Abstract

Purpose. Saudi Arabian firms have grown throughout the years from simple manually run operations to highly sophisticated operations with complex Information Systems (IS). However, not all firms that acquire information systems are able effectively align it with their business objectives or utilize it to streamline critical processes within their firms. In addition, simple IS-focused process improvement initiatives lack the comprehensiveness needed to align IS with business objectives. As a result, an increasing number of organizations have implemented TQM as a means to enhancing all processes, including IS ones, to achieve lasting improvements in organizations. This research study aims to better understand the interrelated link that TQM and IS may have to support the achievement of effective IT-Business alignment.

Approach/Procedure. A survey questionnaire was used for data collection, which was addressed to top IT/IS Managers in Saudi firms. The sample was selected at random, with the main selection criteria for participants being that they work at a Saudi firm. In addition, the number of respondents were 6 out of a total of 20 invites sent to companies to participate in the
Findings/ Results. Interestingly the findings show that TQM is a well-known concept, even though most do not have a lot of experience in implementing TQM. In particular, the TQM-IS relationship was viewed to be beneficial specifically to obtaining greater customer satisfaction and enhancing the quality of delivered products/services. On the other hand, cost cutting and enhancing IS personnel productivity was not highly perceived as a benefit from using TQM with IS. In addition, both customer centric and benchmarking were perceived as strongly highlighting the successful aspects of TQM implementations.

Applied Inferences. The findings indicated a general ability for TQM to enhance IS in supporting the firm’s external and internal customers. In addition, even though top management support was rated as highly supporting TQM, customer centric and benchmarking were also perceived as critical parts needed for effective TQM. This implies that firms identify and believe that TQM is a valuable tool for improvement in customer satisfaction and most of them look for ways to adapt it within their firm (either within IS or other areas of the firm).

Objectivity. The research study was limited to a small sample of Saudi firms, which was selected at random, as a result there may be some degree of bias in respondent’s answers. However, in general the research study provided overall findings that can be further researched and analyzed in the future.

References


**Index Terms**

Computer Science  Information Sciences

**Keywords**