

# THE INFLUENCE OF TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT (TQM) ON BUSINESS PERFORMANCE IN SECURITY SERVICE INDUSTRY

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**Abstract:** *This study examines the influence of Total Quality Management (TQM) on the business performance in security services industry. The research aims to identify key TQM elements, including leadership, benchmarking, continuous improvement, and human resource management, and to assess their relationship with business performance. This study proposes a conceptual framework that integrates key dimensions of Total Quality Management (TQM) to enhance business performance. It makes a significant contribution to the existing body of knowledge by deepening the conceptual understanding of TQM within the context of the Malaysian security service industry. This study highlights the importance of adopting Total Quality Management (TQM) principles to support business growth and stay competitive in a changing market. The practical application of effective management strategies rooted in TQM holds strong potential to improve both business efficiency and overall business performance.*

*The findings offer valuable insights for security service providers, as well as for entrepreneurs and policymakers seeking to enhance the competitiveness and resilience of the sector. By cultivating a high-performing TQM culture, the Malaysian security service industry can better position itself for sustainable growth and long-term success.*

**Keywords:** *Leadership, Benchmarking, Continuous Improvement, Human Resource Management, Business Performance, Total Quality Management (TQM)*

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## Introduction

The security services industry, which encompasses a diverse range of organizations dedicated to safeguarding individuals, property, and assets, has emerged as a critical and integral component of modern society. As the demand for security services expands, organizations operating within this sector are increasingly confronted with the challenge of optimizing their operational performance in order to effectively respond to the dynamic and evolving needs of their clients and stakeholders (Sharma, 2024).

The security services industry has become increasingly competitive in recent years, with organizations striving to deliver the most effective and efficient services to their clients. Business performance within this sector is a critical determinant of success, encompassing financial performance (Kocot & Olak, 2024; Prayag et al., 2018), product market performance (Akgün et al., 2019), and shareholder return (Mamilla & Vasumathi, 2020). Effective performance management is paramount for security services organizations to sustain their success. This involves assessing outcomes, whether positive or negative, and determining whether client needs are being met (Mitrea, 2021). By gaining a clear understanding of their internal processes, organizations can identify known factors and uncover gaps in knowledge, thereby pinpointing areas for improvement and ensuring that decisions are based on empirical data rather than assumptions or emotions (Yulianto et al., 2021).

The security industry has long been a vital component of modern society, tasked with ensuring the safety and well-being of individuals, organizations, and communities. However, the industry has often struggled to implement effective management practices that can consistently deliver high-quality services (Mpaata et al., 2024). The security services industry has been facing increasing competition and evolving client expectations, necessitating a need for security services industry to adopt robust performance-enhancing strategies (Jeong, Lee & Lim, 2019). As the demand for effective and efficient security services continues to grow, organizations within this sector are challenged to optimize their operations to meet the complex needs of their clients and stakeholders (Gaurav & Panigrahi, 2023).

Moreover, the security services industry is a critical sector that plays a vital role in safeguarding the safety and well-being of individuals, organizations, and communities. As the demand for high-quality security services continues to increase, the industry must adapt to meet the evolving expectations of its clients. Total Quality Management (TQM) has emerged as a promising approach to address this challenge, offering a comprehensive framework for improving quality, enhancing customer satisfaction, and driving continuous business improvement (Kareska, 2023). TQM is a comprehensive management philosophy that emphasizes continuous improvement, customer satisfaction, and the active involvement of all

employees within the organization. This approach seeks to achieve superior quality in products and services through a customer-centric strategy and the ongoing optimization of business processes (Pamungkur & Sunarmie, 2024).

Given the significant influence of TQM on business performance, this study aims to investigate the impact of TQM factors on business performance in security services industry. This study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of this relationship.

## Literature Review

### Business performance

Business performance is a fundamental aspect of business management, reflecting the overall effectiveness and efficiency with which an organization achieves its strategic objectives. It is widely recognized as a multidimensional construct, encompassing various operational domains such as financial performance, product market performance, and other critical indicators of organizational success. The definition and conceptualization of business performance have been subjects of ongoing discussion among scholars and practitioners. A prominent perspective suggests that business performance should be evaluated through the lens of multiple stakeholders, including shareholders, customers, employees, and the wider community (Abdul Wahab et al., 2023; Nielsen, 2019; Sirgy, 2022).

