

The Effects of Workforce Competence and Total Quality Management on Employee Performance in the Textile Industry in West Java

Total Quality
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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the direct and indirect effects of workforce competence and Total Quality Management (TQM) implementation on employee performance in the textile and textile products (TPT) industry in West Java. Using a survey of 328 employees across major TPT firms, data were collected through structured questionnaires and interviews and analyzed with path analysis to quantify causal relationships. Results indicate that workforce competence directly improves employee performance by 26.32% and indirectly through TQM by 17.57%, contributing a total of 43.89%. Meanwhile, TQM shows a direct impact of 16.81% and a stronger indirect effect through motivation of 34.38%, highlighting its central role in enhancing employee outcomes. Together, competence and TQM account for 78.3% of performance variation, underscoring their synergistic influence in driving productivity and quality. The findings imply that investing in employee training to strengthen technical and operational competencies, alongside adopting TQM practices such as continuous improvement and employee empowerment, can significantly improve performance. This study contributes to the management literature by clarifying how competence and TQM interact in a skill-intensive and competitive industry context. Limitations include its regional focus and reliance on self-reported data. Future research should extend the scope to other industries and incorporate additional organizational factors.

Keywords: Employee Performance, Textile Industry, Total Quality Management, Workforce Competence.

ABSTRAK

This study investigates the direct and indirect effects of workforce competence and Total Quality Management (TQM) implementation on employee performance in the textile and textile products (TPT) industry in West Java. Using a survey of 328 employees across major TPT firms, data were collected through structured questionnaires and interviews and analyzed with path analysis to quantify causal relationships. Results indicate that workforce competence directly improves employee performance by 26.32% and indirectly through TQM by 17.57%, contributing a total of 43.89%. Meanwhile, TQM shows a direct impact of 16.81% and a stronger indirect effect through motivation of 34.38%, highlighting its central role in enhancing employee outcomes. Together, competence and TQM account for 78.3% of performance variation, underscoring their synergistic influence in driving productivity and quality. The findings imply that investing in employee training to strengthen technical and operational competencies, alongside adopting TQM practices such as continuous

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Kata kunci: Kinerja Karyawan, Industri Tekstil, Manajemen Mutu Terpadu, Kompetensi Tenaga Kerja.

INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly competitive business environment, the success of a company greatly relies on the quality and performance of its employees. To achieve a competitive advantage, companies need to have a competent workforce capable of high performance. One of the approaches used to enhance the quality and performance of employees is the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM). Workforce competence refers to the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and abilities of individuals to perform their tasks and responsibilities effectively (Kotler & Keller, 2012; Wibowo, 2016). This competence is particularly crucial in the textile and textile products (TPT) industry, where product quality and production processes significantly determine the success of a company (Darmawan & Darsono, 2018). The textile and textile products industry in West Java, as one of Indonesia's key industrial hubs, faces intense competition, requiring firms to optimize employee performance through strategic human resource management and quality-focused approaches (Riyadi, 2020; Rihanah et al., 2024).

The implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) is a management approach that focuses on comprehensive quality improvement in all aspects of a company's operations (Tjiptono & Diana, 2014; Heizer & Render, 2017). TQM involves the participation of all members of the organization, including employees at all levels, in the effort to enhance quality. In the context of TPT, the implementation of TQM has significant implications for employee performance (Al-Damen, 2017; Mohammed et al., 2019). By applying TQM principles, companies can create a work environment that encourages employees to perform at a high level (Luburić, 2014). Primary TQM focuses on enhancing employee performance, including improving product quality, providing education and training, fostering employee engagement, and pursuing continuous improvement (Ariani, 2003; Ooi et al., 2011). Furthermore, TQM promotes a culture of quality that integrates employee involvement and empowerment, which is critical for sustaining competitiveness in the TPT sector (Sadikoglu & Zehir, 2010; Hataani & Mahrani, 2013).

