead of their competitors. This competition can be a powerful motivator for companies to innovate and improve their operations (Porter, 1990). In Sri Lanka, Samtessi Brushes operates in the household and personal care industry, which is highly competitive, with numerous companies offering similar products. To sustain its growth, the company must continually improve its product quality and range to keep up with the changing demands of customers. The company must also find ways to differentiate itself from its competitors, such as offering unique product features, better customer service, or more attractive pricing. According to a study by De Silva & Ratnadiwakara (2017), market competition in Sri Lanka has a positive impact on firm performance, including sustained growth.

DSI Samson Group Influence

DSI Group is a large conglomerate in Sri Lanka that operates in various industries, including footwear, retail, and manufacturing. As the mother company of Samtessi Brushes, DSI Group's influence plays a crucial role in the sustained growth of the subsidiary company. According to a study by Zehou, Zhang, and Zhan (2019), the influence of a mother company can lead to improved performance and sustained growth for subsidiary companies. The study found that a mother company's resources, experience, and expertise can help the subsidiary company to improve its operations, expand its market, and increase its competitiveness. In the case of Samtessi Brushes, DSI Group's influence has helped the company to sustain its growth by providing access to the group's resources and expertise. For example, DSI Group's manufacturing expertise has helped Samtessi Brushes to improve its product quality and range, while the group's retail experience has helped the subsidiary company to expand its market and attract more customers. DSI Group's financial resources have enabled Samtessi Brushes to invest in research and development, marketing, and other areas that are crucial for sustained growth. DSI Group's influence has also helped Samtessi Brushes to maintain its reputation and brand image, which is crucial in a highly competitive market like Sri Lanka's.

Case Framework

The case framework illustrates the relationship between the key drivers, the environmental moderator and the outcome. In this case study, demonstrating Transformational leadership, Improving Total Quality Management and executing Product and Market Diversification will act as the key drivers contributing to the outcome of sustained growth. International Market competition and DSI Samson Group Influence will act as environmental moderators. Figure 1 shows the case framework.

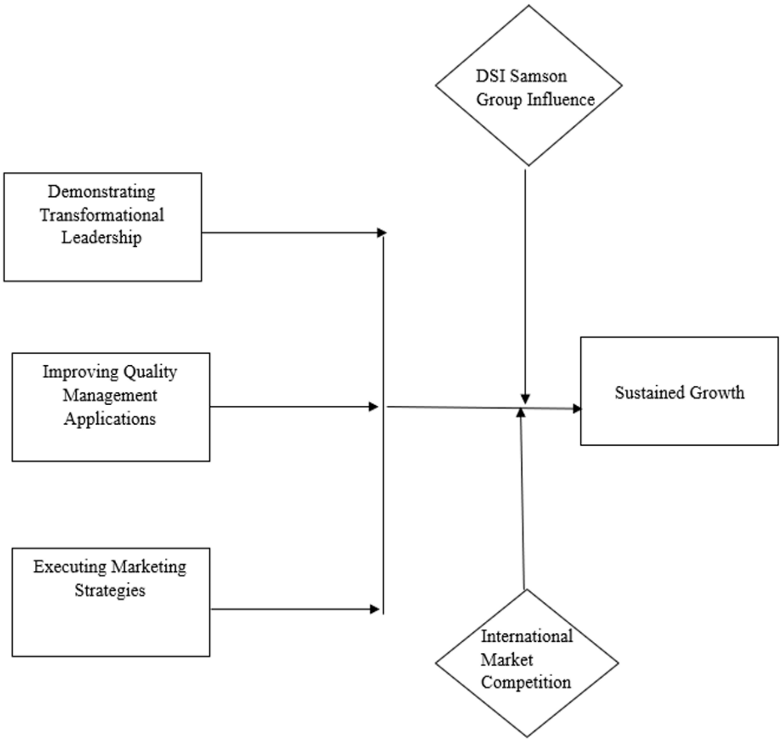

Figure 1: Case Framework

Source: Author (2022)

Data Collection and Methodology

In gathering data for this case study, both primary and secondary data collection methodologies have been used. Qualitative methodologies like in-depth interviews, focus group sessions conducted to gather data and company approval on conducting interviews have been received. Financial head supported in coordinating and gathering data about the company.