The broader concept of business performance is inherently complex, as it encompasses a wide range of factors that contribute to an organization's overall success. In addition to financial and market-based indicators, business performance is increasingly assessed through social and environmental dimensions. These include an organization's impact on the community, its commitment to environmental sustainability, and its treatment of employees, reflecting a more holistic view of performance (Mitrea-Curpanaru, 2021). Scholars have emphasized the importance of recognizing the dynamic and context-dependent nature of business performance. The factors influencing performance can vary considerably based on industry characteristics, market conditions, and other external environmental factors. For instance, organizations operating in highly competitive and rapidly evolving markets may need to prioritize agility, adaptability, and flexibility to sustain a competitive advantage. In contrast, organizations within more stable industries may place greater emphasis on efficiency and cost-effectiveness (Putra & Santoso, 2020).

### Total Quality Management

Total Quality Management (TQM) represents a comprehensive and systematic approach to business management aimed at enhancing the quality of products and services through continuous improvement driven by feedback. It is not merely a collection of techniques or practices, but a holistic philosophy that permeates all levels of the organization, shaping its culture, operational processes, and interactions with internal and external stakeholders (Jabeen & Ganaie, 2019). This holistic approach requires the active involvement of all employees ranging from top-level executives to front-line staff in identifying and addressing quality-related challenges. TQM's strong emphasis on customer satisfaction as a central determinant of long-term success sets it apart from traditional management models (Qazi & Gani, 2018).

The principles of TQM have been effectively applied across a wide range of sectors, including manufacturing, healthcare, education, and government, illustrating its versatility and

adaptability (Ayash et al., 2020). Its continuous improvement orientation positions it as a strategic tool for organizations striving to maintain a competitive advantage amid shifting market dynamics (Sallis, 2010). TQM has emerged as a vital strategy for organizations of various sizes and industries, highlighting the importance of leadership, customer focus, and strategic planning in driving quality and operational excellence (Júnior & Broday, 2019). Furthermore, the success of TQM is closely tied to an organization's ability to cultivate a culture of collaboration, empowerment, and shared accountability, wherein employees are motivated to take ownership of quality initiatives (Luthfia & Sumarto, 2020).

The principles of Total Quality Management (TQM) have also demonstrated relevance within the security services industry, where safety, reliability, and customer satisfaction are of critical importance. In this context, TQM can be applied to strengthen various operational dimensions, including risk assessment, the development and implementation of security protocols, employee training, and customer service delivery (Sulastri & Achmad, 2022). By adopting TQM practices, security service providers can continuously refine their processes, minimize operational errors, enhance client satisfaction, and ultimately improve their competitive standing in the market (Magd et al., 2021). The client-centric nature of TQM underscores the need to align products and procedures with customer expectations, ensuring that quality management initiatives are responsive to client needs (Jacob et al., 2020). TQM's core principles—continuous improvement, employee empowerment, and customer focus are particularly well-suited to the objectives of security service organizations, which aim to deliver dependable, efficient, and client-oriented services. By fostering a culture of quality, TQM enables organizations to enhance both service delivery and long-term competitiveness (Hidayah et al., 2022). In the security sector, where trust and client relationships are paramount, TQM's customer-centric approach offers significant strategic value (Sulastri & Achmad, 2022).

The successful implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) requires effective communication and comprehensive training for all stakeholders to ensure a clear understanding of quality management principles. This approach plays a critical role in preventing contractual disputes and enhancing client satisfaction (Murali & Ponmalar, 2017). While TQM initiatives may face challenges such as resistance to change and the need for sustained leadership commitment, the long-term benefits such as cost savings, increased market share, and improved organizational reputation often outweigh the initial difficulties (Kareska, 2023). In the security services industry, the effectiveness of TQM implementation largely depends on the organization's capacity to foster a culture of quality. This includes empowering employees to actively identify and resolve quality-related issues and promoting continuous improvement as a collective organizational objective.

