

Total Quality Management Practices and Medium Enterprises: An Empirical Study based on Employees' Experience



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Abstract

The study examines the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) practices in medium-sized enterprises in Assam in northeastern India, with a focus on enhancing operational performance, product quality, and competitiveness. It specifically examines TQM practices adopted by service-based and manufacturing-based enterprises in Kamrup (Rural) and Kamrup (Metropolitan) Districts of Assam. Using a quantitative approach, data were collected from 600 employees, 300 from each of these two types of enterprises, through convenience sampling due to the lack of formal sampling frames. Findings highlight that employees with more than 15 years of experience in service-based enterprises require specific attention regarding top management activities, likely due to their seniority and leadership roles. Employees with less than 5 years of experience in manufacturing-based enterprises need to be emphasized, possibly indicating a focus on establishing foundational knowledge and skills crucial for manufacturing processes. Employees in service-based medium enterprises operating for over 5 years understand the significance of process-centred activities, particularly regarding designing new products or services. These findings suggest that experience significantly influences how employees perceive and engage with TQM principles within their respective enterprises.

Keywords: Total Quality Management, implementation, service-based, manufacturing-based, medium enterprise, employees, experience.

Introduction

Medium-sized enterprises (MEs) play a crucial role in industrial and economic development of emerging economies by supporting large industries, fostering innovation, and promoting entrepreneurship (Temtime and Solomon, 2002; Israr and Gangele, 2014; Dipasupil and Dipasupil, 2018). In Assam, MEs have contributed towards economic diversification beyond traditional sectors like tea, oil, and natural gas (Sharma and Neog, 2017; Banik and Boro, 2024), while promoting rural industrialization and employment, aiding balanced regional development (Neagu, 2016; Popadić, Živanović and Živanović, 2022).

As per the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (Notification dated 26th June, 2020 (effective from 1st July, 2020)), a medium enterprise is defined as one with an investment in plant and machinery or equipment between ₹5 crore and ₹50 crore, and an annual turnover between ₹50 crore and ₹250 crore, applicable to both manufacturing and service sectors (Balkrishna, Mishra, Dabhade and Vedpriya, 2022).

MEs have contributed significantly to employment generation and local economic stimulation, especially in sectors like agro-processing, textiles, handicrafts, and services (Israr and Gangele, 2014). They help bridge rural-urban development gap by facilitating a more equitable distribution of resources (Yusof and Aspinwall, 2000). Their importance in Assam in northeastern India is further magnified by regional

challenges like geographic isolation, poor infrastructure, and socio-economic disparities (Das and Gupta, 2022). However, these MEs in Assam often struggle with maintaining competitive product and service quality (Balkrishna et al., 2022). Adoption of Total Quality Management (TQM) offers an opportunity to improve their operational efficiency and competitiveness (Goklani and Fulwari, 2024). This study, therefore, examines TQM practices in service-based and manufacturing-based MEs in Kamrup (Rural) and Kamrup (Metropolitan) districts of Assam, using historical case studies and survey-based comparative analysis. The research aims to explore how TQM can be implemented to enable these enterprises to compete more effectively in local and global markets while contributing to regional economic growth.

2.Literature review

TQM is a strategic approach aimed at improving organizational performance through continuous improvement, customer satisfaction, and employee involvement (Oakland, 2014). While TQM is well-established in large organizations, its application in MEs has gained growing attention, especially given their unique challenges and opportunities (Temtime and Solomon, 2002). MEs often lack infrastructure for full-scale TQM. Yet, their flexibility and close employee-management relationships can support faster adoption (Yusof and Aspinwall, 2000). Despite

fragmented implementation due to resource constraints, MEs can still achieve notable improvements in quality and efficiency (Talib, Rahman and Qureshi, 2011). Leadership commitment and employee involvement are widely recognized as critical success factors (Psomas and Antony, 2015).