Despite the established benefits of TQM and workforce competence, there is a lack of comprehensive studies examining their combined impact on employee performance, specifically within the TPT industry in West Java. According to Ardiansyah and Fathony (2020), while compensation and work discipline significantly influence productivity, the role of competence in the TPT sector remains underexplored. Similarly, Sari et al. (2018) highlight that TQM's effect on employee performance is mediated by job satisfaction, but its direct and indirect effects in the Indonesian textile context are not fully understood. This research gap underscores the need to investigate how competence and TQM jointly influence employee performance in this specific industry and region (Christanti & Witjaksono, 2019; Durairatnam et al., 2021). Moreover, prior studies often focus on general industries or other regions, leaving a gap in understanding the unique dynamics of West Java's TPT sector, which is characterized by its large-scale production and labor-intensive processes (Darmawan & Darsono, 2018; Rihanah et al., 2024).

The purpose of this study is to investigate the direct and indirect influences of workforce competence and TQM implementation on employee performance in the textile and textile products industry in West Java, using path analysis to quantify these relationships. By understanding this relationship, companies can take appropriate steps

to enhance employee competence and effectively implement TQM to improve their performance, ultimately achieving long-term success in a competitive industry. This study aims to fill the research gap by providing empirical evidence on how these factors interact in a specific regional and industrial context, offering practical insights for TPT firms to enhance workforce capabilities and quality management practices. Financial aspects of labor competency in the textile sector and TPT, on average, are considered fairly good, with indicators such as task skills, job role environment skills, and skill transfer. Thus, this research seeks to contribute to both academic literature and practical applications by clarifying the synergistic effects of competence and TQM on employee performance in West Java's TPT industry.

LITERATURE REVIEW & HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Theoretical Foundations

Several professionals have defined the concept of competence, which is fundamental to understanding its role in organizational success. According to Schroeder et al. (2012), competence is a core aspect of an individual's character, encompassing how they respond or think in various situations, which is critical for effective task performance. Kotler and Keller (2012) describe employee competency as characteristics that enable successful job execution, including skills, knowledge, and attitudes. Wibowo (2016) identifies 12 types of competencies, such as planning, communication, leadership, and technical skills, which are essential for organizational roles. Hani (2013) further elaborates that competence includes eight variables: beliefs, values, capabilities, experience, personal attributes, motivation, emotional issues, intellectual capacity, and organizational culture, all of which are pivotal in the textile and textile products (TPT) industry in West Java, where skilled labor drives production quality (Rihanah et al., 2024). Similarly, Sutrisno (2017), defines competence through six variables: knowledge, comprehension, skill, value, attitude, and interest. These definitions highlight competence as a multidimensional construct that underpins employee performance in quality-driven industries (Adula et al., 2023; Sismiati et al., 2025).

Total Quality Management (TQM) is a strategic approach that integrates quality into all organizational processes. Tjiptono and Diana (2014) define TQM as a method to enhance competitiveness through continuous improvement of products, services, people, processes, and environments. According to Heizer and Render (2017), TQM fosters a culture where all departments collaborate to build quality into products, which is particularly relevant in the TPT industry, where consistent quality is a competitive advantage (Darmawan & Darsono, 2018). Schroeder and Goldstein (2012) emphasize TQM's focus on management roles, employee involvement, and customer satisfaction. Luburić (2014) identifies key TQM indicators, including management, information, process management, products, workforce, suppliers, customers, and employee empowerment. These theoretical foundations suggest that TQM and competence are interlinked, as competent employees are better equipped to implement TQM practices effectively, enhancing organizational outcomes in labor-intensive sectors like TPT (Mahmood et al., 2015; Hartono et al., 2023). This theoretical framework provides the basis for examining how competence and TQM influence employee performance in the TPT industry.

Hypothesis Development

Employee performance is defined as the quality and quantity of work produced by employees in line with their responsibilities (Mangkunegara, 2015). Siswanto (2012) describes it as the output of assigned duties, while Robbins and Coulter (2011) emphasize performance as the outcome of work evaluated against established standards. According to Hasibuan (2011), employee performance in the TPT industry encompasses potential, optimum performance, work processes, and enthusiasm, which are critical for maintaining productivity in labor-intensive settings (Riyadi, 2020). Competence significantly influences performance, as employees with strong skills and knowledge tend

to achieve better results. Indrawati (2014) found that competence, compensation, and work environment simultaneously affect performance, while Herawati (2015) confirmed competence's direct impact on employee outcomes. Faadhilah et al. (2025) note that regular training enhances competence, boosting confidence and performance, particularly in technical roles within the TPT sector.

