

ABSTRACT

Development of a Tool for Measuring Quality Culture Maturity of Trinidad and Tobago's Manufacturing Organisations

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The manufacturing sector plays an important role in the economy of the Trinidad and Tobago (T&T) in terms of government revenues, foreign exchange earnings and jobs. Yet, there has been a recent declining trend in the country's global competitiveness. Consequently, many local manufacturers have sought to implement quality management practices (QMP) as a means of improving competitiveness and market share. However, many manufacturers have failed in their QMP initiatives. Lack of a quality culture has been recognised as a reason for failure. Recent literature has identified five core dimensions of culture (including low Uncertainty Avoidance, Collectivism, Feminity, low Power Distance and Confucian Dynamic) that would be conducive to successful QMP implementation. This research develops a Tool for measuring maturity of these quality culture elements for the facilitation of QMP in T&T manufacturing organisations. A two-stage approach was adopted. Stage-one consisted of a self-administered questionnaire survey, the results of which were statistically analysed using one-sample *t*-test. This showed that medium-sized manufacturers (with 21-199 employees) as well as the chemicals and printing and packaging sectors conformed to the prescribed quality culture. In order to measure the maturity of the quality culture elements for these sectors, an interview instrument/tool and a Five-point Maturity Scale were developed in the Stage-Two investigation. Findings indicated that "Intermediate" to "Mature" levels of CD, Feminity and

Collectivism would facilitate QMP significantly. The empirical findings were then used to refine the Maturity Scale and to develop a Self-Assessment Tool. These are considered to be novel contributions of this research in that they can be used to assist manufacturers in measuring the maturity status of quality culture elements, to assess their readiness for QMP implementation, to diagnose failing QMPs and identify areas for improvement.

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