Employees in MEs, who frequently multitask, offer practical insights into TQM implementation. Their perceptions, shaped by empowerment, communication, and training, directly affect TQM outcomes (Bou-Llusar et al., 2009). Key TQM elements include leadership, customer focus, continuous improvement, process management, training, and employee involvement, with leadership and training particularly crucial in MEs (Sila and Ebrahimpour, 2003). Participatory management and employee development contribute significantly to product quality and customer satisfaction (Kumar et al., 2009), while internal quality practices often enhance employee satisfaction more than external customer strategies (Psomas, Vouzas and Kafetzopoulos, 2014). Nonetheless, MEs face obstacles such as limited resources, weak strategic planning, and lack of formal quality systems, which can make TQM seem burdensome to employees, especially when they are excluded from decision-making (Temtime and Solomon, 2002). Cultural and organizational factors, including communication, Integrating employee perspectives is essential to understanding and sustaining quality initiatives. Building a quality-focused culture, enhancing involvement, and aligning TQM with strategic goals are vital for effective implementation in MEs (Kaynak, 2003).

3. Significance of the Study and Research Gap

While numerous studies have examined TQM implementation in service and manufacturing enterprises globally, research on medium-sized enterprises in Kamrup (Rural) and Kamrup (Metropolitan) districts of Assam remains scarce. Given the region's distinctive socio-economic and infrastructural context, a focused study is necessary to understand local TQM practices. This research addresses this gap by exploring TQM adoption in medium-sized service and manufacturing enterprises in these districts, emphasizing employees'

experiences and perceptions. This employee-centered approach provides valuable insights for regional development and advances broader understanding of TQM in MEs.

4. Objective of the study

To compare Total Quality Management (TQM) practices implemented by medium-sized service and manufacturing enterprises in Kamrup (Rural) and Kamrup (Metropolitan) districts of Assam.

5. Methodology

The study adopts a quantitative approach utilizing both primary and secondary data. It focuses on 65 service-based and 77 manufacturing-based medium enterprises in the above two districts of Assam, registered with the Udyog Aadhar Memorandum till June 30, 2020.

Secondary data were sourced from the District Industries and Commerce Centres (DICC) in Guwahati (Kamrup Metropolitan) and Mirza (Kamrup Rural), supplemented by literature including theses, journal articles, books, and magazines.

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire through personal interviews covering a sample of 600 respondent employees. To support comparative analysis, the sample was balanced equally between service-based and manufacturing-based medium enterprises (300 each), even though number of enterprises differed (77 manufacturing and 65 service). This inevitably led to some overrepresentation, particularly from larger or more cooperative firms, but ensured a sufficient and robust dataset. Also, to ensure comprehensive representation, respondents were selected across varied functional roles such as operations, quality control, production, customer service, and administration. The number of respondents per enterprise varied according to their size, workforce availability, and willingness to engage. According to DICC records, total workforce across these MEs was 9368, comprising 4872 employees in 77 manufacturing enterprises and 4496 employees in 65 service enterprises. Cochran's formula was applied to determine the appropriate sample size (detailed in Table 1).

Table 1: Sample Size Determination

Respondents Group	Service-based Medium Enterprises		Manufacturing-based Medium	
	Sample Size Determined Using Cochran's Formula	Actual Respondent Sample Size	Sample Size Determined Using Cochran's Formula	Actual Respondent Sample Size
Employees	177	300	192	300

However, this study employed a sample of 300 respondents per sector (manufacturing and service) aligning with the typical range of 200-500 respondents for problem-solving research (Malhotra & Dash, 2011). Respondent selection relied on convenience sampling, driven by practical constraints, specifically, lack of a formal sampling frame within many enterprises. This approach facilitated timely access to willing participants across various functional roles.

The study instrument was a self-developed questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale to assess employee

perceptions of TQM. Reliability analysis by Cronbach's alpha (SPSS) yielded a coefficient of 0.74, indicating acceptable internal consistency (Malhotra & Dash, 2011). Content validity (confirmed through expert reviews) was also found to be appropriate as per resultant Content Validity Index (CVI) values shown in Table 2 (Malhotra & Dash, 2011).

Table 2: CVI values of the questionnaire for respondent employees	
I-CVI (item-level content validity index)	0.97
S-CVI/Ave (score-level content validity index as per the average)	0.97
S-CVI/UA (score-level content validity index as per the universal)	0.86

As per International Organization for Standardization (ISO), the following TQM principles can facilitate creation of a quality work culture and successful implementation of quality management in any organization (refer to Table 3).