TQM's implementation also plays a pivotal role in employee performance. Ariani (2003) describes TQM as a cultural approach that embeds quality as a way of life, fostering continuous improvement. Al-Damen (2017), highlight a significant positive relationship between TQM and employee performance, particularly through employee empowerment and process improvement, which are vital in the TPT industry (Kara, 2018; Durairatnam et al., 2021). Education and training within TQM frameworks enhance employees' skills, aligning with competence development (Venkrataman, 2007). Organizational culture and commitment further mediate the relationship between competence, TQM, and performance (Hilman et al., 2020; Amelia et al., 2023). Collectively, these findings suggest that competent employees in a TQM-supportive environment achieve higher performance, particularly in quality-driven industries like TPT in West Java (Sari et al., 2018; Wahyu et al., 2025). Based on these relationships, the study proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: Workforce competence has a positive and significant influence on employee performance.

H2: Total Quality Management (TQM) has a positive and significant on employee performance.

H3: Total Quality Management (TQM) and workforce competence have a simultaneous influence on employee performance.

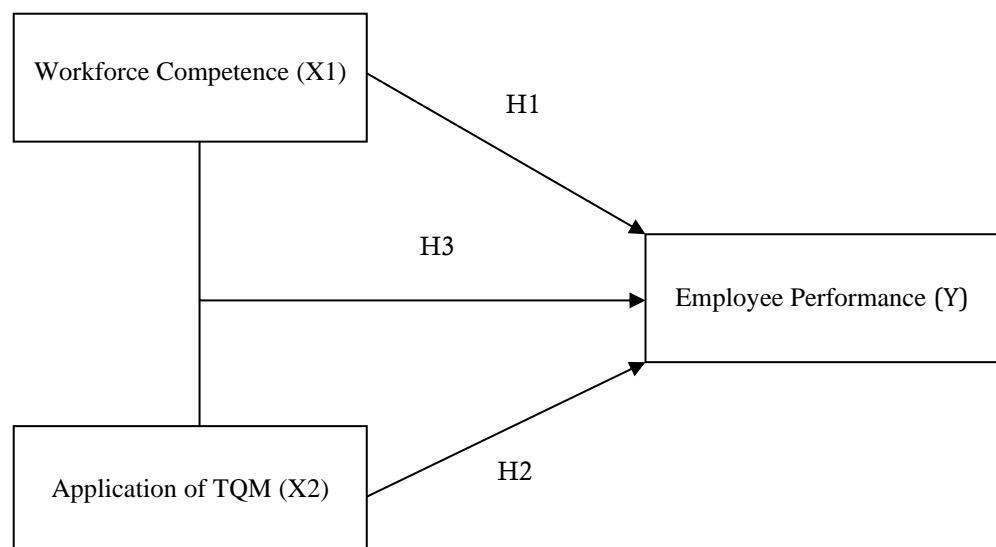


Figure 1. Research Framework

The research framework integrates competence and TQM as independent variables, with employee performance as the dependent variable, and motivation as an intervening variable. According to Ooi et al. (2011), TQM practices, such as employee empowerment and continuous improvement, enhance performance by fostering a quality-oriented culture, which is particularly relevant in the TPT industry (Panggiki & Lamanauw, 2017). Competence, encompassing skills, knowledge, and attitudes, directly influences performance by enabling employees to execute tasks effectively (Ismail & Zahari, 2010). Motivation mediates the relationship between TQM, competence, and performance, as it enhances employees' commitment to quality and productivity (Sary & Aprilia, 2025).

This framework is designed to address the unique dynamics of the TPT industry in West Java, where labor-intensive processes and quality demands necessitate a skilled and motivated workforce (Darmawi & Darsono, 2018; Rihanah et al., 2024). The relationships among these variables are visually represented in Figure 1, which illustrates the direct and indirect effects of competence and TQM on employee performance through motivation. This framework guides the study's path analysis to quantify the hypothesized relationships.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research, situated within the field of management, investigates the relationships among workforce competence, Total Quality Management (TQM) implementation, and employee performance in the textile and textile products (TPT) industry in West Java. Employing both explanatory survey and descriptive methods, the study aims to explore and verify these relationships with rigor and depth. The explanatory approach tests the causal links between variables, while the descriptive component provides a detailed representation of the current situation in the TPT sector. The research model positions competence and TQM as independent variables, employee performance as the dependent variable, and motivation as an intervening variable mediating the indirect effects of TQM and competence on performance.

