



TQM practices and its association with production workers

TQM practices and production workers

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to investigate the multidimensionality of total quality management (TQM) practices and its relationship with production workers' job satisfaction in the Malaysian electrical and electronics (E&E) industry context.

Design/methodology/approach – Data for this study were collected using a self-administered questionnaire that was distributed to 520 production workers in three major E&E organizations in Malaysia. Of the 520 questionnaires posted, 173 usable questionnaires were returned, yielding a response rate of 33.26 percent. The correlation and multiple regression analyses were applied to test the theoretical model and the relationship between TQM practices and job satisfaction.

Findings – The results revealed that not all TQM practices enhanced production workers' job satisfaction. Only organization culture and teamwork showed a positive relationship with the production workers' job satisfaction. It was found that when teamwork was perceived as a dominant TQM practice, improvement in production workers' job satisfaction levels was significant.

Practical implications – The findings prescribed potential implications for top management to review their TQM dimensions, consistent with the training needs of the employees within the organizations. Hence, production workers will be more likely to perform better and to feel a higher level of satisfaction towards the organizations.

Originality/value – The study has contributed in advancing the TQM literature with a better understanding of the multidimensionality of TQM practices and its association with production workers' job satisfaction that would facilitate more quality management research in developing countries.

Keywords Total quality management, Job satisfaction, Malaysia, Blue collar workers, Electronics industry

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

The introduction of total quality management (TQM) plays a vital role in the development of management practices for the past two decades (Hoang *et al.*, 2006). TQM can be defined as commitment of all employees to the continuous improvement of work process with the aim of satisfying customers' requirements and needs (Lee and Chang, 2006). TQM is a once-and-for-all business management philosophy (Lin and Ogunyemi, 1996) and it has gained widespread attention as it is fundamentally a way of organizing and involving the whole organization so that all members participate in planning and implementing continuous quality improvements (Lin and Clousing, 1995; Lin and Wayne, 1995). The function of TQM is extensively recognized as being a critical determinant in the success and survival of both manufacturing and service

