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

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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.


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