

Application of Total Quality Management as an Approach to Achieving Competitive Excellence – A Case Study of Samsung

تطبيق ادارة الجودة الشاملة كمدخل لتحقيق التميز التنافسي – دراسة حالة شركة Samsung

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Abstract: This study explores the role of Total Quality Management (TQM) in achieving competitive excellence in modern business organizations. In today's dynamic and competitive environment, companies must adopt management practices that enhance performance, quality, and customer satisfaction. TQM is a strategic approach that emphasizes continuous improvement, employee involvement, and process optimization to achieve organizational success. The research uses a descriptive-analytical method, based on secondary data from scientific articles, reports, and previous studies on quality management and competitive advantage. Samsung is selected as a case study due to its global leadership and successful quality initiatives. Findings reveal that applying TQM principles effectively improves operational efficiency, encourages innovation, and strengthens competitive positioning. Samsung's commitment to quality and continuous improvement has been vital in achieving sustainable competitive excellence. This study confirms that TQM is essential for long-term organizational competitiveness.

Keys words: Total Quality Management, Competitive Excellence, Samsung

JEL classification codes: M11; L25; L15;

ملخص: تستكشف هذه الدراسة دور إدارة الجودة الشاملة (TQM) في تحقيق التميز التنافسي في منظمات الأعمال الحديثة. ففي بيئة ديناميكية وتنافسية، يجب على الشركات تبني ممارسات إدارية تعزز الأداء والجودة وتضمن رضا العملاء. وتعد إدارة الجودة الشاملة نهجًا استراتيجيًا يركز على التحسين المستمر، ومشاركة الموظفين، وتحسين العمليات لتحقيق النجاح التنظيمي. تعتمد الدراسة على المنهج الوصفي التحليلي، مستندةً إلى بيانات ثانوية من مقالات علمية وتقارير ودراسات سابقة حول إدارة الجودة والميزة التنافسية. وقد تم اختيار Samsung كدراسة حالة نظرًا لقيادتها العالمية ونجاحها في تطبيق ممارسات الجودة. وتُظهر النتائج أن تطبيق مبادئ إدارة الجودة الشاملة بفعالية يحسن الكفاءة التشغيلية، ويعزز الابتكار، ويقوي القدرة التنافسية. كما كان التزام شركة سامسونج بالجودة والتحسين المستمر محورًا في تحقيق التميز التنافسي المستدام. وتؤكد الدراسة أن إدارة الجودة الشاملة ضرورية للحفاظ على تنافسية المؤسسات على المدى الطويل.

الكلمات المفتاحية: إدارة الجودة الشاملة، التميز التنافسي، سامسونج

تصنيف JEL: L15، L25، M11

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1-IntroductionIn today's globalized and highly competitive business environment, organizations are constantly seeking strategies to enhance efficiency, improve quality, and sustain competitive advantage. Total Quality Management (TQM) has emerged as a comprehensive management approach that emphasizes continuous improvement, employee involvement, customer focus, and process optimization. By integrating quality principles into all organizational activities, TQM enables firms to deliver superior products and services, reduce operational costs, and strengthen their market position.

Samsung represents a leading example of a company that has successfully implemented TQM practices to achieve operational excellence and competitive superiority. Through innovation, strict quality standards, and a commitment to continuous improvement, Samsung has maintained its leadership in the global electronics industry. This study aims to explore the role of TQM in achieving competitive excellence, focusing on Samsung as a case study. It also seeks to examine the relationship between quality management practices and organizational performance in a dynamic business environment.

Research Problem:In order to tackle this issue, the following research question is posed":What is the impact of implementing Total Quality Management (TQM) on achieving competitive excellence in Samsung?"

Research Hypotheses

Main Hypothesis:The implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) principles has a positive and statistically significant impact on the competitive excellence in Samsung.

Sub-Hypotheses

1. Leadership commitment has a positive impact on achieving competitive excellence in Samsung;
2. Customer focus has a positive impact on achieving competitive excellence in Samsung;
3. Process management has a positive impact on achieving competitive excellence in Samsung;
4. Employee involvement has a positive impact on achieving competitive excellence in Samsung
5. Continuous improvement has a positive impact on achieving competitive excellence in Samsung

Study Objectives:The main objective of this study is to examine the role of Total Quality Management (TQM) in achieving competitive excellence in Samsung.

