
Understanding the importance of total quality management dimensions: critical review of soft and hard aspects

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Abstract: This paper contributes to quality management literature by focusing on the two dimensions of TQM philosophy for continuous improvement, namely, the management system (ST) and the technical system (HT). It critically reviews soft and hard dimensions. Few studies discussed these dimensions separately. This paper attempts to overview these dimensions; it briefly discussing the importance of their usage, followed by review of most ST and HT elements. Finally, it depicted six different TQM models including them collectively in the integrated frameworks. The models are theoretically proposed here; the future direction of this paper is to investigate the applicability of these models empirically in a cross sectional study using surveys as main strategy for data gathering. Quality managers can use these models to establish a better implementation environment in their manufacturing facilities using the appropriate integrated TQM framework.

Keywords: soft; hard; TQM models; dimensions; understanding; quality management; Malaysia.

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