

The role of quality management practices in operational performance

An empirical study in a transitional economy

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ABSTRACT:

Purpose: This research was conducted to recognize quality management (QM) practices which have relationship with operational performance.

Design/methodology/approach: Based on the extensive literature review, a set of quality management practices were identified and a conceptual model was built to explore their relationship with operational performance. An empirical testing at Vietnamese garment enterprises was carried out.

Findings: The results of this research showed that four main practices including top management support, human resource management, reporting and analysis of quality data, product/service design and process management are directly and indirectly related to operational performance. In addition, 57.1% variance of operational performance was explained by the QM practices above mentioned.

Research limitations/implications: Within the scope of this study, there are some aspects that haven't been yet considered: (i) there are many other factors that might also have impact on operational performance which are not incorporated in this study, such as, external environment, capital, technology, equipment, information flow, outsourcing, etc., (ii) generalized ability of results would be higher if extending the sample scope to other industries and other countries. These imply directions for further research.

Practical implications: To increase operational performance, the QM practices should be applied simultaneously and the structural model was used in this study could play as "a guideline" to orient for the implementation of these practices.

Originality/value: This study tried to address some issues that have not been fully examined in the literature. Not only fill these voids, the research model presented the relationship among QM practices and operational performance, along with the measurement instrument validated in this study also provided some insights to the theory system of QM and operational performance. It is also a valuable contribution for the next empirical studies, especially for countries having the transitional economy as Vietnam.

Keywords: Quality Management, Quality Management practices, Operational performance, garment industry, transitional economy, Vietnam.