The main objective of this case study is to identify how Samtessi Brushes was able to achieve sustained business growth in the period 2013-2020, and to study the role transformational leadership has played in this case. Primary data has gathered on face-to-face, one-to-one discussion with 10 company employees on their past experience and how they feel about the current status of the company. In other hand, have conducted 5 focus group discussions with a set of people once. Secondary data refers to information that has been gathered by individuals or entities other than the primary user. This implies that the data has already been obtained and is then subjected to analysis by an individual or group (Sekaran, 2016). Secondary data encompasses several sources such as periodicals, newspapers, books, and journals, among others. These data collection methodologies have been used to validate the case framework and to broadly identify the case.

Results of the Case Study About the "Samtessi Brush Manufacturing"

Forbes issued a thorough study of the manufacturing sector in 2022, and it states that Sri Lanka's brush manufacturing industry has grown significantly in recent years (Smith, 2022). Numerous important causes are responsible for this rise, including the rising need for brushes across a range of industries, including domestic cleaning, construction, and automotive.The growth of these sectors has improved the business climate for Sri Lankan brush producers. Concurrently, the worldwide brush production industry has demonstrated favorable expansion, driven by technological breakthroughs that result in the creation of increasingly effective and long-lasting brushes (Smith, 2022). Furthermore, an increase in the global market for brushes has been attributed to a greater consciousness of personal cleanliness and grooming (Smith, 2022). This pattern is supported.

It is anticipated that Sri Lanka's infrastructure will require more brushes in the future for painting, cleaning, and maintenance. In addition, the world market for brush manufacturing is expected to grow due to the global beauty and cosmetics products industry's rapid growth (Smith, 2022). The beauty industry's continued expansion will probably result in a rise in the need for brushes that meet different make-up and skincare requirements. From 2013 to the present, Samtessi Brush Manufacturing, a Sri Lankan company, has grown steadily and with remarkable resilience despite difficult economic circumstances, such as the COVID-19 pandemic's effects and national economic uncertainty. Samtessi's success has been largely attributed to its strategic emphasis on diversification and adaptability.

Samtessi Brush Manufactures (Pvt) Ltd, a trailblazing company in the brushware sector, was founded in 1993 and has its origins in a visionary shareholder from Essef BVP Belgium. This adventure started with a resource exploration of Sri Lanka, where wood and fibre served as the basis for a creative joint venture with the DSI Samson Group in Sri Lanka. With a combined total of 29 years of industry experience, Samtessi, a subsidiary of DSI Samson Group (Pvt) Limited, a well-known business conglomerate in Sri Lanka, has developed into a top brush manufacturer. Working together with prestigious partners like Essef BVBA in Belgium and Borstelfabriek MJJ Lurvink BV in the Netherlands, we have established ourselves as a leader in the brush manufacturing industry.

The company has been able to introduce a wide range of products that have gained global acclaim, reaching markets from the UK to Europe, Japan to the Middle East, and Australia to the USA, thanks to our commitment to quality and innovation. Established over 29 years of producing brushes and brooms, Samtessi Brush Manufactures is more than just a company; it is a legacy based on our unwavering trust in the combined knowledge of our employees, whom we view as our most valuable resource. By prioritising renewable raw materials like rubber wood and fibre, we operate with a sustainable mindset and make sure that our products not only meet the highest standards but also help to create a more environmentally conscious future.

Slow and Steady Growth

Samtessi Brush Manufactures' growth journey is a testament to the transformative power of overcoming organizational failures. Initially struggling with financial losses due to partner-imposed pricing, the company undertook a strategic restructuring, including a significant shift in ownership dynamics as DSI increased its stake from 25% to 60%. This restructuring, combined with financial prudence, allowed Samtessi to establish a stronger foundation. The director emphasizes that "our past challenges were pivotal in shaping our present success. We learned that true resilience lies in adaptability". This perspective underscores the role of learning from setbacks as a cornerstone of long-term success.

Furthermore, strategic leadership and customer-centric initiatives were instrumental in reversing Samtessi's negative revenue trend, as reflected in Figure 2. The new management prioritized direct customer engagement, including yearly visits and participation in international trade shows, strengthening client relationships and driving business expansion. Figure 3 highlights the company's impressive revenue turnaround. By fostering trust and loyalty, these strategic initiatives enabled Samtessi to diversify its market presence and ensure sustainable growth.

