# Advancing Work Efficiency with Total Quality Management: A Bibliometric and Systematic Review

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**Abstract.** This study investigates the role of Total Quality Management (TQM) in enhancing organizational efficiency through a bibliometric and systematic literature review. From 5,353 Scopus-indexed documents (1961–2025), 28 rigorously selected articles were analyzed. The findings show that TQM is widely applied across healthcare, manufacturing, and education, often integrated with Lean Six Sigma and Industry 4.0 technologies. Evidence indicates that TQM improves resource utilization, reduces waste, and supports innovation. In healthcare, Lean-based TQM enhances service flow and reduces errors; in manufacturing, TQM combined with Industry 4.0 increases productivity and lowers defects; in education, TQM strengthens curriculum development and institutional performance. Leadership commitment, employee involvement, and alignment with sustainability goals emerge as essential success factors. Although the review is limited to Scopus data and bibliometric methods, the results confirm TQM's adaptability and continued relevance. Future studies are encouraged to explore deeper integration with Quality 4.0.

**Keywords:** CO2 Emissions, GDP, FDI, Population Level, ASEAN.

## 1 Introduction

Total Quality Management (TQM) is a strategy that helps organizations continuously improve their processes, ensuring optimal performance and delivering high-quality results. This concept emphasizes the importance of engaging every organizational element to ensure that each process operates optimally and delivers the highest quality outcomes. TQM emerged as a response to the need for enhancing organizational competitiveness through a systematic approach that balances efficiency and innovation. For example, while TQM improves resource utilization and streamlines operations to reduce costs, it simultaneously encourages innovative practices such as customer-focused design and adaptive production processes to meet evolving market demands [1, 2]

The implementation of TQM is often associated with increased efficiency, process optimization, and stakeholder satisfaction. In the era of globalization, organizations must swiftly adapt to market changes and increasingly complex customer demands. TQM not only assists organizations in improving operational efficiency but also drives sustainable innovation in product and service development [3]. This is


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particularly relevant for organizations operating in competitive environments, where quality serves as a key differentiator [4, 5].

In many sectors, TQM is integrated with modern technologies such as data-driven systems and digital innovations to optimize quality management. For example, in the manufacturing industry, the integration of TQM with Industry 4.0 technologies, such as IoT-enabled monitoring systems, has significantly improved production efficiency and minimized defects in assembly lines. For instance, Industry 4.0 enables organizations to adopt automation and real-time data-driven decision-making, thereby enhancing operational efficiency and accuracy [3]. Moreover, TQM approaches that incorporate elements like Six Sigma and Lean have proven effective in reducing waste, boosting productivity, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement in various organizations [6, 7].

TQM also fosters a culture of organizational learning and collaboration by emphasizing teamwork, cross-functional communication, and the use of tools such as quality circles and continuous improvement programs. These strategies enable employees to work collectively towards shared goals, enhancing both collaboration and organizational effectiveness. In workplaces implementing TQM, every individual plays a crucial role in achieving organizational goals. This approach prioritizes employee engagement through continuous training, recognition of their contributions, and empowerment to make decisions in process improvement [8, 9]. These efforts not only enhance employee morale but also create a more productive and innovative work environment.

However, the success of TQM implementation heavily depends on the commitment of top management. Effective leadership is essential to ensure that TQM principles are fully integrated into the organization's strategic framework. Management must provide adequate resources, establish a clear vision, and facilitate effective communication across the organization [7]. With such support, TQM can serve as a robust foundation for sustainable growth.

This study aims to investigate strategic methods for implementing TQM in diverse industrial sectors, with a particular emphasis on identifying practices that effectively enhance efficiency and productivity within organizations. This research also aims to analyze key success factors in TQM implementation and evaluate its benefits in diverse organizational contexts. The research methodology will be detailed separately, emphasizing thematic analysis and case study evaluations to identify effective TQM practices that support strategic organizational objectives.

