

**STRATEGIC APPLICABILITY OF TQM IN FOOD AND BEVERAGE
COMPANIES IN SRI LANKA**

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to find out the strategic applicability of TQM in food and beverage companies in Sri Lanka. The strategic importance of TQM has been argued for considerable time in the history. The findings in the past shows that the importance and the relationship between strategy and TQM has not been studies seriously.

Quality has become a hot topic in all the countries of the world. This is due to the fact that consumers every where is concern about their health. Food and beverage companies have to be extra cautious about their products to prevent adverse effect to the consumers as well as for their own survival. The world shows a lot of new trends in certification on food safety and consumer protection laws. As a developing country, Sri Lanka needs to be much focused on the quality of its food and beverages, in order to produce an internationally recognized product. To attain this target, food and beverage companies need to attach with a holistic method, where all aspects of the organization is covered. Principles of TQM provide the foundation need to build this massive pillar of corporate success. Companies can use TQM to achieve their quality objectives as well as the goals in the areas of finance, human resource, supply chain, etc. Simply TQM can be used to achieve the strategic objectives of the company.

A set of six (06) Quality assurance managers, working in large and medium scale food and beverage manufacturing companies were used as the sample in finding the information. The mechanism used in finding the applicability is through in- depth interviews with them to get their opinions on this issue. As experienced and qualified individuals, their views could be considered as a reliable source of information about the industry. Using an in- depth interview method this research tries to explore the potential of TQM in linking quality management, corporate strategy and resultant business operations. The findings reveal that Sri Lankan food and beverage companies are not ready to grasp the potential of TQM as yet.