

Theoretical Paradigms for Total Quality Environmental Management (TQEM)

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Abstract : Quality management is dominated by rational paradigms for the measurement and management of quality, but these paradigms start to 'break down', when faced with the inherent complexity of managing quality in intensely competitive changing environments. In this article, the various theoretical paradigms employed to manage quality are reviewed and the advantages and limitations of these paradigms are highlighted. A major implication of this review is that when faced with complexity, an ideological stance to any single strategy paradigm for total quality environmental management is ineffective. We suggest that as complexity increases and we envisage intensely competitive changing environments there will be a greater need to consider a multi-paradigm integrationist view of strategy for TQEM.

Keywords : total quality management (TQM), total quality environmental management (TQEM), ideologies (philosophy), theoretical paradigms

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