## 2 Literature Review

### 2.1 Historical Overview of TQM

The origins of Total Quality Management (TQM) can be traced back to early 20th-century industrial practices when organizations began to formalize quality control processes [10]. Key contributions came from pioneers like Walter Shewhart, who introduced statistical quality control techniques foundational to modern TQM. Post-World War II, W. Edwards Deming and Joseph Juran further advanced TQM by emphasizing managerial responsibility and continuous improvement. Their methodologies were

instrumental in Japan's post-war economic recovery, where TQM became integral to industrial competitiveness [3, 11].

In the late 20th century, TQM evolved as organizations worldwide adopted its principles to meet increasing productivity demands and customer expectations. The inclusion of methodologies such as Lean and Six Sigma during this period demonstrated TQM's flexibility, integrating quality improvement with cost reduction and operational efficiency. This evolution underscores TQM's capacity to adapt to changing technological and industrial needs, as reflected in its ongoing application across diverse sectors [6, 12].

### 2.2 Previous Research on the Relationship Between TQM and Efficiency

A substantial body of research has established a clear link between TQM implementation and improved organizational efficiency. For instance, studies have shown that adopting TQM practices reduces waste, streamlines processes, and enhances resource utilization [4, 7]. Research highlights how TQM, when integrated with real-time monitoring systems, enables organizations to identify inefficiencies promptly and implement corrective actions [3].

Moreover, empirical studies suggest that TQM fosters a culture of accountability and proactive problem-solving, directly contributing to efficiency. Organizations consistently applying TQM principles report significant improvements in cycle times, defect rates, and overall productivity [11, 13]. These findings demonstrate the potential of TQM as a transformative approach for achieving operational excellence across various industries [14, 15].

### 2.3 Key Concepts and Theories Related to TQM and Efficiency

The theoretical foundation of TQM rests on several key concepts, including continuous improvement, customer focus, and employee involvement. Continuous improvement, or "Kaizen," emphasizes incremental changes that collectively result in substantial organizational advancements. This approach ensures that efficiency gains are sustainable over time and adaptable to evolving business needs [6, 7].

Another critical concept is the integration of customer feedback into quality improvement processes. By aligning operational goals with customer expectations, organizations can achieve higher levels of satisfaction and efficiency [3, 11]. Theories such as Deming’s System of Profound Knowledge and Juran’s Trilogy further support this integration by providing frameworks for understanding and enhancing organizational performance through quality-focused initiatives [12, 16].

## 3 Method

Bibliometric studies systematically analyze past literature by examining research areas, identifying trends, and supporting strategic decisions [17]. This method tracks critical

information such as authors, affiliations, citations, patents, keywords, and publications to reveal current trends and potential future developments. Bibliometric analysis, first developed by Garfield, has since become a fundamental tool for assessing academic collaboration and knowledge dissemination across disciplines [18–20].

In this study, a combination of bibliometric analysis and systematic literature review (SLR) was employed to investigate the research landscape of Total Quality Management (TQM) and its relationship with efficiency. The bibliometric analysis provided a quantitative overview of the research trends and patterns, while the SLR ensured a focused and in-depth exploration of relevant literature. Articles published between 1961 and 2025 were identified using the query TITLE-ABS-KEY (efficiency AND "total quality management") in the Scopus database. To maintain relevance to the study's objectives, filters were applied for the subject area (Business, Management, and Accounting), document type (Articles), and keywords closely associated with TQM, such as "Quality Improvement," "Efficiency," and "Leadership." This comprehensive search yielded 5,353 documents, reflecting the broad scope of TQM research across six decades.

A two-step filtering process was implemented to refine the dataset further. The first step involved applying structured criteria to focus on articles that directly addressed the intersection of TQM and efficiency, narrowing the selection to 2,390 documents. In the second step, detailed manual screening was performed to ensure alignment with the study's research questions, resulting in a final selection of 28 articles for in-depth analysis. These articles were chosen based on their methodological rigor, relevance, and contribution to understanding how TQM practices influence organizational efficiency.