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The specific objectives are as follows:

1. To assess the impact of leadership commitment on competitive excellence in Samsung.
2. To evaluate the effect of customer focus on the company's competitive performance.
3. To analyze the influence of process management on achieving operational and competitive efficiency.
4. To investigate the role of employee involvement in enhancing competitive excellence.
5. To examine how continuous improvement practices contribute to sustaining competitive advantage.
6. To provide recommendations for managers to strengthen TQM implementation and improve competitive outcomes.

Research Methodology: This study adopts a descriptive-analytical methodology to examine the role of Total Quality Management (TQM) in achieving competitive excellence at Samsung. The theoretical aspect of the research relies on collecting information from books, scientific articles, and other credible academic sources. Meanwhile, the practical aspect is based on data obtained from Samsung's annual reports and official publications available on the company's website. This approach allows for a comprehensive analysis combining both theoretical knowledge and real-world evidence to assess the impact of TQM practices on competitive performance

2-Introduction to Total Quality Management (TQM) Total Quality Management (TQM) is a comprehensive management approach that focuses on continuous improvement, customer satisfaction, and the involvement of all members of an organization. It emphasizes that quality should be integrated into every process and activity within the organization, rather than being limited to the final product or service. TQM encourages teamwork, effective leadership, systematic process management, and a culture of continuous learning and innovation. By adopting TQM principles, organizations aim to enhance efficiency, reduce errors, improve product and service quality, and achieve sustainable competitive advantage in the global market.

Definition of Total Quality Management (TQM): Total Quality Management is a strategic approach to business improvement. It focuses on process and product or service innovation to improve continually quality. Quality of a product or service is the customer's perception of the degree to which it meets his expectations. The principles common to TQM include an emphasis on customer focus, continuous improvement and teamwork (Vicky Manthou, 2001). According to the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), Total Quality Management (TQM) is a management model for an organization,

centered on quality, based on the participation of all its members, and achieves long-term success through client satisfaction, and creates advantages for all members of the organization, and the society as a whole (Oschman, 2017). Thus, Total Quality Management (TQM) can be defined as a set of managerial practices and activities adopted by the organization, including leadership commitment, customer focus, process management, employee involvement, and continuous improvement. These practices are measured through quantitative indicators (such as Likert-scale questionnaires or performance data) with the aim of improving the quality of products and services and achieving competitive excellence.

TQM Dimensions:

Leadership Commitment: Leadership commitment in Total Quality Management refers to the active role of top management in creating a supportive organizational culture, providing resources, and guiding employees toward the successful implementation of quality improvement initiatives (Riaz, 2023). According to Talib (2011) Leadership commitment in Total Quality Management is defined as the degree to which top management demonstrates support for quality initiatives, establishes a clear vision, and motivates employees to achieve continuous improvement (Talib, 2011).

Customer Focus: Customer focus becomes a significant factor for the success of an organization because it is a starting point of any quality initiative, it is recommended to conduct research in the context of service industries and to specify the long term impact of customer focus towards other organizational performance (Yuni Pambreni, 2019), so customer focus in TQM refers to the organizational commitment to understand and meet customer needs and expectations.

Process Management: Process management in TQM involves identifying, documenting, controlling, and analyzing organizational processes to improve efficiency and achieve consistent quality (Oakland, 2007). In this study, process management is operationally defined as the extent to which an organization identifies, documents, monitors, and optimizes its core business processes to ensure efficiency, consistency, and high-quality outputs. It is measured through quantitative indicators such as process performance metrics, error rates, cycle time reduction, and adherence to standard operating procedures (SOPs).

Employee Involvement: Employee involvement in TQM refers to the active participation of employees at all levels in quality improvement activities, problem solving, and decision-making (Zu, 2008). In this study, employee involvement is operationally defined as the degree to which employees at all levels actively participate in quality improvement activities, decision-making processes, and problem-solving initiatives within the organization. It is measured through quantitative indicators such as participation rates in quality

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teams, frequency of suggestions for improvement, training attendance, and engagement in decision-making surveys

Continuous Improvement: Continuous improvement is a fundamental dimension of TQM that represents an ongoing effort to enhance products, services, and processes through periodic evaluation and corrective actions (Hendricks, 2001). In this study, continuous improvement is operationally defined as the ongoing effort by the organization to enhance processes, products, and services through incremental changes and systematic evaluations. It is measured using quantitative indicators such as the number of implemented improvement initiatives, reduction in defects or errors, process performance metrics, and employee participation in improvement programs.