<u>Before New management appointed.</u>

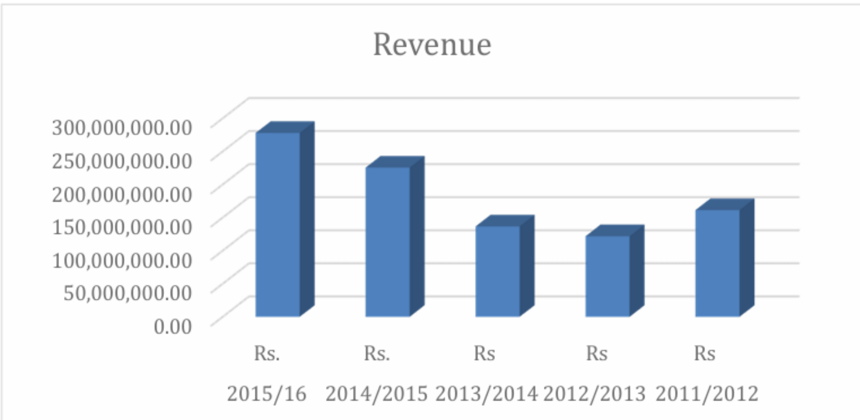

Figure 2: Revenue – before

Source: Company Records

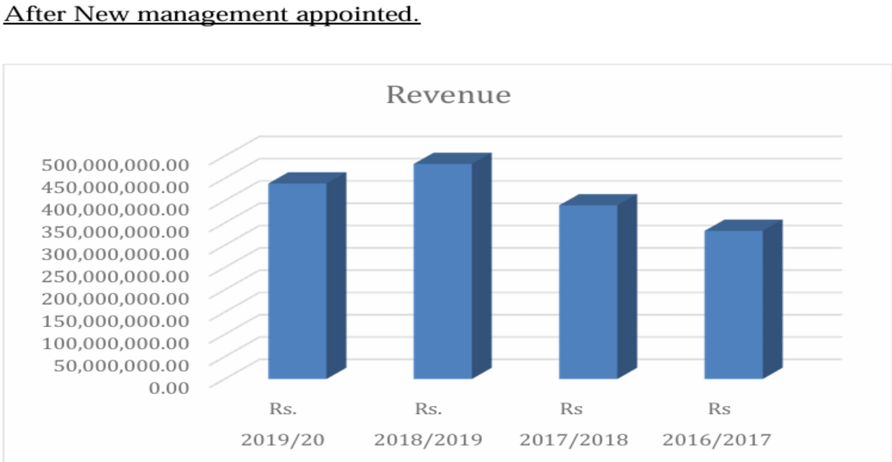

Figure 3: Revenue - Income statement – after

Source: Company Records

Leading the Way Towards Success

Samtessi Brush Manufactures exemplifies the power of idealized influence in leadership, fostering a culture of unity and shared commitment among employees. By clearly articulating a compelling long-term vision and leading by example, senior management has successfully instilled confidence and motivation in the workforce. Employees are not only aligned with the company's strategic goals but also inspired to contribute actively to its growth. As Mr. Lalith Jayawardana, the director, emphasizes, *"Our leadership philosophy is based on inspiring through influence. We inspire a shared vision that goes beyond immediate objectives rather than merely setting goals"*. This leadership approach has been instrumental in shaping the company's sustained success, reinforcing employee dedication and resilience.

Moreover, transformational leadership at Samtessi is evident in its commitment to effective communication and structured guidance. The company's approach ensures that employees at all levels receive clear instructions, aligning their roles with the overarching organizational goals. The leadership's emphasis on direct engagement, illustrated through strategic planning and operational oversight, has significantly improved productivity and cohesion within the company. This structured leadership model, combined with a focus on employee empowerment and mentorship, has driven organizational effectiveness, strengthening Samtessi's market position.