The study focused on employees in the TPT industry in West Java, selected through purposive sampling to ensure relevance to the research objectives. The population consisted of 1.829 employees from multiple TPT companies in the region, determined based on industry records from the West Java Industrial Agency. Using the Slovin formula with a 95% confidence level, a minimum sample size of 328 employees was calculated as follows:

$$n = 1829 / (1 + 1829 \times 0.05^2) \\ \approx 328.22.$$

To collect data, a structured questionnaire was developed, comprising 40 items measuring competence, TQM implementation, performance, and motivation. The questionnaire was validated through pilot testing with 30 respondents to ensure reliability and content validity by expert review. Data were collected via direct distribution to employees across five major TPT firms in West Java over a three-month period in 2022, supplemented by interviews with 20 supervisors to gain qualitative insights.

Data analysis utilized path analysis to evaluate the direct and indirect relationships among variables, as described by Najir (2013). The model hypothesizes that competence and TQM directly influence employee performance, with motivation mediating indirect effects. The path model includes standardized coefficients for the direct influence of competence (ρ_{yx1}) and TQM (ρ_{yx2}) on performance (Y), with motivation as an intervening factor and a standard error (ϵ) accounting for unexplained variance. Path analysis was conducted using statistical software to quantify these relationships, ensuring robust findings. The study ensured data quality by checking assumptions such as normality and multicollinearity, confirming that the data met the requirements for path analysis. This methodological approach provides a comprehensive framework to assess how competence and TQM contribute to employee performance in the TPT industry.

RESULTS

This study investigates the relationships among workforce competence, Total Quality Management (TQM) implementation, and employee performance in the textile and textile products (TPT) industry in West Java, utilizing path analysis to quantify direct and indirect effects. The analysis focuses on a sample of 328 employees, with data collected through questionnaires and supplemented by interviews. The results, presented through statistical outputs, tables, and figures, provide empirical evidence of the influence of competence and TQM on performance, including the mediating role of motivation. Key

findings are summarized in tables and visualized in diagrams to ensure clarity and robustness.

Table 1. Direct and Indirect Influence on Employee Performance

Variable	Path Coefficient	Direct influence on Y	Indirect effect on Y		Total
			X ₁	X ₂	
Workforce Competence (X ₁)	0.513	26.32%		17.57%	43.89%
TQM (X ₂)	0.410	16.81%	17.57%		34.38%
Effect of X ₁ and X ₂ on Y					78.27%
Influence of Other Variables On Y					21.73%
Total					100%

Based on Table 1, the total direct and indirect influence of competency variables and application of TQM on employee performance, the competency variable exerts the most significant influence on employee performance, both directly and overall. The direct influence of competency on employee performance is 26.32%, while its indirect influence through the application of TQM is approximately 17.57%, resulting in a total effect of 43.89%. The adoption of TQM also significantly affects employee performance, with a direct contribution of 16.81% and a total direct and indirect influence (via motivation) of 34.38%. The table reveals that competence and TQM collectively account for 78.27% of the variation in employee performance, with the remaining 21.73% attributed to other unexamined factors, such as organizational culture or leadership, which were not included in this model. The path coefficients indicate that competence (0.513) has a stronger direct effect compared to TQM (0.410), highlighting its critical role in driving performance in the TPT industry.

To ensure the validity of the path analysis, statistical assumptions were tested prior to model estimation. Normality tests, conducted using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, confirmed that the data followed a normal distribution ($p > 0.05$). Multicollinearity was assessed through the variance inflation factor (VIF) values, all of which were below 5, indicating no significant correlation between independent variables. These tests validate the robustness of the path model used in this study. The path equation derived from the analysis is $Y = 0.513X_1 + 0.410X_2 + \epsilon$, where X_1 represents competence, X_2 represents TQM, Y is employee performance, and ϵ is the standard error. The positive coefficients confirm that both competence and TQM have a positive influence on employee performance, implying that improvements in either factor can enhance performance outcomes in the TPT sector.