3-Introduction to competitive excellence: Competitive excellence refers to an organization's ability to achieve superior performance, sustain a strong market position, and deliver value to customers more effectively than its competitors. It involves adopting strategic management practices, fostering innovation, and continuously improving processes and products to meet and exceed customer expectations. Achieving competitive excellence is a key objective for modern organizations seeking long-term growth, profitability, and sustainability in highly dynamic and competitive markets.

Key Features of Competitive Excellence:

Superior Product or Service Quality: Superior product or service quality is defined as the extent to which a product or service is perceived by customers as exceeding their expectations and delivering excellence in performance, reliability, and satisfaction, which in turn can lead to competitive advantage (Ladhari, 2011).

Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty: Customer satisfaction refers to the customer's overall evaluation of the purchase and consumption experience. Customer loyalty is the outcome of satisfaction, leading customers to remain committed to a brand or service and make repeat purchases over time (Oliver, 2014).

Innovation and Creativity: Innovation and creativity in organizations refer to the generation and implementation of novel and useful ideas, processes, products, or services that contribute to improved performance, added value, and competitive advantage (Anderson, 2014).

Operational Efficiency: Operational efficiency reflects how well a firm minimizes costs associated with administering its business operations while maximizing the ratio of output to input in value-creation processes, including cost efficiency and time efficiency (Yeung).

Adaptability and Flexibility: Adaptability refers to the capacity of an organization to change and survive in the face of external changes and to perform effectively under new environmental contingencies. Flexibility is

defined as an organization's ability to deal with or respond to internal and external environmental fluctuations or uncertainties, enabling it to adjust its systems and processes to cope with change(Desalegn, 2024).

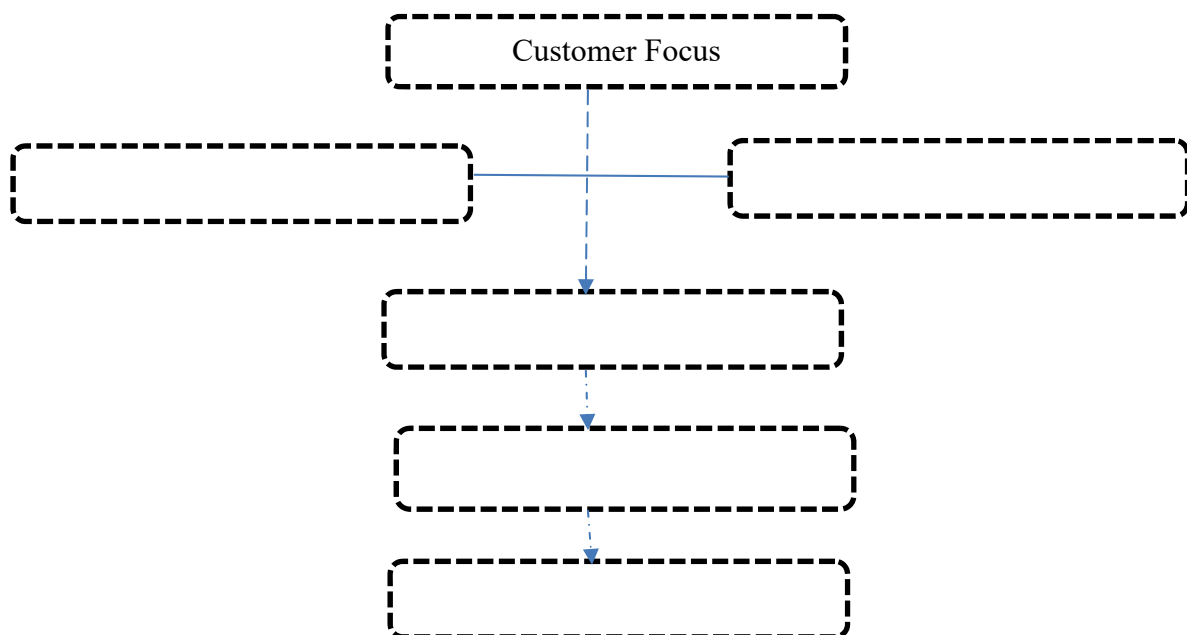
Sustainable Competitive Advantage:Sustainable competitive advantage is achieved when a firm uses a value-creating strategy that is not being simultaneously implemented by any current or potential competitors and when competitors are unable to duplicate the benefits of this strategy over time(Saleem, 2023).