### **Leadership**

Leadership is a critical determinant of organizational success, as it involves the capacity of individuals in managerial roles to guide, inspire, and motivate teams toward the attainment of common goals (Htike, 2019; Alodhiani, 2024; Gomathy, 2023). In the context of management, leadership can be defined as the process of influencing and guiding individuals toward the achievement of organizational objectives. It entails the ability to establish a clear vision, communicate it effectively, and inspire and empower employees to work collaboratively toward its realization. Effective managerial leadership has been associated with a range of positive

organizational outcomes, including higher levels of employee engagement, increased productivity, and enhanced organizational learning and innovation (Aziz & Kesuma, 2021).

The leadership styles adopted by managers can have a significant impact on the performance and success of the organization. Transformational leadership, for instance, has been found to be particularly effective in fostering organizational learning and innovation, as it encourages employees to think critically, challenge the status quo, and engage in continuous improvement. In contrast, transactional leadership, which focuses on the exchange of rewards and punishments, may be more suitable in highly structured and stable environments where the emphasis is on maintaining the status quo (Young, Glerum, Joseph & McCord, 2021). The effectiveness of management leadership is also shaped by various contextual factors, such as the organizational culture, the nature of the industry, and the characteristics of the employees. In highly competitive and dynamic environments, leaders who can foster a culture of innovation and adaptability may be more successful than those who prioritize strict control and adherence to established procedures. Similarly, in organizations with a highly educated and autonomous workforce, a more participative and empowering leadership style may be more effective than a more directive approach (Hutabarat et al., 2022).

### **Benchmarking**

Benchmarking is a widely recognized tool for organizations to assess and enhance their performance by comparing their processes and practices to those of industry leaders (Hoffmann et al., 2019). This process involves systematically evaluating and contrasting an organization's practices, products, and services with those of its competitors or industry leaders, with the aim of identifying areas for improvement and adopting best practices. The fundamental concept of benchmarking is to learn from others who have demonstrated superior performance in specific areas and then adapt those practices to enhance one's own organization. Benchmarking allows organizations to identify performance gaps and take steps to close them, ultimately driving continuous improvement (Davidson, 2022). However, successful benchmarking requires a structured and strategic approach to generate meaningful insights and facilitate transformative change. The literature underscores several key factors that organizations must consider when undertaking a benchmarking initiative.

Successful benchmarking requires organizations to identify and collaborate with industry peers or leading practitioners who can offer meaningful and relevant comparisons. Benchmarking partners should share similar characteristics, such as market position, operational scale, and strategic objectives, to ensure the validity and applicability of the insights derived (Wu et al., 2018). Another critical factor is the depth and scope of the benchmarking process. Benchmarking can be conducted at various levels, from high-level operational metrics to in-depth process-level comparisons (Davidson, 2022).

Additionally, the benchmarking process should be seamlessly integrated into an organization's broader strategic planning and continuous improvement efforts. Benchmarking is most effective when viewed not as a one-time activity but as an ongoing process that is closely aligned with the organization's goals and objectives. As noted by Davidson (2022), the effectiveness of benchmarking hinges on the ability to derive a comprehensive and accurate set of comparisons, which can then be utilized to drive sustainable performance improvements. Successful benchmarking initiatives typically involve the establishment of clear performance



metrics and the systematic monitoring of progress over time (Ransley, 2018). This approach enables organizations to assess their performance in relation to their benchmarking partners and ensure that implemented changes are yielding the desired outcomes. Ultimately, the successful integration of benchmarking into an organization's overall strategy and operations is a key determinant of the long-term success and impact of the process (Ongosi et al., 2020).

### **Continuous Improvement**

Continuous improvement (CI) is defined as a systematic approach that encourages an ongoing process of identifying and addressing opportunities for improvement, with the ultimate goal of achieving sustainable and measurable progress. This concept encompasses a wide range of strategies and methodologies aimed at enhancing organizational performance, efficiency, and productivity (Bhuiyan & Baghel., 2005). Continuous improvement has become a cornerstone in many industries, encompassing diverse strategies and methodologies aimed at enhancing performance, efficiency, and productivity. At its essence, CI is a systematic, ongoing process of identifying and addressing areas for enhancement to achieve sustainable, measurable progress. This dynamic approach has gained widespread adoption across sectors including manufacturing, healthcare, and education as organizations seek to remain competitive amid evolving market demands, technological advancements, and changing business environments (Aleu & Aken, 2018; Glover, Farris, & Van Aken, 2020).