AGM Finance at Samtessi, who says, *"Leadership influence has been a cornerstone of our sustained growth Initiatives like daily target setting and career guidance, which are modelled in industries like carpentry, demonstrate the experience-driven influence of the* *leadership. Our financial growth has been largely attributed to the leadership's forward-thinking approach, which is demonstrated by their dedication to entering the USA market and providing loans to suppliers*.". This insight from the AGM Finance perspective highlights how the leadership's influence has transcended typical managerial roles, creating an environment where employees are empowered and aligned with the company's overarching goals, fostering sustained growth. Below Figure 4 shows how idealized influenced from top management inspired subordinates to work towards attaining local and international recognition.

Figure 4: NCE Export Awards

Source: Company Records

Shared Gains

By placing a strong emphasis on inspirational motivation, enabling staff members to express their thoughts, and actively participating in the company's expansion, Samtessi Brush Manufactures has promoted a culture of shared achievement. A shared vision where creativity and transparency are essential components of the organisational structure is fostered by this leadership style. Open-door policies and whistleblower policies, for example, have improved transparency by enabling direct communication between staff members and upper management. Frequent weekly meetings facilitate the exchange of ideas and guarantee that staff members participate in company decision-making processes. The organisation has empowered its employees by fostering a sense of purpose and inclusivity, which strengthens the connection between individual endeavours and organisational goals.

In addition to fostering an innovative work environment, the company has actively recognized employee contributions through structured engagement initiatives. By encouraging staff to share their ideas without hesitation, Samtessi has cultivated a workplace where every voice matters. As the purchasing department manager puts it, *"The company's commitment to motivate employees is visible in our ability to voice concerns, ideas, and suggestions without hesitation."* This highlights how an inclusive leadership approach can enhance trust, employee morale, and productivity.

Employee Well-being Over Common Goals

Samtessi Brush Manufactures has prioritized employee well-being by offering comprehensive benefits that extend beyond financial compensation. Recognizing that job satisfaction encompasses more than just salaries, the company has implemented training programs, professional development opportunities, and health-related initiatives to support its workforce. Employees have access to annual training courses, knowledge-sharing sessions, and out-of-office development programs. This investment in workforce development has reinforced employee commitment and fostered a sense of loyalty. As one of the planning assistant, highlights, *“Our abilities are improved and we advance both personally and professionally when we have access to training and career development”*. His statement underscores how Samtessi’s emphasis on continuous learning enhances both individual growth and company success.

Beyond training, Samtessi integrates well-being into its corporate culture by supporting employees through a range of incentives and initiatives. The company acknowledges employee contributions with structured recognition programs, which include awards for innovative workers . Additionally, Samtessi provides scholarships for employees' children, transport services, and financial support during challenging times, such as the Covid-19 pandemic. These initiatives reinforce the company's belief in shared success and long-term workforce stability.

The Assistant Manager of Finance, states, “*The company’s dedication to offering comprehensive training and knowledge-sharing sessions has been instrumental in sustaining employee growth”*. This approach highlights how investing in employees’ professional and personal well-being is a strategic decision that strengthens the company’s long-term competitiveness.

Talents over Targets

Samtessi Brush Manufactures places a strong emphasis on nurturing talent through its performance-driven culture, ensuring that individual growth aligns with corporate success. Annual Key Performance Indicator (KPI) assessments play a pivotal role in evaluating both employee and organizational achievements. By setting well-defined KPIs tailored to specific roles, the company fosters motivation, accountability, and continuous improvement. The Planning Assistant, underscores the significance of this approach, stating, *“KPI establishment has been crucial in guiding employee performance towards specific goals”*. The structured performance management system, complemented by rewards for outstanding contributions, has cultivated a high-performance work culture, ultimately driving Samtessi’s sustained growth.

Beyond performance metrics, Samtessi fosters an environment of intellectual stimulation, encouraging employees to think creatively and contribute innovative ideas. The leadership actively recognizes and rewards valuable employee suggestions, reinforcing a culture of continuous learning and improvement. The company’s AGM of Finance, highlights this philosophy, stating, *“Over the years, our KPIs have been essential in guiding and maintaining growth. The* *company has established a successful road map by matching key performance indicators with important business objectives like improved sales, increased production volume, increased profitability, and effective cash flow management".* This strategic alignment of performance evaluations with business growth objectives has strengthened employee engagement, ensuring Samtessi's competitive edge in the industry.