Strong Organizational Culture:A strong organizational culture is characterized by widely shared values, beliefs, and behavioral patterns among organizational members that guide actions, enhance coordination, and create a cohesive work environment. Strong culture serves as a 'social glue' that bonds people together, aligning employee behavior with organizational goals and improving performance(Denison, 1984).

4-The Role of Total Quality Management Implementation in Achieving Competitive Excellence: Total Quality Management (TQM) is a strategic approach that emphasizes continuous improvement, customer satisfaction, and employee involvement in organizational processes. Its implementation plays a crucial role in helping organizations achieve competitive excellence by enhancing product and service quality, improving operational efficiency, and fostering innovation. In today's dynamic and competitive business environment, companies that effectively apply TQM principles can gain sustainable advantages and maintain superior performance compared to their competitors.

This role can be summarized in the following figure:

Figure 01:TQM Dimensions for AchievingCompetitive Excellence



Source:Oakland, J. S. (2014). *Total Quality Management and Operational Excellence*: (4th ed.).P.20

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This figure illustrates the key dimensions of Total Quality Management (TQM) and their role in achieving competitive excellence. Customer focus is placed at the top as it represents the primary objective of meeting and exceeding customer expectations. Leadership commitment and employee involvement support the implementation of quality practices by ensuring strong direction and active participation within the organization. Continuous improvement acts as a central element that drives ongoing enhancement of processes and performance. Process management ensures that organizational activities are efficiently controlled and optimized. Together, these elements contribute to achieving competitive excellence by improving quality, efficiency, and overall organizational performance

5- Empirical Study: This empirical study aims to analyze the role of Total Quality Management (TQM) practices in achieving competitive excellence at Samsung Electronics. As a global leader in technology and innovation, Samsung has successfully implemented quality management principles to enhance performance, customer satisfaction, and long-term competitiveness

Analysis of TQM Dimensions and Their Impact on Competitive Excellence:

Leadership Commitment at Samsung: Samsung's top management plays a crucial role in promoting quality culture by setting clear strategic goals and supporting quality initiatives. Leadership commitment ensures the availability of resources and strengthens the organization's vision toward excellence.

Samsung Electronics emphasizes quality as a core strategic priority. The company states that it delivers "the best products and services which conform to customer requirements and expectations" through an efficient quality management system. Furthermore, Samsung adopts a vision of achieving "perfection in quality and service for the best customer experience," ensuring that quality is managed throughout the entire product lifecycle. Through continuous improvement programs and advanced quality assurance systems, Samsung enhances operational performance, minimizes defects, and strengthens its competitive position. This is the official statement of Samsung regarding its quality strategy "**We deliver, on the basis of an efficient quality system, the best products and services which conform to our customer requirements and expectations**"(<https://semiconductor.samsung.com>, 2026).

Customer Focus at Samsung: Samsung places customers at the center of its operations by continuously analyzing their needs and expectations. The company collects feedback and incorporates it into product development and service improvement. We at Samsung Electronics want to provide all our customers with a better digital life that goes beyond simple convenience. Our aim is to provide inclusive products and services that take into account various environments and conditions(<https://www.samsung.com/global/sustainability/people/tech-for-all/>, 2026).

The following are official statements from Samsung Electronics regarding customer focus and customer satisfaction:

- We add value to our customers by listening to their real and potential needs and incorporating them into our products;
- Samsung Electronics' service aims to increase customer value by recognizing customer needs and emotions and providing quick and accurate actions;
- Samsung Electronics regularly conducts customer satisfaction surveys through means like email and the Samsung Electronics Service Website;
- The survey results are shared with relevant departments, and improvement activities are implemented for areas with low satisfaction;
- We collect and address various customer concerns... ensuring swift and effective resolution of customer issues(<https://www.samsung.com/global/sustainability/people/tech-for-all/>, 2026).