Table 3: Important Total Quality Management (TQM) principles	
Management Commitment	Plan (drive, direct) Do (deploy, support, participate) Check (review) Act (recognize, communicate, revise)
Employee Empowerment	Training Suggestion Scheme Measurement and recognition Excellent teams
Fact-based decision making	Statistical process control Design of experiments, failure mode and effective analysis The seven statistical tools Team-oriented problem solving
Continual improvement	Systematic measurement Excellent teams Cross-functional process management Attain, maintain, and improve standards
Customer focus	Supplier partnership Service relationships with internal customers Never compromise quality Customer-driven standards

A review of existing literature revealed that TQM has been widely studied in both service (Yasin, 2004; Akhtar, 2014; Al-Salim, 2018) and manufacturing sectors (Rahman, 2009; Talib, 2011; Kumar, Khurshid and Waddell, 2014; Sahoo, 2018), in India and globally. Secondary data analysis further highlights several sub-practices under key TQM dimensions relevant to MEs as shown below with abbreviations indicated within parentheses. However, these sub-practices remain empirically unexplored in case of Assam.

A.TQM Practices related to Top Management Commitment Activities

- i) Perceiving cost as a more important factor by the management as compared to quality (Gautam, 2010; Kumar, Garg and Garg, 2011) (A1).
- ii) Perceiving of management of the organization as a role model (Dewhurst and Martinez- Lorente, 1998; Gautam, 2010) (A2).
- iii) Perceiving unwillingness of the management to authorize the employees to undertake decisions about their jobs (Gautam, 2010; Kumar, Garg and Garg, 2011) (A3).
- iv) Acquisition and continuous upgradation of knowledge by the management that is valuable for the

enterprise (organization) (Ugboro, and Obeng, 2000) (A4).

- v) Encouragement of the employees to participate in the continuous improvement initiatives by the management (Ugboro, and Obeng, 2000; Kumar, Garg and Garg, 2011) (A5).

B.TQM Practices related to Customer Focused Activities

- i) Emphasis on long-term customer satisfaction as the mission and basic principle of the enterprise (organization) (Ugboro, and Obeng, 2000) (B1).
- ii) Understanding customers' needs at all levels of the enterprise (organization) (Fotopoulos and Psomas, 2009; Kumar, Garg and Garg, 2011) (B2).
- iii) Complete and thorough analysis of the cause that led to customers leaving the product/services (Grover, Agrawal and Khan, 2006; Kumar, Garg and Garg, 2011) (B3).
- iv) Improvement of the products and/or services by addressing complaints and grievances of customers (Ugboro, and Obeng, 2000; Kumar, Garg and Garg, 2011) (B4).
- v) Analysis of present relationships with customers and making regular attempts to improve them

(Ugboro, and Obeng, 2000; Fotopouls and Psomas, 2009) (B5).

C.TQM Practices related to Supplier Management Activities

- i) Development of close long-term relationships with suppliers designed to resolve quality-related problems (Quazi, Jemangin, Kit and Klan, 1998; Fotopouls and Psomas, 2009) (C1).
- ii) Suppliers' help in improving products and/or services of the enterprise and their related technical assistance (Quazi, Jemangin, Kit and Klan, 1998; Kumar, Garg and Garg, 2011) (C2).
- iii) Co-ordination of the enterprise with suppliers regarding strategies and technical know-how (Kumar, Garg and Garg, 2011) (C3).
- iv) Perceiving strategic importance of suppliers for technological development of the enterprise (Fotopouls and Psomas, 2009; Gautam, 2010) (C4).
- v) Investment of substantial resources by the enterprise (e.g., time, money, contacts, and meetings) in building a relationship with the suppliers (Gautam, 2010; Kumar, Garg and Garg, 2011) (C5).

D.TQM Practices related to Process Centred Activities

- i) Designing the processes in such a way that skills and capacities meet the enterprise needs (Grover, Agrawal and Khan, 2006; Kumar, Garg and Garg, 2011) (D1).
- ii) Regular assessment of all processes, procedures, and products to bring change and improvement (Joiner, 2007; Fotopouls and Psomas, 2009; Kumar, Garg and Garg, 2011) (D2).
- iii) Thorough and meticulous design of new products and/or services before being manufactured and marketed (to ensure that clients' present and future expectations are met) (Grover, Agrawal and Khan, 2006; Joiner, 2007) (D3).
- iv) Ensuring flexibility of the processes (Joiner, 2007; Kumar, Garg and Garg, 2011) (D4).
- v) Equal involvement of all the departments (within the enterprise (organization)) during development of new products and/or services (Grover, Agrawal and Khan, 2006; Joiner, 2007; Fotopouls and Psomas, 2009) (D5).

