
The interrelationship between ISO 9000 and total quality management: an empirical investigation with a focus on soft and hard TQM dimensions

Amjad Al-Khalili*

Development and Studies Division, Department of
Planning, Studies and Projects, Palestine
Technical University/ Kadoorie(PTUK), Tulkarm,
Yaffa Street,
West Bank, P.O. Box 7, Palestine
Fax: +97092677922 E-mail: amjad_alkhalili@yahoo.com
*Corresponding author

Khairanum Subari

Student Development and Campus Lifestyle,
Universiti Kuala Lumpur,
Level 3, 1016, Jalan Sultan Ismail,
50250 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Fax: +603 21754446 E-mail: khairanum@unikl.edu.my

Abstract: Little is known about the interrelatedness between the critical factors of ISO 9000 (CFI) and total quality management (TQM) two dimensions, namely, soft (ST) and hard (HT), and little is known about whether they can coexist together in manufacturing companies' or not. To fill this gap, this paper proposes a theoretical framework, which stipulates that ISO 9000 is an antecedent to TQM. The framework was tested using cross sectional mail survey of 250 ISO 9000 certified Malaysian manufacturing companies. Correlation and multiple regression analysis were utilised from SPSS to test the propositions. The key findings indicated the existence of a significant relationship in both propositions, hence, supported the theoretical framework and both ISO 9000 and TQM could be interrelated together in Malaysian manufacturing industries.

Keywords: ISO 9000; soft TQM; hard TQM; interrelationship; quality management; Malaysia.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows: Al-Khalili, A. and Subari, K. (2014) 'The interrelationship between ISO 9000 and total quality management: an empirical investigation with a focus on soft and hard TQM dimensions', *Int. J. Services and Operations Management*, Vol. 18, No. 4, pp.429–448.

Biographical notes: Amjad Al-Khalili is a Lecturer in Palestine Technical University (PTUK); specialised in quality management (ISO 9000 and TQM) and industrial engineering. He graduated from the USM. He teaches courses of operations management, production planning, maintenance engineering and mathematics. He is the Head of Development and Studies Division. He has participated in different study tours to the USA, and Egypt. He worked with the