The bibliometric analysis was conducted using tools like VOSviewer to uncover patterns in citations, co-authorship networks, and keyword clustering. Key contributors such as Sader et al. [3] and Dahlgaard et al. [6] were identified for their impactful research on integrating TQM with modern technologies. This analysis also highlights influential journals and thematic concentrations within the TQM domain. By integrating qualitative synthesis from the SLR with quantitative bibliometric insights, this study provides a comprehensive perspective on TQM research and its practical applications.

# 4 Result

## 4.1 Basic Statistical Analysis of Articles Published

The analysis of documents published between 2016 and 2025 reveals significant trends in research activity. As evident from Figure 2 and Table 1, the number of publications fluctuated over the years, with notable peaks in 2020 and 2023. These variations reflect dynamic shifts in research priorities and funding opportunities over time. The filtering process, detailed in Table 1, began with 2,390 documents and narrowed them down to 28 articles that met all predefined criteria. This rigorous selection ensures relevance and quality in the final analysis.

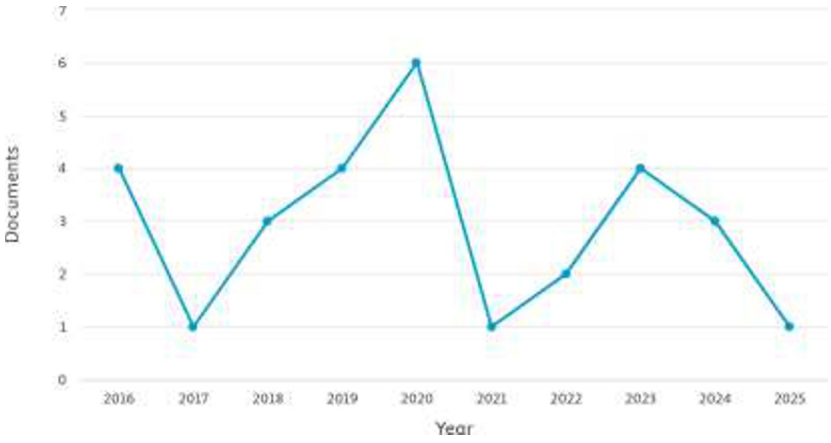


**Fig. 1.** Document by Year
Source: Data Processed, (2025)

**Table 1.** Filtering Document

| No | Filter | Details Limited | Documents Found |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Timeframe | 2016 – 2025 | 2,390 |
| 2 | Subject Area | Business, Management and Accounting | 150 |
| 3 | Document Type | Article only | 106 |
| 4 | Keywords | Total Quality Management, Organization and Management, Efficiency, Organizational, Quality Improvement | 96 |
| 5 | Access | All Open Access | 28 |
| 6 | Language | English | 28 |
| 7 | Final Selection | Documents that meet all criteria | 28 |

Source: Data Processed, (2025)

The broader dataset includes 5,353 documents published between 1961 and 2025, identified using the query TITLE-ABS-KEY (efficiency AND "total quality management") and filtered by subject area, document type, and exact keywords. This dataset encapsulates decades of research progress, showcasing the evolving interest in Total Quality Management (TQM) as a focal point for improving organizational efficiency and performance. Keywords such as Total Quality Management, Organization and Management, Quality Improvement, Efficiency, and Leadership highlight the varied dimensions of TQM explored by researchers. The dataset's comprehensive scope emphasizes the critical role of TQM in addressing both operational and strategic challenges across industries. The inclusion of open-access articles ensures that these

contributions remain widely accessible, fostering continued discourse and collaboration within the scholarly community.

On average, the selected articles demonstrate a focus on Total Quality Management (TQM) themes, with recurring keywords highlighting organizational efficiency and quality improvement. Recent publications show a steady growth in relevance, though citation counts may lag due to their relatively recent entry into the scholarly domain. The dataset also reflects a growing diversification in topics, spanning areas such as organizational innovation, operational performance, and human resource management. Overall, these findings underscore the progressive development of TQM-related research over the examined timeframe, highlighting the field's ability to adapt to emerging challenges and opportunities.