The literature on continuous improvement presents a wide range of definitions and conceptualizations. CI is often viewed as a dynamic capability that enhances an organization's capacity to adapt and respond to changing challenges. This perspective highlights the necessity of a robust organizational infrastructure to support the CI process, including key elements such as strong leadership, active employee engagement, and data-driven decision-making. Furthermore, research has emphasized the alignment between CI and adaptive leadership, underscoring the value of cultivating a culture that promotes experimentation, continuous learning, and adaptive change (Galli, 2019; Yurkofsky, Peterson, Mehta, Horwitz-Willis & Frumin, 2020).

The practical application of continuous improvement (CI) has been widely observed across diverse industries. In the packaging industry, for instance, the implementation of quality control circles has highlighted the role of employee involvement and motivation in achieving cost savings and enhancing productivity (Yusuf & Azhar, 2020). Similarly, in the education sector, the adoption of CI methodologies such as networked improvement communities and instructional rounds has shown promise in addressing complex challenges and fostering sustainable improvements (Yusuf & Azhar, 2020). Furthermore, the literature emphasizes the dynamic and multifaceted nature of continuous improvement (CI), underscoring the need for a comprehensive framework that captures the interrelationships among key elements such as leadership, organizational culture, and process management (Yurkofsky et al., 2020). Empirical studies have explored the specific components of CI, revealing the critical importance of factors such as employee involvement, data-driven decision-making, and the establishment of a supportive infrastructure that facilitates continuous learning and adaptation (Cheng et al., 2019).

### **Human Resources Management**

Human resource management (HRM) has emerged as a critical driver of organizational success in today's dynamic and unpredictable business environment (Hamid, 2019). To remain competitive, organizations must effectively manage and develop their human capital, widely regarded as their most valuable asset. Recent research emphasizes the strategic role of HRM in fostering sustainable competitive advantage. HRM's contribution to both organizational sustainability and the sustainability of its own processes has been recognized as an innovative and evolving approach (Macke & Genari, 2019). Existing studies have explored the varying assumptions and objectives underlying different conceptualizations of sustainable HRM, highlighting its complexity and growing importance in modern management practices.

Moreover, Researchers have emphasized the strategic significance of human resource management (HRM) in enabling organizations to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage within today's volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) business environment (Hamid, 2019). Key HRM practices such as talent acquisition, performance management, training and development, and the promotion of workplace diversity are essential for building a skilled, motivated, and adaptable workforce capable of supporting long-term strategic objectives (Macke & Genari, 2019).

According to Breaz and Jaradat (2024), a strategic approach to human resource management (HRM) that aligns with organizational goals can significantly enhance performance outcomes. Similarly, existing literature highlights the importance of shifting the focus of HR managers from short-term, profit-driven objectives toward long-term, sustainable practices that promote employee well-being, organizational resilience, and environmental responsibility (Macke & Genari, 2019; Hamid, 2019). This paradigm shift necessitates the integration of sustainability principles into core HRM functions and the adoption of "green" HRM practices that leverage emerging technologies to raise environmental awareness and drive sustainable business performance.

### **Total Quality Management and Business Performance**

According to Luft, Jeong, Idsardi, and Gardner (2022), theoretical frameworks offer a structured approach to clarifying and understanding the research problem, while conceptual frameworks help articulate the underlying assumptions of the phenomenon under investigation. The present study examines four independent variables human resource management, management leadership, benchmarking, and continuous improvement and their influence on the dependent variable, business performance. The proposed theoretical framework is designed to analyze the correlations between these independent variables and business performance, providing a foundation for exploring how these factors contribute to business success.