TQM implementation often enhances employees' satisfaction, engagement, and overall experience, demonstrating a strong positive relationship between

engagement and continuous improvement (Hrgović, Črnjar and Škarica, 2020). To explore this, the researchers examined how employees' work experience (in years) influenced their perception regarding TQM-related dimensions shown above. Using One-way ANOVA at a 5% significance level ($\alpha=0.05$), the following hypothesis was tested where work experience served as independent variable and employees' perceptions of TQM practices as dependent variable.

Hypothesis: There is a significant difference between the means of employees' perception regarding each of the above-mentioned points of TQM across their work experience.

The above hypothesis was tested using the following null and alternative hypotheses (H_0 and H_1 , respectively).

H_0 : There is no significant difference between the means of employees' perception regarding each of the above-mentioned points of TQM across their work experience.

H_1 : There is a significant difference between the means of employees' perception regarding each of the above-mentioned points of TQM across their work experience.

One-way ANOVA was utilized to identify TQM-related aspects where the above null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected (p-value less than $\alpha=0.05$ (5%)). Following significance detection by ANOVA, descriptive statistics were used to identify which experience-level group exhibited the highest mean perception score for each significant TQM point. This suggested that management should prioritize these groups to enhance TQM implementation in both service and manufacturing medium enterprises.

6. Analysis and Discussion

1. Profile of the Respondents

Out of 600 employees surveyed, service-based medium enterprises comprised 62.67% male respondents and 37.33% female, whereas in manufacturing-based enterprises, males accounted for 73.67% and females 26.33%. The largest age group in both sectors fell within the 46-60 age group, 47.67% in service enterprises and 42.67% in manufacturing. Most respondents in both sectors also shared 5-15 years of experience (53.00% in services and 54.67% in manufacturing). Detailed figures are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Profile of Respondent Employees

	Service-based medium		Manufacturing-based	
Gender	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Male	188	62.67	221	73.67
Female	112	37.33	79	26.33
Total	300	100.00	300	100.00
Age				
Below 30 years	14	4.67	21	7.00
31-45 years	127	42.33	127	42.33
46-60 years	143	47.67	128	42.67

61 & above	16	5.33	24	8.00
Total	300	100.00	300	100.00
Experience in				
Below 5 years	18	6.00	36	12.00
5-15 years	159	53.00	164	54.67
Above 15 years	123	41.00	100	33.33
Total	300	100.00	300	100.00
Source: Field survey				

2. Perception Regarding Top Management Commitment and Work Experience

ANOVA results indicated that null hypothesis (H_0), which assumed no significant difference in employees' perceptions of how management acts as a role model (A2) across varying work experience can be rejected for both service-based ($p = 0.01$) and manufacturing-based ($p = 0.04$) medium enterprises, as p-values are below the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$) (refer Table 5). This suggests that employee perceptions of top management commitment significantly vary with their years of experience.

Descriptive statistics further revealed that in service-based enterprises, employees with over 15 years of experience reported the highest perception scores regarding managerial role. In manufacturing-based enterprises, the highest mean scores were from employees with less than 5 years of experience (Table 5). This indicates that these groups may be more perceptive or sensitive to leadership behaviour and should be a focus area for top management.