Doing the Housekeeping Correct Way

Samtessi Brush Manufactures has emphasized quality assurance as a cornerstone of its operational excellence, ensuring product consistency and reliability. Through strategic quality planning, the company aligns its manufacturing processes with international standards, optimizing production efficiency while reducing defects. A significant aspect of this commitment is its internal housekeeping and waste management approach, which has resulted in a zero-waste production system. By outsourcing housekeeping duties to ABANS, Samtessi ensures a clean, well-structured workplace, reinforcing its dedication to quality and environmental sustainability. As Samtessi Production manager asserts, *"This dedication not only guarantees the creation of superior brushes but also plays a part in maintaining a sustainable environment."* This highlights the company's dual focus on quality excellence and environmental responsibility.

The company's stringent quality control measures have earned it multiple certifications, underscoring its adherence to global standards. These certifications, as depicted in Figure 5, validate Samtessi's ability to meet international benchmarks while catering to customer expectations. By implementing structured quality checks and ensuring seamless compliance with regulatory requirements, the company strengthens its market credibility and competitive edge. The combination of rigorous quality assurance, effective waste management, and strategic operational planning has enabled Samtessi to maintain a strong reputation, ensuring its continued growth in the global industrial brush market.

Figure 5: Financial KPI indicators

Source: Company Records

Thinking Ahead

Samtessi Brush Manufactures has adopted a forward-thinking approach by integrating strategic quality planning into its operations, ensuring long-term business sustainability. By aligning its quality goals with international standards, the company has built a reputation for delivering defect-free products, a critical factor in maintaining customer loyalty and industry competitiveness. With a defect tolerance rate as low as 0.5%, Samtessi demonstrates its unwavering commitment to quality, especially in meeting the stringent requirements of the European and Japanese markets. As the AGM Sourcing, states, *"We recognize the importance of meeting and surpassing the high standards set by the European market. By coordinating our quality planning with global standards, we guarantee market compliance and establish ourselves as a dependable and favored vendor"*. This proactive strategy not only safeguards the company's market position but also fosters customer trust and satisfaction.

Furthermore, Samtessi's commitment to quality extends beyond compliance to setting new industry benchmarks. The company employs a data-driven approach to continuous improvement, using quality control metrics to enhance production efficiency and reduce errors. This dedication is reflected in its ability to meet the rigorous quality expectations of markets like Japan, where any lapses result in penalties and payment reductions. Figure 6 highlights the company's adherence to the Samson Group's quality objectives, demonstrating its focus on sustainable quality practices. By prioritizing excellence and strategic foresight, Samtessi ensures that its products not only meet but exceed industry standards, securing its position as a leader in the global brush manufacturing sector.

Quality Policy

Samson International Plc is committed to manufacture and supply quality moulded & extruded polymer products while mitigating the risks (that can affect the quality management system of the company) under efficient & effective management practices and also provide the maximum value to the customer by providing products at competitive prices with highest level of service to meet

- Customer needs and expectations all the time.
- Continual improvement of products, processes and systems by efficient utilization of its resources.
- Minimum defects in all our products & processes.
- Compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements.
- On time delivery.

Figure 6: Quality Policy

Source: Annual reports- SAMSON INTERNATIONAL PLC

Prioritizing Customer Satisfaction

Samtessi Brush Manufactures has established customer satisfaction as a core pillar of its business strategy, ensuring that client needs are consistently met and exceeded. The company employs a multi-channel approach to gathering customer feedback, integrating it into quality assurance processes for continuous improvement. Regular communication with clients, including post-purchase email feedback mechanisms and impromptu meetings, allows for a swift response to concerns and a deeper understanding of evolving customer preferences. As the Warehouse Executive, emphasizes, *"Prioritizing customer satisfaction has been a guiding principle in our journey of sustained growth. We not only meet but also surpass our customers' expectations by constantly providing them with the highest level of care and attention."* This customer-centric philosophy has strengthened Samtessi's market position, fostering trust and loyalty among its clientele.