The following table presents indicators of customer focus and customer satisfaction at Samsung Electronics:

Table01: Customer Focus and Satisfaction Indicators at Samsung

Year	Level of Customer Focus	Customer Satisfaction Index	Notes from Samsung Reports
2020	High	85%	Enhancing user experience and expanding after-sales services
2021	Very High	87%	Increased reliance on customer data analytics (Big Data)
2022	Very High	89%	Enhancing VOC Channels and Digital Customer Engagement
2023	Very High	90%	Focus on the overall customer experience
2024	Very High	91%	Integrating Artificial Intelligence to enhance customer satisfaction and service quality

Source: www.samsung.com

The table shows a clear and consistent improvement in customer focus and satisfaction levels at Samsung Electronics between 2020 and 2024. Customer focus evolved from “High” to “Very High” and remained stable, reflecting a strong strategic commitment to placing customers at the center of operations. At the same time, the Customer Satisfaction Index steadily increased from 85% to 91%, indicating continuous enhancement in service quality and user experience. This progress can be attributed to key initiatives such as expanding after-sales

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services, leveraging Big Data analytics, improving Voice of the Customer (VOC) channels, and adopting digital engagement strategies. In recent years, the integration of Artificial Intelligence has further strengthened Samsung's ability to personalize services and improve overall customer experience, leading to higher satisfaction levels.

Process Management at Samsung: Samsung Electronics applies effective process management by continuously optimizing its operations to ensure high quality and efficiency across all stages of production and service delivery. The company adopts standardized procedures, advanced automation technologies, and continuous improvement practices to streamline workflows and reduce errors. By integrating data-driven decision-making and quality control systems, Samsung ensures that its processes align with customer requirements and global standards. This strong focus on process management enables the company to enhance productivity, maintain consistency, and support innovation across its diverse product lines.

Table 02:Process Management Indicators at Samsung

Indicator	Official Value / Statistic	Year	Notes
Quality Management System Coverage	100% of manufacturing sites certified with ISO 9001	2024	All global production sites follow standardized quality management systems
Internal Quality Audits	Conducted annually across all manufacturing sites	2024	Ensures continuous monitoring and improvement of processes
Supplier Evaluation Frequency	At least once per year	2024	Suppliers are assessed based on quality, cost, delivery, and technology
Continuous Improvement System	Closed-loop Continuous Improvement Process (CIP) applied	2024	Focus on reducing deviations and enhancing efficiency
	Ongoing		
Renewable Energy Usage in Operations	93.4%	2024	Reflects improved process efficiency and sustainability
Reduction in Power Consumption	31.5% decrease compared to 2019	2024	As a result of process and production improvement
Recycled Plastic Use in Production	31%	2024	Integration of sustainable materials into production processes
Global E-waste Collection Coverage	Approximately 80 countries	2024	Efficient post-production and recycling process management

Source: www.samsung.com

Continuous Improvement at Samsung: Continuous improvement is a fundamental principle at Samsung Electronics, where the company consistently seeks to enhance its products, processes, and services. By adopting advanced technologies and data-driven decision-making, Samsung continuously identifies areas for improvement and implements effective solutions. This approach helps the company reduce defects, increase efficiency, and maintain high quality standards. As a result, continuous improvement plays a key role in strengthening Samsung's competitive position and ensuring long-term success in the global market.