Table 5: Results of ANOVA- Top Management Commitment-related activities across Employees' Experience

Top Management Commitment Activities	Service-based Medium Enterprises							Manufacturing-based Medium Enterprises						
	Below 5 years		5-15 years		Above 15 years		p-value	Below 5 years		5-15 years		Above 15 years		p-value
	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean		N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	
A1	18	1.44	159	1.58	123	1.53	0.47	36	2.81	164	2.54	100	2.49	0.26
A2	18	1.44	159	1.74	123	1.83	0.01	36	2.00	164	1.76	100	1.85	0.04
A3	18	1.83	159	1.72	123	1.82	0.22	36	1.44	164	1.62	100	1.52	0.11
A4	18	1.72	159	1.82	123	1.79	0.61	36	2.08	164	2.01	100	1.92	0.31
A5	18	1.72	159	1.67	123	1.68	0.88	36	2.17	164	2.11	100	1.95	0.11

In service-based enterprises, the assumption of equal variances was met ($p > 0.05$), justifying the use of Bonferroni post-hoc test. Results showed significant differences between employees with less than 5 years and those with 5-15 years of experience, while other pairwise comparisons were not significant (Table 6). For manufacturing-based enterprises, where variances were unequal ($p < 0.05$), the Games-Howell post-hoc test confirmed similar group-wise differences (Table 7).

However, for other dimensions of top management commitment, the null hypothesis could not be rejected ($p > 0.05$), suggesting that work experience did not significantly influence employee perceptions in these areas (Chawla & Sondhi, 2011).

Table 6: Results of Bonferroni Post Hoc Tests concerning Service-based Medium Enterprises- Management presents themselves as role models for the employees (Dependent variable) and Experience (Independent Variable)

(I) Experience in Years	(J) Experience in	Mean Difference
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	Years	(I-J)
Below 5 years	5-15 years	-0.30
	above 15 years	-0.38*
5-15 years	below 5 years	0.30
	above 15 years	-0.09
Above 15 years	below 5 years	0.38*
	5-15 years	0.09
Note: * The mean difference is significant at 0.05		

Table 7: Results of Games-Howell Post Hoc Tests concerning Manufacturing Medium Enterprises- Management presents themselves as role models for the employees (Dependent variable) and Experience (Independent Variable)

(I) Experience in Years	(J) Experience in Years	Mean Difference (I-J)
Below 5 years	5-15 years	0.24
	above 15 years	0.15*
5-15 years	below 5 years	-0.24
	above 15 years	-0.09
Above 15 years	below 5 years	-0.15*
	5-15 years	0.09
Note: * The mean difference is significant at 0.05		

3.Perception Regarding Customer-Focused Activities and Work Experience

In both service-based and manufacturing-based medium enterprises, employees' work experience did not significantly influence their perceptions of customer-focused TQM activities, such as long-term customer satisfaction and understanding customer needs. ANOVA results for all these dimensions yielded p-values greater than $\alpha = 0.05$ (see Table 8), indicating that null hypothesis could not be rejected. Therefore, regardless of tenure, employees hold similar views on customer-focused practices (Chawla & Sondhi, 2011).

Table 8: Results of ANOVA- Customer-Focused Activities across Employees' Experience

Customer-Focused Activities	Service-based Medium Enterprises							Manufacturing-based Medium Enterprises						
	Below 5 years		5-15 years		Above 15 years		p-value	Below 5 years		5-15 years		Above 15 years		p-value
	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean		N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	
B1	18	1.56	159	1.58	123	1.61	0.51	36	2.08	164	1.89	100	1.93	0.19
B2	18	2.05	159	1.79	123	1.78	0.09	36	1.83	164	1.83	100	1.7	0.14
B3	18	1.67	159	1.84	123	1.79	0.25	36	1.75	164	1.85	100	1.83	0.63
B4	18	1.5	159	1.53	123	1.63	0.21	36	1.67	164	1.76	100	1.86	0.17
B5	18	1.44	159	1.59	123	1.58	0.50	36	1.94	164	1.85	100	1.87	0.68

4.Perception regarding Supplier-Management related Activities and Work Experience

As explained in sub-section 3, similar findings were observed in the case of supplier management for the service and manufacturing-based medium enterprises of both districts.

5.Perception Regarding Process-centred Activities and Work Experience

As discussed in Sub-section 1, top management in service-based medium enterprises should prioritize employees with 5-15 years of experience to enhance effectiveness of TQM, particularly in process-centred activities. Significant differences were found in perceptions regarding design of processes that align employee skills with organizational needs (D1) ($p=0.000 < \alpha=0.05$), and careful planning of new products or services before launch (D3) ($p=0.002 < \alpha=0.05$).