Beyond direct feedback, Samtessi's commitment to client satisfaction is reflected in its strategic global outreach. The company's registration with ISSA and its active participation in industry exhibitions allow it to maintain visibility and strengthen international partnerships. By adding approximately five new international clients annually, Samtessi carefully balances local and global expansion, ensuring steady revenue growth while adhering to market regulations. Figure 7 illustrates the declining trend of customer complaints, highlighting the success of these proactive measures. Additionally, the company maintains a 24/7 open communication channel with its Director of Marketing, reinforcing its commitment to customer responsiveness. The General Manager, affirms this approach, stating, *"Our dedication to putting customer satisfaction first is closely linked to our sustained growth. We not only meet but surpass expectations by aggressively seeking out and appreciating customer feedback, laying the groundwork for long-term growth based on client loyalty and trust."* This strategic focus on quality-driven customer engagement has been integral to Samtessi's ongoing success.

Customer Complaints

Year	Number of Customer complaints
2012/13	29
2013/14	14
2014/15	17
2015/16	12
2016/17	14
2017/18	12
2018/19	25
2019/20	16
2020/21	10

Figure 7: Number of Complaints

Source: Annual reports- SAMSON INTERNATIONAL PLC

Continuous Development

Samtessi Brush Manufactures has successfully leveraged continuous development strategies to ensure its sustained growth in the competitive brush manufacturing industry. The company has adopted market penetration strategies by optimizing pricing structures and enhancing distribution efficiency, allowing it to maintain a strong foothold in existing markets. Samtessi has also embraced structured cost management by eliminating hardship allowances and negotiating favorable credit terms with suppliers, ensuring financial stability even amidst economic uncertainties. These strategic adjustments have enabled the company to maintain competitiveness while adapting to evolving market conditions. As the purchasing manager Samtessi, highlights, *"Our approach to continuous development aligns with market latest strategies. Our approach to adjusting our business model to changing market conditions and embracing new revenue streams guarantees not only our survival but also steady growth."* This forward-thinking strategy has played a pivotal role in the company's ability to maintain long-term profitability.

Seizing Opportunities

Samtessi Brush Manufactures has demonstrated its ability to seize opportunities through strategic market expansion and product diversification. By leveraging international exhibitions, the company has successfully expanded its customer base while complying with local regulatory restrictions on growth. This proactive market engagement has allowed Samtessi to establish a global presence, adapting its strategies to meet the unique demands of different regions. As the Shipping Executive, highlights, *"With the exception of the Chinese plastic market, our expansion strategy entails the addition of roughly five new customers annually through international exhibitions."* This calculated approach ensures that Samtessi continues to strengthen its foothold in international markets while maintaining steady growth.

Additionally, the company's diversification efforts have extended beyond traditional brush manufacturing, as seen in its entry into the Chinese market for plastic and artificial brushes. Through a joint venture in Dubai, Samtessi effectively managed supply chain operations and local business functions, ensuring seamless international expansion. This strategic move reflects the company's commitment to flexibility and market adaptation. By embracing calculated risk-taking and exploring new revenue streams, Samtessi continues to position itself as a leading player in the competitive brush manufacturing industry .

Expanding Boundaries

Samtessi Brush Manufactures has strategically expanded its market boundaries by embracing diversification as a key growth strategy. Initially constrained by local sales limitations due to BOI regulations, the company gradually increased its local sales to 9% by 2014. To mitigate risks and enhance revenue streams, Samtessi expanded beyond brush manufacturing into new ventures such as coco pit trading and grow bags. This strategic diversification allowed the company to increase revenue without incurring significant production overheads. As one of the General Manager Mr. Nuwan states, "*We are committed to long-term growth, which involves looking into new revenue sources and developing local markets. By buying and selling instead of manufacturing, we've not only expanded our revenue streams but also ensured agility in adapting to market demands.*" This approach underscores Samtessi's ability to balance core strengths with new market opportunities.

Findings of the Case Study

Achieving Sustained Growth

Revenue growth has been acknowledged as a useful metric for examining organisational sust ained growth, as Delmar (1997) elucidates.On the other hand, the number of employees and production volume can also be used as metrics. The primary and secondary data of Samtessi demonstrated that the organization had indeed grown over the period under review (i.e. 2013 2023). According to Taylor and Consenza (1997), sustained growth is defined as a growth that occurs between "no growth" and "limitless growth." It goes without saying that organizational resources and growth are positively correlated. Under the dynamic leadership of the new management, Samtessi Brush Manufactures saw a significant turnaround in its revenue dynamics. The company's declining revenue trend was reversed, and a period of steady growth was initiated by the strategic initiatives of the leadership team. A primary driver of revenue growth was the emphasis on maintaining strong client relationships, as evidenced by yearly client visits and active participation in industry exhibitions. Samtessi’s revenue had risen from Rs. 54 Mn in its first year of operations to Rs. 332,243,779 by 2017, justifying the growth of the firm in terms of income.