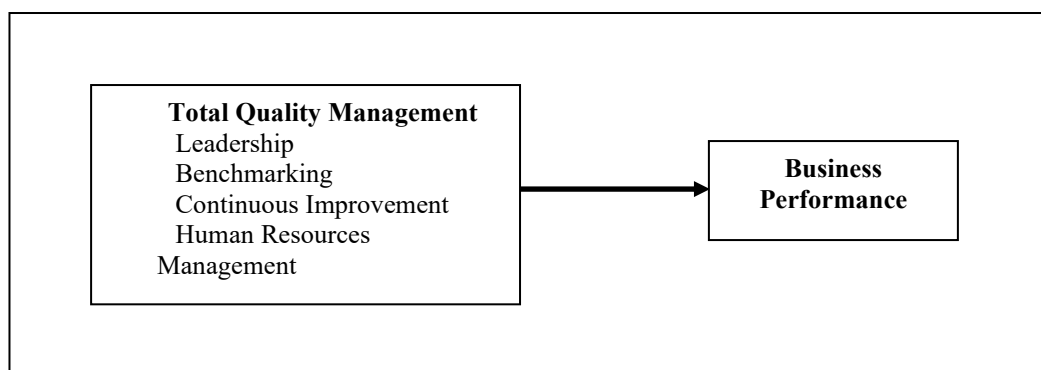
Theoretical perspectives offer valuable insights into understanding the strategic drivers of human resource management (HRM) practices and their influence on business outcomes. For instance, the resource-based view (RBV) posits that firms can achieve sustainable competitive advantage by developing unique, valuable, and inimitable human resource capabilities (Chapman et al., 2016). This perspective emphasizes the importance of strategic human resource management (SHRM) practices that enable organizations to leverage human capital as a source of competitive differentiation. Conversely, institutional theory highlights how organizations often adopt similar HR practices in response to coercive, mimetic, and normative

pressures, potentially leading to institutional isomorphism rather than distinct HR capabilities. Integrating these theoretical lenses helps explain the need for organizations to balance institutional conformity with resource-based differentiation in developing high-performance work systems.

Management leadership is another critical factor influencing business performance. Effective leaders inspire and motivate employees, cultivate a positive organizational culture, and drive strategic decision-making aligned with organizational goals. Studies have shown that leadership styles such as transformational and charismatic leadership are positively associated with employee engagement, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment factors that contribute to improved business performance (Sutianingsih, 2018).

Benchmarking, defined as the process of comparing an organization's practices and performance against industry best practices or competitors, is also essential for driving performance improvements (Jenatabadi, 2015). By identifying performance gaps and adopting proven strategies, organizations can enhance efficiency, innovation, and competitiveness. This proactive approach not only boosts customer satisfaction but also strengthens employee engagement (Paladino & Paladino, 2011).

In conclusion, leadership, benchmarking, continuous improvement, and human resource management each play pivotal roles in enhancing business performance. Effective leadership drives motivation, alignment, and a positive organizational culture that supports strategic goals. Benchmarking facilitates the identification and adoption of best practices, fostering innovation and competitive advantage. Continuous improvement ensures ongoing refinement of processes, promoting efficiency and adaptability in a rapidly changing environment. Meanwhile, human resource management strategically develops and leverages talent, creating a skilled and engaged workforce essential for sustained business success. Therefore, these variables interact to create a dynamic framework that significantly contributes to improved and sustainable business performance.



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

## Conclusion

In conclusion, this study makes a meaningful contribution to the existing body of knowledge on the influence of Total Quality Management (TQM) on business performance within the security service industry. By examining the impact of four key dimensions of TQM leadership,



benchmarking, continuous improvement, and human resource management on business performance, the research underscores the critical role of cultivating a strong TQM culture. The findings highlight how organizations in the security service sector can enhance their performance by embedding these TQM principles into their operational practices. This study is valuable for both researchers and industry practitioners, as it identifies essential TQM elements that drive business success in a highly competitive and service-driven environment. Overall, the research provides a solid conceptual foundation that links TQM to improved business performance, offering strategic guidance for the security service industry in its pursuit of excellence and long-term competitiveness.

Furthermore, this paper makes a significant contribution by developing a conceptual model that clarifies the relationships between Total Quality Management (TQM) and business performance within the context of the security service industry. The study enhances existing knowledge by addressing a notable gap in the literature, where discussions on TQM practices in the Malaysian security service industry remain limited. By focusing on this underexplored sector, the research deepens the understanding of how TQM principles influence business outcomes in a service-oriented and highly regulated environment. The findings of this study provide practical value by enabling security service providers in Malaysia to identify, adopt, and implement effective TQM practices. In doing so, the industry can improve its overall performance and strengthen its competitive position in the marketplace.

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