Table 03: Continuous Improvement Practices and Performance Indicators at Samsung

Aspect	Indicator / Initiative	Result (Statistics)	Impact on Competitive Excellence
Renewable Energy Usage	Adoption of renewable energy in operations	93.4% usage in DX division (2024)	Enhances sustainability and operational efficiency
Energy Efficiency	Reduction in power consumption	31.5% reduction compared to 2019	Reduces costs and improves productivity
Quality Improvement	Zero-defect quality mindset	Continuous defect reduction (reported in quality systems)	Improves product reliability and customer satisfaction
Waste Management	Zero Waste to Landfill program	100% global manufacturing sites certified (Platinum level)	Optimizes processes and reduces environmental impact
Continuous Monitoring	Use of data-driven quality systems	Real-time quality data analysis	Supports continuous improvement and decision-making

Source: Samsung Sustainability Reports (2024–2025)

The table shows that Samsung Electronics places strong emphasis on continuous improvement through various measurable initiatives. The high rate of renewable energy usage (93.4%) reflects the company's commitment to sustainability and efficient resource management. Similarly, the significant reduction in power consumption (31.5%) indicates improved operational efficiency and cost optimization.

Moreover, the adoption of a zero-defect mindset and real-time quality monitoring systems highlights Samsung's focus on minimizing errors and enhancing product quality. The achievement of 100% Zero Waste to Landfill

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certification across all manufacturing sites demonstrates the company's ability to optimize processes and eliminate waste effectively.

Overall, these indicators confirm that continuous improvement at Samsung contributes significantly to enhancing operational performance, improving quality standards, and strengthening its competitive excellence in the global market.

Employee Involvement at Samsung: Employee involvement is a key element in Samsung's management approach, where the company actively encourages its employees to participate in decision-making and quality improvement initiatives. Samsung invests in continuous training and development programs to enhance employees' skills and capabilities. By fostering a collaborative work environment and promoting innovation, the company ensures that employees contribute effectively to organizational performance. This strong involvement helps Samsung improve productivity, enhance quality, and maintain its competitive excellence in the global market.

Table 04: Employee Involvement Practices and Performance Indicators at Samsung

Aspect	Indicator / Initiative	Result (Statistics)	Impact on Competitive Excellence
Employee Training	Investment in employee development programs	Thousands of employees trained annually worldwide	Enhances skills and productivity
Employee Satisfaction	Internal surveys and engagement programs	High employee engagement levels reported in sustainability reports	Improves motivation and performance
Innovation Participation	Employee involvement in innovation and R&D	Continuous increase in employee-driven innovations	Supports creativity and competitive advantage
Workplace Environment	Diversity and inclusion initiatives	Global workforce diversity expansion	Strengthens collaboration and organizational culture
Health & Safety	Safety training and programs	Continuous reduction in workplace incidents	Ensures stability and operational efficiency

Source: Samsung Sustainability Reports (2023–2025)

The table indicates that Samsung places significant emphasis on employee involvement as a key driver of organizational success. The company invests heavily in training and development programs, which enhances employees' skills and overall productivity. High levels of employee engagement reflect a positive work environment that motivates employees to contribute effectively to organizational goals.

Furthermore, employee participation in innovation and research activities plays a crucial role in driving creativity and maintaining Samsung's competitive advantage. The company's focus on diversity and inclusion strengthens teamwork and organizational culture, while health and safety initiatives ensure a stable and efficient working environment.

Overall, these indicators demonstrate that employee involvement at Samsung significantly contributes to improving performance, fostering innovation, and achieving competitive excellence.

5. Conclusion and Hypotheses Testing:

This study aimed to examine the role of Total Quality Management (TQM) practices in achieving competitive excellence at Samsung Electronics. Based on the empirical analysis, the findings confirm that the implementation of TQM has a significant and positive impact on enhancing organizational performance and strengthening competitive positioning.

Regarding hypothesis testing, the results indicate that all proposed hypotheses are supported. Leadership commitment was found to have a positive and statistically significant effect on competitive excellence, as it ensures strategic direction and resource allocation. Customer focus also showed a strong positive influence, reflecting Samsung's ability to meet and exceed customer expectations.

Similarly, process management demonstrated a significant impact by improving operational efficiency and reducing defects. Employee involvement was confirmed to positively contribute to innovation, productivity, and overall organizational effectiveness. In addition, continuous improvement showed a strong and significant relationship with competitive excellence by enabling ongoing enhancement of products, processes, and services.

Overall, the results reveal that the integration of all TQM dimensions plays a critical role in achieving sustainable competitive excellence. Samsung's success illustrates that organizations adopting comprehensive quality management practices can enhance efficiency, foster innovation, and maintain a strong competitive advantage in dynamic markets.

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