Test of homogeneity indicated unequal variances for both dimensions ($p < 0.05$), prompting the use of the Games-Howell post hoc test. For process alignment, significant differences emerged between employees with 5-15 years and those with over 15 years of experience, while other groups showed no significant variation (Table 8). Similarly, for product/service planning, significant differences were observed between employees with more than 5 and 5-15 years, and between 5-15 and less than 15 years, reinforcing the importance of the 5-15 years tenure group for TQM-focused interventions.

Conversely, for other aspects of top management commitment in service-based enterprises, no significant differences were found across experience levels ($p > 0.05$; Table 7). In manufacturing-based enterprises, employee experience did not significantly influence perceptions of any of the five process-centred TQM dimensions (Table 7) (Chawla & Sondhi, 2011).

Table 9: Results of ANOVA- Supplier Management-related activities across Employees' Experience

Supplier Management Activities	Service-based Medium Enterprises							Manufacturing-based Medium Enterprises						
	Below 5 years		5-15 years		Above 15 years		p-value	Below 5 years		5-15 years		Above 15 years		p-value
	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean		N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	
C1	18	1.56	159	1.71	123	1.67	0.45	36	1.78	164	1.82	100	1.78	0.84
C2	18	1.67	159	1.64	123	1.61	0.83	36	1.83	164	1.84	100	1.92	0.43
C3	18	1.94	159	1.83	123	1.77	0.22	36	1.78	164	1.83	100	1.79	0.79
C4	18	1.61	159	1.68	123	1.69	0.75	36	1.56	164	1.73	100	1.7	0.25
C5	18	1.83	159	1.91	123	1.89	0.72	36	1.61	164	1.69	100	1.65	0.65

Table 10: Results of ANOVA- Process-centred activities across Employees' Experience

Process-centred activities	Service-based Medium Enterprises							Manufacturing-based Medium Enterprises						
	Below 5 years		5-15 years		Above 15 years		p-value	Below 5 years		5-15 years		Above 15 years		p-value
	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean		N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	
D1	18	1.72	159	1.95	123	1.68	0.00	36	1.69	164	1.71	100	1.74	0.85
D2	18	1.89	159	1.91	123	1.82	0.35	36	1.69	164	1.7	100	1.66	0.83
D3	18	1.5	159	1.87	123	1.71	0.002	36	1.69	164	1.63	100	1.69	0.61
D4	18	1.89	159	1.84	123	1.84	0.90	36	1.67	164	1.79	100	1.69	0.11
D5	18	1.83	159	1.82	123	1.79	0.81	36	1.89	164	1.77	100	1.7	0.16

Table 11: Results of Games-Howell Post Hoc Tests in Case of Service-based Medium Enterprises- Designing processes to ensure that skills and capacities are right for enterprise needs (Dependent variable) and Experience (Independent Variable)

(I) Experience in Years	(J) Experience in Years	Mean Difference (I-J)
Below 5 years	5-15 years	-0.23
	above 15 years	0.04
5-15 years	below 5 years	0.23
	above 15 years	0.27*
Above 15 years	below 5 years	-0.04
	5-15 years	-0.27*

Note: * The mean difference is significant at 0.05

Table 12: Results of Games-Howell Post Hoc Tests in Case of Service-based Medium Enterprises- Designing new products and/or services thoroughly and meticulously before being manufactured and/or marketed to ensure that clients' present and future expectations are met (Dependent variable) and Experience (Independent Variable)		
(I) Experience in Years	(J) Experience in Years	Mean Difference
Below 5 years	5-15 years	-0.37*
	above 15 years	-0.21
5-15 years	below 5 years	0.37*
	above 15 years	0.16*
Above 15 years	below 5 years	0.21
	5-15 years	-0.16*
Note: * The mean difference is significant at 0.05		

7. Conclusion

The study of TQM practices in medium-sized service and manufacturing enterprises across Kamrup (Rural) and Kamrup (Metropolitan) districts of Assam found that employees with over 15 years of experience and newcomers under 5 years, particularly in manufacturing, require focused attention due to their influence on organizational culture and operational foundations. While in service enterprises, processes must be aligned with employees' skills and expertise. Across both sectors, meticulous product and service design must be ensured to meet quality standards. Future research should broaden industry scope to include retail, technology, and emerging sectors, diversify stakeholder involvement, and adopt longitudinal methods to enhance validity and generalizability.

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