Demonstrating Transformational Leadership and Sustained Growth

A leader with an ability to inspire and motivate people to perform beyond expectations. When comes to the manufacturing industries, this transformational leadership should be executed along with the directive leadership style, which is a leadership style that targets on goal setting and role clarification (Burawat, 2019). Samtessi has excelled this concept in which senior management's dedication to long-term objectives trickles down to employees via effective communication, creating a common vision and a shared commitment to short- and medium-term objectives. Mr.Lalith Jayawardana, director of Samtessi is a main part of this leadership style, which is defined by clearly articulating a compelling vision and leading by example, has played a significant role in determining the company's long-term growth. Subordinates are inspired by the top management's steadfast commitment to long-term goals, which fosters a sense of unity and purpose within the company. As manufacturing companies more focus on “best fit” approach, while large organizations more focus on “best practice” approach. “Best fit” approach suggest that management people should take contingencies to account (Boxall and Purcell, 2000). Samtessi Brush Manufactures' idealized influence has molded the company's success, particularly when it comes to providing employees with detailed instructions on how to finish their jobs. The commitment of upper management to collaborate with subordinate managers ensures that employees receive clear instructions, creating a work environment where job requirements can be readily fulfilled by individual competencies. This leadership approach, which emphasizes clear communication and strategic coordination, has been essential to the business's continuous success. According to the company primary and secondary data, company has achieved best exporter NCE awards in year 2021-2023 period.

Improving Quality Management Applications and Sustained Growth

Quality management is described as a management approach to improve firm performance, particularly in terms of quality aspects. Quality is an important strategy when comes to operation management in competitive business environment. Quality management comprises with human resources management, customer satisfaction, top management, process management, quality information and strategic quality planning (Ebrahimi & Sadeghi, 2013). Samtessi Brush Manufactures places a premium on quality. The business carefully synchronises its procedures with international quality standards by using a strategic quality planning approach. With a mere 0.5% tolerance for defects, the company's dedication to producing faultless products is highlighted. The following is a literature review of several studies on the topic of SQP in TQM. Kim et al.(2017) explored the impact of SQP on organizational performance. The study found that organizations that implemented SQP had better performance in terms of product quality, customer satisfaction, and financial performance. Samtessi Brush Manufactures' strategic quality planning, supported by its Quality Department, has been crucial in upholding a high standard of quality and fostering the business's ongoing expansion. Samson group attained awards and certification due to practicing quality standards as Samtessi is aligning with mother company quality standards. According to the company primary and secondar data, company has achieved industry recognized certifications like Sedex and Fsc. Apart from that company has attained Sri Lankan Quality Circle awards in 2016-2017 and Sri Lankan Quality merit awards in 2015,2016 and 2019.

Executing Market Strategies and Sustained Growth

Growth opportunities can be divided into four kinds, according to Ansoff (1965). (1) The penetration of the market. The company's goal of increasing sales of its present products in its current (international) markets is known as market penetration. (2) The expansion of markets. By introducing its present products into new (international) markets, the company hopes to boost sales. (3) Development of products. Product development is the process by which a company creates new or enhanced products for its existing (international) markets in an effort to boost sales. (4) Growth in diversification. By creating new items and introducing them to new (international) markets, the company hopes to boost sales. The three main categories of diversification that were found were conglomerate diversification (c), horizontal diversification (b), and concentric diversification (a). In order to maintain its success, the company adopted a pricing strategy that ensured market competitiveness by utilizing a standard costing scheme. Automation has become one of the key concepts influencing production, accuracy, and efficiency in the manufacturing sector. Automation is the process of combining machinery and technology to carry out tasks on its own. Its goals are to minimize manual labor and minimize the possibility of human error. Samtessi Brush Manufactures has taken a measured approach in the face of Sri Lanka's economic recession and high interest rates, despite the acknowledged benefits of automation. According to company reports, company has acquired new machineries with latest technologies to provide quality and standardized products across the globe and company has expanded the business into Dubai with new set of machineries.