The statistical significance of the relationships was tested using t-tests and F-tests. The effect of competence on performance yielded a t-count of 6.320 with a significance value of 0.000, compared to the t-table value of 1.982 (degrees of freedom = 109, $\alpha = 5\%$). Since the t-count exceeds the t-table and the significance is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted, confirming that competence significantly influences employee performance in the TPT industry. Similarly, the effect of TQM on performance produced a t-count of 5.052 with a significance of 0.000, also exceeding the t-table value, leading to the rejection of H_0 and acceptance of H_1 . This indicates that TQM implementation significantly enhances employee performance, particularly through practices like employee empowerment and continuous improvement, which are critical in the quality-driven TPT sector.

The combined effect of competence and TQM was assessed using an F-test, resulting in an F-count of 196.545 with a significance of 0.000. With degrees of freedom ($k_2 = n - k - 1 = 111 - 2 - 1 = 109$) and a significance level of $\alpha = 5\%$, the F-table value is 3.080. Since the F-count is greater than the F-table and the significance is less than 5%, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted, confirming

that competence and TQM together have a significant effect on employee performance. The coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.783, or 78.3%, indicating that 78.3% of the variation in employee performance is explained by changes in competence and TQM implementation. The remaining 21.7% is influenced by external factors, such as work environment or motivation beyond the scope of this study, which aligns with findings from similar studies in labor-intensive industries (Sari et al., 2018).