### 4.2 Leading Countries Contributing to Research

The reviewed articles originated from a diverse range of countries, showcasing a global interest in TQM research. Table 2 identifies the United Kingdom as the leading contributor with five publications. Countries such as Hungary, Italy, and Portugal each contributed two articles, while other nations like Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, and Taiwan contributed one article each. This distribution highlights the uneven global engagement in TQM research, with more contributions concentrated in Western nations. Interestingly, the data suggest that collaborative efforts across countries could bridge the gap in contributions from underrepresented regions. Promoting international partnerships may enhance the geographical balance and enrich the diversity of perspectives in TQM literature.

**Table 2.** Leading Countries Based on Contribution

| Country/Territory | Documents |
|---|---|
| United Kingdom | 5 |
| Hungary | 2 |
| Italy | 2 |
| Portugal | 2 |
| Russian Federation | 2 |
| Spain | 2 |
| Sweden | 2 |
| United States | 2 |
| Angola | 1 |
| Australia | 1 |
| Brazil | 1 |
| Finland | 1 |
| India | 1 |
| Indonesia | 1 |

| Country/Territory | Documents |
|---|---|
| Jordan | 1 |
| Lithuania | 1 |
| Saudi Arabia | 1 |
| South Africa | 1 |
| Taiwan | 1 |
| United Arab Emirates | 1 |
| Uzbekistan | 1 |

Source: Data Processed, (2025)

### 4.3 Keyword Analysis and Research Focus Areas

A keyword analysis of the selected articles, as summarized in Table 3, identifies Total Quality Management (TQM) as the most frequently recurring keyword, appearing 72 times. Other prominent keywords include Organization and Management (37), Efficiency, Organizational (33), and Quality Improvement (33). These keywords underscore the primary focus areas of the research, which revolve around enhancing organizational practices and achieving quality improvements through TQM. Figure 3 illustrates keyword clusters, categorizing the research into thematic groups. These clusters provide valuable insights into the research trends and highlight areas where TQM practices intersect with broader organizational goals. Emerging themes from these clusters suggest potential directions for future research.

**Table 3.** Keyword Limitations Summary

| Keyword | Occurrences |
|---|---|
| Total Quality Management | 72 |
| Organization and Management | 37 |
| Efficiency, Organizational | 33 |
| Quality Improvement | 33 |

Source: Data Processed, (2025)

### 4.4 Distribution of Subject Areas

Table 4 presents the subject area distribution of the selected documents. Economics, Econometrics, and Finance lead the subject areas with three articles, followed by Environmental Science and Nursing, each contributing two articles. Other fields, such as Earth and Planetary Sciences and Psychology, are represented by a single article. This distribution reflects the interdisciplinary nature of TQM research, demonstrating its broad applicability across various domains, including healthcare, education, and environmental management. The dataset's depth also highlights the increasing integration of TQM principles into diverse fields, emphasizing its relevance as a cross-disciplinary framework for improvement.

**Table 4.** Subject Areas Distribution

| Subject Area | Documents |
|---|---|
| Economics, Econometrics and Finance | 3 |
| Environmental Science | 2 |
| Nursing | 2 |
| Earth and Planetary Sciences | 1 |
| Materials Science | 1 |
| Psychology | 1 |

Source: Data Processed, (2025)

### 4.5 Top Cited Papers and Their Contributions

Table 5 lists the most cited articles from the selected documents, showcasing their contributions to the field. The paper by Sader S., Husti I., and Daróczi M., which explores Industry 4.0 as a key enabler for implementing TQM practices, leads with 71 citations. Another significant contribution is Antony J. et al.'s study on Lean Six Sigma for reducing medication errors in healthcare, with 37 citations. These works represent a mix of theoretical and empirical approaches, highlighting the practical implications and theoretical advancements of TQM in diverse settings. Other notable contributions include Dahlgaard J.J. et al.'s analysis of the evolution of TQM and Shea C.M. et al.'s investigation of factors influencing quality improvement in primary care settings. These studies exemplify the versatility of TQM in addressing challenges across industries and organizational contexts, providing critical insights into its potential applications and effectiveness.