DSI Samson Group Influence and Sustained Growth

Competitive pressure can come from five forces, competing sellers, buyers, sellers, potential new entrance and firms offering substitute products (Porter, 1979). With respect to the competition, market prices will change to attain highest market segment within the industry. There are market strategies to face market competition, such as cost leadership, differentiation, and focus (Porter, 1980). Samtessi Brush Manufactures has successfully navigated its way to success by coordinating its efforts with market penetration strategies and making strategic adjustments and ongoing development. The company is aware of the difficulties it has faced in the past and has learned important lessons from them that have accelerated its growth trajectory. Notably, losses from previous production based on partner prices prompted a reorganization of share issues and a strategic review, with DSI raising its ownership to 60%. Both primary and secondary data supported Samtessi's use of the best-cost provider model. The company had a capped-margin pricing policy and made efforts to guarantee that its products were of the highest quality in the industry.

International Market Competition and Sustained Growth

DSI Group is a large conglomerate in Sri Lanka that operates in various industries, including footwear, retail, and manufacturing. As the mother company of Samtessi Brushes, DSI Group's influence plays a crucial role in the sustained growth of the subsidiary company.According to a study by Zehou, Zhang, and Zhan (2019), the influence of a mother company can lead to improved performance and sustained growth for subsidiary companies. DSI Group's influence has helped the company to sustain its growth by providing access to the group's resources and expertise. For example, DSI Group's manufacturing expertise has helped Samtessi Brushes to improve its product quality and range, while the group's retail experience has helped the subsidiary company to expand its market and attract more customers. DSI Group's financial resources have enabled Samtessi Brushes to invest in research and development, marketing, and other areas that are crucial for sustained growth. The realization prompted a significant shift in ownership dynamics, with DSI acquiring 60% of shares, up from the initial 25%. During this challenging period, the company navigated financial constraints by taking loans, later capitalizing them and converting them into shares to ensure a more robust financial foundation. The business is conscious of the challenges it has encountered in the past and has drawn valuable conclusions from them that have quickened its rate of expansion. Notably, DSI increased its shareholding to 60% after a strategy review and reorganisation of share issuance were spurred by losses from prior production based on partner prices.

Conclusion

This case study's primary objective was to elucidate how Samtessi managed to experience steady growth throughout the course of its first ten years of existence. Sustained growth was defined in the literature review along with the different ways it may be monitored. Samtessi's primary and secondary data sets unmistakably showed steady increases in sales, output, and workforce size. Sustained increase was also evident in other growth indicators, like the quantity of suppliers and customers, in addition to these three dimensions. Through a careful analysis of significant events that shaped the organization's chronology, the main drivers that helped the organization achieve its goal were found. It was determined that exhibiting transformational mindset, putting quality management practices into effect, and carrying outgrowth initiatives were the main motivators. This case study's second objective was to elucidate the part TL played in achieving sustainable growth. Due to its dominance in the events that took place throughout the timeframe, particularly in the early years of the Company, TL was determined to be the primary driver.

Samtessi has comparatively few secondary sources compared to companies that are investigated more extensively and have more public disclosures. One of the challenges in completing a thorough analysis is the restricted availability to extensive secondary data, which includes company publications, monthly and annual releases, newspaper articles, and other web resources.

Practical Implications/Lesson learned

A number of important management and social principles that are essential for sustained corporate success are highlighted in the Samtessi Brush Manufacturers case study. From a managerial standpoint, maintaining growth has been made possible by the company's flexibility and diversification. By diversifying its sources of income beyond standard manufacturing to include grow bags and coco pit trade, Samtessi showed how crucial it is to use unorthodox tactics in order to stay profitable. This change emphasises the lesson that while strategic adaptation promotes resilience, strict adherence to traditional business models can stifle development potential. Additionally, the company's success in developing local markets through supermarket penetration and van sales highlights how important it is to comprehend and take advantage of local customer characteristics in order to sustained growth.

Socially speaking, Samtessi's dedication to sustainability and moral business conduct is an insightful lesson in corporate responsibility. The business emphasises the use of renewable raw resources, like rubber wood and fibre, which is in line with worldwide environmental consciousness trends. This strategy supports the notion that by incorporating sustainable practices into their operations, companies can favourably impact larger societal objectives.

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