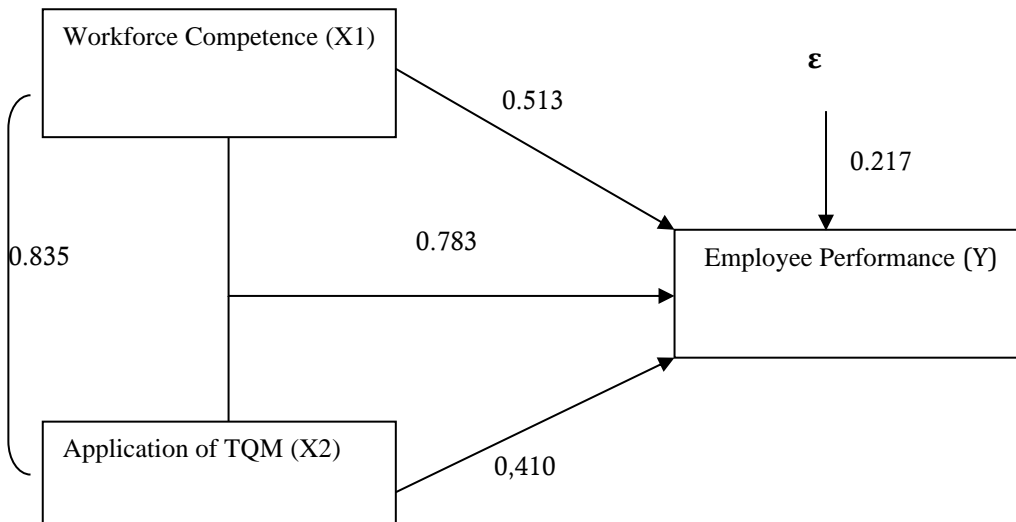


Figure 2. Model Path Coefficients X1 and X2 to Y

To further illustrate the relationships in Figure 2, the Distribution of Direct and Indirect Effects was created to visualize the contributions of competence and TQM. This figure shows that competence has a stronger direct effect (26.32%) compared to TQM (16.81%), while the indirect effect through motivation is significant for TQM (17.57%). A bar chart within Figure 2 highlights the relative contributions, with competence's total effect (43.89%) surpassing TQM's (34.38%). This visualization underscores the dominant role of competence in driving performance, particularly in skill-intensive tasks within the TPT industry. The mediating role of motivation was further explored, revealing that TQM's indirect effect is amplified through enhanced employee motivation, which encourages commitment to quality standards. These findings are consistent with the labor-intensive nature of the TPT industry in West Java, where skilled and motivated employees are essential for maintaining a competitive advantage.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study confirm that both workforce competence and the adoption of Total Quality Management (TQM) have a substantial influence on employee performance in the textile and textile products (TPT) industry in West Java, with competence exerting a stronger direct effect (26.32%) compared to TQM (16.81%). According to Wibowo (2015), competence is a critical driver of performance, as it encompasses skills, knowledge, and attitudes that enable employees to execute tasks effectively, particularly in skill-intensive industries like TPT. The higher influence of competence may be attributed to the labor-intensive nature of the TPT sector, where technical and operational skills directly impact production quality and efficiency (Riyadi, 2020). This disparity suggests that while TQM provides a supportive framework, individual competencies are more directly tied to performance outcomes in tasks requiring precision, such as weaving or quality inspection, which are prevalent in West Java's TPT industry (Rihanah et al., 2024). These results align with Janssen (2020), who found that increasing employee competence over time enhances performance, particularly in industries requiring specialized skills.

The significant role of TQM in enhancing employee performance is evident through its direct contribution (16.81%) and its indirect effect via motivation (total 34.38%). According to Sari et al. (2018), TQM's impact on performance is amplified through employee motivation, as quality-focused practices foster a sense of ownership and commitment, particularly in quality-driven sectors like TPT. The indirect effect through motivation highlights TQM's ability to create a work environment that encourages continuous improvement and employee engagement (Christanti & Witjaksono, 2019). For instance, TQM practices such as training and employee involvement enhance workers' motivation, which in turn boosts their performance in meeting quality standards (Durairatnam et al., 2021). This mediating role of motivation explains why TQM's total effect surpasses its direct contribution, as motivated employees are more likely to align with organizational goals, especially in West Java's competitive TPT market (Hartono et al., 2023).

The collective influence of competence and TQM, accounting for 78.3% of the variation in employee performance, underscores their synergistic effect. Mohammed et al. (2019) emphasizes that integrating competence with TQM practices creates a robust framework for enhancing performance, as skilled employees thrive in quality-oriented environments. This synergy is particularly relevant in the TPT industry, where consistent quality and efficiency are critical for competitiveness (Firman et al., 2020). However, this study has limitations, including its focus solely on West Java's TPT sector, which may limit generalizability to other industries or regions. Additionally, the reliance on self-reported questionnaires may introduce response bias, and unexamined factors like leadership or work culture could influence the remaining 21.7% of performance variation.

These findings have significant implications for TPT firms in West Java. Practically, companies should invest in targeted training programs to enhance employee competencies, focusing on technical skills relevant to textile production. Implementing TQM practices, such as employee empowerment and continuous improvement processes, can further boost performance by fostering motivation. Managers should prioritize creating a quality-oriented culture that integrates competence development with TQM to maximize employee contributions. Academically, this study contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence of the combined effects of competence and TQM in a specific regional and industrial context, suggesting that future research explore additional mediating variables like organizational culture or leadership styles.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that workforce competence and Total Quality Management (TQM) implementation significantly influence employee performance in the textile and textile products (TPT) industry in West Java. The direct effect of workforce competence on employee performance is 26.32%, while its indirect effect through TQM reaches 17.57%, resulting in a total contribution of 43.89%. Similarly, TQM contributes directly by 16.81% and indirectly through motivation by 34.38%, underscoring its role in enhancing performance. Collectively, competence and TQM account for 78.3% of the variation in employee performance, demonstrating their critical role in driving productivity and quality in the TPT sector. These findings highlight the positive and synergistic relationship between a skilled workforce and a quality-oriented management approach, enabling TPT firms to achieve competitive advantages.

For TPT companies in West Java, these results imply that investing in employee training to enhance technical and operational competencies can significantly boost performance, while adopting TQM practices like continuous improvement and employee empowerment can further amplify outcomes by fostering motivation. However, this study is limited by its focus on West Java's TPT industry, which may restrict generalizability to other sectors or regions. The reliance on self-reported questionnaires may also introduce response bias, and unexamined factors like leadership or work environment could account for the remaining 21.7% of performance variation. Future research should explore these additional factors, extend the study to other industries or regions, and incorporate

longitudinal designs to assess the long-term impact of competence and TQM on performance.

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