

Evaluation of the efficiency of operations in a Tea broker
warehouse

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ABSTRACT

Tea auction system is an integral element of Tea supply chain where the Tea broker also plays a major role as the arbitrator between the buyers of Ceylon tea and manufacturers of Ceylon tea. Tea broker warehouse is an essential element for a broker as major operations of unloading of teas, sample drawing of tea, storage of teas and delivery of teas are done in the warehouse. Hence, the efficiency and quality of warehousing service are directly affecting to the performance of a broker.

The study was intended to search for the major problems prevail in the Tea Broker warehouse with respect to its performance and quality of service. Identification of problems prevailing in the warehouse through continuous Observation and practical involvement in warehouse operations was done. Out of the identified problems the Major problems were identified through a Pareto analysis, which was conducted regarding the responses for the structured questionnaire provided to the employees of the warehouse. The identified Major problems were then analyzed for the Root causes using several Root cause analytical tools and techniques namely Casual factor charting, Ishikawa/ Fish bone diagram and Five why analysis.

The major problems in the warehouse according to the Pareto analysis were, time taken for delivery of tea lots is very long , frequent claims for short weighed tea sacks, high relative humidity and high temperature inside the warehouse, Waste of teas during sample drawing.

The major root causes identified for each problem were, the current procedure of directing the lorries to loading ends, The double deep racking system of the warehouse, The Make, Life time, lifting capacity and the rotational speed of the forklifts. The incapability of the digital scale to measure the sacks continuously, Scarcity of labour;

lack of unloading points compared to the quantity of unloaded sacks per day, negligence and carelessness of the workers, Congested storage environment with tea lots stacked up to the ceiling level, Poor ventilation system, direct heavy sun light incidence onto walls from the morning till evening with no proper insulation system. Lack of proper supervision, lack of proper technical training for sample drawing and negligence of the sample drawer.

Key Words- *Warehouse, Efficiency, Root causes, Pareto analysis, Casual factor charting, Ishikawa/ Fish bone diagram , Five why analysis.*