

**Research
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**An Exploratory Study on Leadership in a
Semiconductor Manufacturing Firm's Performance****^aPoh Kiat Ng*, ^bGerald Guan Gan Goh and ^cUchenna Cyril Eze**^aFaculty of Engineering and Technology, Multimedia University, Malaysia^bFaculty of Business and Law, Multimedia University, Malaysia^cSchool of Business, Monash University, Sunway Campus, Malaysia

Abstract: Top management leadership is considered one of the most important principles of TQM due to its assumed relationship with customer satisfaction. However, the evidence for which TQM factors like leadership contributes most to the improved organizational performance is not yet conclusive, and sometimes contradictory. Few studies have been carried out on the systemic affects of leadership practices on engineering project performance in Malaysian manufacturing firms. Hence, the purpose of this paper is to study the impact of leadership towards engineering project performance in a semiconductor manufacturing firm. The study involves analyzing the influence of a set of leader traits, values and behaviours that are extracted from the TQM philosophy within the organization. The findings identify the conditions, culture and environment whereby effective performance is influenced by effective leadership within this organization. This study is useful for engineers, managers and researchers as it provides insights on the specific factors that require adequate attention to ensure effective engineering project performance.

Keywords: Leadership, total quality management, organizational context, project performance

INTRODUCTION

According to Ugboro and Obeng (2000), the long-term survival of many manufacturing and service organizations is considered to be inextricably linked

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