**Table 5.** Top most cited papers

| Cites | Authors | Method | Contributions |
|---|---|---|---|
| 71 | Sader S.; Husti I.; Daróczi M. | Theoretical | Explores Industry 4.0 as a key enabler for implementing TQM practices. |
| 37 | Antony J.; Forthun S.C.; Trakulsunti Y.; Farrington T.; McFarlane J.; Brennan A.; Dempsey M. | Quantitative | Investigates Lean Six Sigma to reduce medication errors in Norwegian healthcare. |
| 35 | Dahlgaard J.J.; Reyes L.; Chen C.-K.; Dahlgaard-Park S.M. | Theoretical | Analyzes the evolution and future of TQM, focusing on organizational learning and management control. |
| 33 | Shea C.M.; Turner K.; Albritton J.; Reiter K.L. | Quantitative | Examines factors influencing quality improvement in primary care settings. |
| 32 | Calvo-Mora A.; Domínguez-CC M.; Criado F. | Quantitative | Studies the impact of EFQM Excellence Model on organizational social impact. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 25 | Al-Hyari K.; Abu Hammour S.; Abu Zaid M.K.S.; Haffar M. | Quantitative | Evaluates the impact of Lean bundles on hospital performance in Jordan. |
| 22 | Pacagnella A.C., Jr.; Hollaender P.S.; Mazzanati G.V.; Bortolotto W.W. | Quantitative | Identifies efficiency drivers of international airports using benchmarking techniques. |
| 20 | Lepistö K.; Saunila M.; Ukko J. | Quantitative | Examines the effect of TQM on customer satisfaction, personnel satisfaction, and company reputation. |

Source: Data Processed, (2025)

### 4.6 Emerging Themes and Research Clusters

The keyword clustering analysis identifies several major themes emerging from the selected articles, as illustrated in Figure 3. The first theme emphasizes the role of TQM in enhancing customer loyalty, customer satisfaction, and service quality. This theme highlights how TQM practices are integral to improving customer-focused outcomes, ultimately contributing to better satisfaction and loyalty. The second theme explores the link between innovation, knowledge management, and organizational performance, demonstrating TQM's role in fostering innovation and improving overall organizational outcomes, especially in manufacturing and developing industries. Another significant theme delves into the critical success factors and quality measurement tools, such as Six Sigma and Lean Production, which are pivotal for achieving measurable quality improvements. A further theme connects TQM to strategic planning and sustainable development, illustrating how quality management practices align with broader organizational goals, including sustainability in industries like construction and environmental management. Finally, the fifth theme examines the impact of quality assurance on competitive advantage in education, showcasing how robust TQM frameworks can enhance the competitiveness and quality of educational institutions.

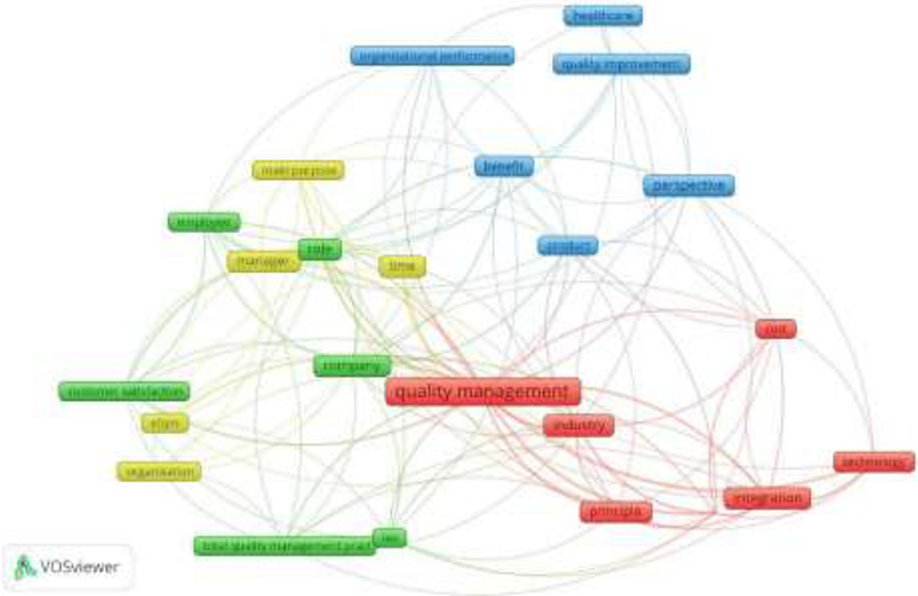


**Fig. 2.** Represents the clusters based on keywords
Source: Data Processed, (2025)

**Cluster 1:** Industry, Integration, Principle, Quality Management, Technology

**Cluster 2:** Employee, ISO, Role, Total Quality Management

**Cluster 3:** Organizational Performance, Perspective, Product, Quality Improvement

**Cluster 4:** Manager, Organisation, Time

**Theme-1:** Industrial Development and Employee Roles
**Theme-2:** Quality Management Practices and Standards
**Theme-3:** Organizational Performance and Product Innovation
**Theme-4:** Managerial Effectiveness and Time Management

**Fig. 3.** Topics and themes of literature published
Source: Data Processed, (2025)

## 5 Discussion

The keyword clustering analysis identifies several major themes emerging from the selected articles, as illustrated in Figure 3. One prominent theme is the role of TQM in enhancing customer loyalty, customer satisfaction, and service quality, demonstrating its impact on improving customer-focused outcomes and fostering loyalty [8, 21]. Another theme highlights the connection between innovation, knowledge management, and organizational performance, emphasizing how TQM fosters innovation and improves outcomes, particularly in manufacturing and developing industries [6].

The analysis also underscores the importance of critical success factors and quality measurement tools such as Six Sigma and Lean Production, which are pivotal for achieving measurable quality improvements [3, 22]. These tools are widely adopted across industries to optimize performance and enhance operational efficiency. In addition, the integration of TQM with strategic planning and sustainable development aligns quality management practices with broader organizational goals, including environmental and social sustainability [23, 24].

The role of quality assurance in fostering competitive advantage, particularly in education, has also been explored. TQM frameworks have been shown to significantly enhance curriculum development and institutional reputation, reflecting the adaptability of quality management principles across sectors [6]. Furthermore, human resource management is identified as a critical component of TQM implementations. Employee engagement, training, and empowerment are central to successful TQM practices, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and adaptation to changing demands [16, 25].

Another emerging area focuses on integrating TQM with digital transformation strategies. Organizations are increasingly leveraging Industry 4.0 technologies such as data analytics, automation, and artificial intelligence to enhance quality management processes [3, 22]. This integration streamlines operations and provides actionable insights, enabling organizations to make data-driven decisions and monitor performance more effectively. The synergy between TQM and digital tools represents a promising direction for future research, particularly in technology-reliant industries.

## 6 Conclusion

This study demonstrates that Total Quality Management (TQM) continues to play a vital role in strengthening organizational performance. Through a bibliometric and systematic review, the findings show that TQM has evolved alongside technological advancements, sustainability demands, and the growing importance of human resource development. Its application is effective not only in manufacturing but also in healthcare, education, and digital industries. TQM supports process improvement, enhances overall performance, and strengthens customer satisfaction. Leadership commitment, employee involvement, and a culture of continuous improvement remain key factors in achieving successful implementation.

In addition, TQM contributes to shaping the strategic direction of organizations as they navigate digital transformation. The integration of modern industrial technologies, automation, and data-driven management systems expands the potential to improve productivity and sustainability. Although this study is limited to Scopus-indexed publications and quantitative bibliometric methods, it provides a clear picture of global research developments related to TQM. Future research is encouraged to explore the integration of Quality 4.0 by combining digital technologies with human-centered approaches, ensuring that TQM remains a relevant framework for innovation, organizational resilience, and sustainable growth in an increasingly competitive environment.

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