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Total Quality Management and Entrepreneurial Orientation as Predictors of Business Performance among Small-Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

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Abstract
The research sought to identify the areas of Total Quality Management and Entrepreneurial Orientation that significantly predict the Business Performance of Small and Medium Enterprises located in the City of Tagum. The respondents of the study were four hundred ninety (490) selected Small and Medium Enterprises in Tagum City, Davao del Norte. The researcher used a quantitative, non-experimental utilizing correlational technique in research and utilized the adapted and modified research questionnaires as instrument. The statistical tools used in the research include Mean, Pearson r, and Multiple Regression Analysis. The sampling techniques employed in this study is random sampling. Results revealed that the level of Total Quality Management of the respondents is very high, the level of Entrepreneurial Orientation is very high, while the level of Business Performance indicates a very high level. In addition, the study found out that there is a significant relationship between total quality management and business performance, and there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and business performance. The domains of TQM that significantly predict Business Performance are customer focus, planning, process management, people management, and information analysis. Moreover, the domains of Entrepreneurial Orientation that significantly predict Business Performance are autonomy, proactiveness, and competitive aggressiveness. Lastly, the results of the study support the theories of Resource based View Theory and Dynamic Capabilities Theory.

Keywords
Business Administration, Total Quality Management, Entrepreneurial Orientation, Business Performance, Small and Medium Enterprises, Tagum City, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

Small-Medium Enterprises are essential and significant in generating employment opportunities, creating wealth, and providing income. Nevertheless, these enterprises often have a short lifespan and face a high likelihood of failure due to multiple factors (Engidaw 2021). According to Chakraborty et al. (2019), the main reasons behind the failure of SMEs include insufficient managerial skills, subpar management practices, inadequate employee training, limited technical abilities, quality issues, and scarcity of resources.

SMEs hold a significant position and contribute significantly to the growth and development of the economy (Glonti et al., 2021). They are the backbone of a nation's economy as they create jobs, foster entrepreneurial spirit and innovation, and are needed for promoting competitiveness and employment (Toke & Kalpande 2020). SMEs are not just a catalyst, but also fundamental drivers for achieving balanced and inclusive growth. They constitute the foundation of private sector activities and thus hold immense significance in the process of economic transformation, as stated by Sawaean & Ali (2020).

Several studies have been carried out to explore how total quality management influences SMEs' business performance. TQM is primarily concerned with elevating customer satisfaction by upgrading the quality of products and services, and the overall standard of the organization. The ultimate aim is to offer customers the most effective product or

service solution (Permana et al., 2021). Similarly, according to Hilman et al. (2019), firms that perform TQM obtain a competitive advantage over their competitors. Olaleye et al. (2021) also added that Total Quality Management (TQM) is a systematic approach aimed at improving the performance of firms.

Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) is a noteworthy concept that can enhance business performance by fostering innovative ideas based on knowledge and developing new competencies or restructuring existing ones to promote a creative culture within the organization (Ardhi & Irham, 2021). The results of this investigation align with previous research which concludes that entrepreneurial orientation with its dimensions: innovativeness, risk-taking, and proactiveness has a significant and positive effect on business performance (Perera et al., 2019).

Overall, the literature demonstrates a relationship between total quality management, entrepreneurial orientation, and business performance. Waheed (2020) supported the research findings that total quality management positively and significantly influences performance. It is also consistent with the study of Almazrouei and Dahalan (2022) which states that total quality management and entrepreneurial orientation have a significant impact on organizational performance.

The relationship among total quality management, entrepreneurial orientation and business performance has been theorized under the Resource based Theory (Barney 1991). The RBV theory suggests that a firm's resources and capabilities are the key drivers of its competitive advantage and subsequent performance. Accordingly, a company's competitive advantage and its ability to outperform other companies in its industry can be attributed to its unique resource assets and capabilities, which enable it to develop internal capabilities and effectively compete in the market (Barney et al., 2001).

The influence of total quality management to business performance is in accordance with the study of Ghobadian and Gallear (1996) that the adoption of TQM increases the probability of long-term survival and expansion of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Demirbag et al., (2006) also states that the performance of SMEs is significantly and positively associated with the implementation of TQM. RBV provides a useful theoretical base to explain the effects of TQM on performance. The basic argument is that TQM can contribute to the improvement of performance by encouraging the development of assets that are specific, produce socially complex relationships, are steeped in the history and culture of the company and generate tacit knowledge. All these features correspond to the conditions, which, according to the RBV, allow a sustained competitive advantage (Barney, 1991; Grant, 1991).

Furthermore, the influence of entrepreneurial orientation to business performance is supported by the Dynamic Capabilities theory. Entrepreneurial orientation, with its emphasis on proactivity, innovation, and risk-taking, is considered a key driver of dynamic capabilities and can lead to superior business performance (Teece et al., 1997). This is also supported by a study conducted by Lumpkin and Dess (2001) which reveals that entrepreneurs who have high levels of EO are more inclined to recognize and seize opportunities, take measured risks, and adapt promptly and effectively to changes in the business environment, which enables them to gain a competitive edge leading to better business performance.

While there were several studies on total quality management and entrepreneurial orientation predicting SMEs' business performance, however, in the locality of Tagum City, no studies concerning the variables mentioned were conducted. The researcher has observed numerous start-up businesses in Tagum City, yet, the community lacks relevant and significant studies on the influence of total quality management and entrepreneurial orientation on the business performance of SMEs.

As a consequence thereto, the authors would like to conduct this study to pave the way for SMEs in the locality of Tagum City by providing awareness and a comprehensive understanding of the capability of Total Quality Management and Entrepreneurial Orientation in predicting the outcome of SMEs' business performance. It also aims to determine if the influence of total quality management and entrepreneurial orientation can predict the longevity of SMEs since some SMEs in the locality have suffered failures in their operation.

The purpose of this study is to determine the influence of total quality management and entrepreneurial orientation on business performance among SMEs. Specifically, this will seek to accomplish the specific objectives to wit: to describe the level of total quality management on business performance in terms of Leadership, People Management, Customer Focus, Strategic Planning, Information and Analysis, and Process Management; to describe the level of entrepreneurial orientation on business performance in terms of Autonomy, Innovativeness, Risk-taking, Pro-activeness, and Competitive Aggressiveness; to determine the relationship between Total Quality Management and Business Performance; to determine the relationship between Entrepreneurial Orientation and Business performance; to determine a significant relationship between Total Quality Management and Entrepreneurial Orientation to Business Performance; to determine what domains in total quality management significantly predicts business performance; and to determine what domains in entrepreneurial orientation significantly predicts business performance.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research is quantitative, non-experimental, descriptive correlational design. A correlational study aims to determine connections or associations between two or more variables (Tan, 2014). The authors explored potential alternative hypotheses to establish connections and analyze different factors, providing results and interpretations without making conclusive statements about causation (Belli, 2008).

The target population of this study are the Small-Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Tagum City registered in the first quarter of 2023. For the inclusion criteria, only the listed SMEs from the office of Tagum City-Business Permit and

Licensing Division and a total of Nine Hundred Twenty-Eight (928) SMEs are considered. For exclusion criteria, Micro enterprises are excluded as of the first quarter of 2023, and those who are not on the official list from Tagum City-Business Permit and Licensing Division. The population includes 645 small enterprises and 283 medium enterprises.

The sampling techniques employed in this study is random sampling. Random sampling technique is a probability technique in which every item or unit in the population has an equal chance of being selected in the sample and this probability can accurately be determined (Mohammed & Saturday, 2019). The sample size was derived from the online Raosoft Sample Size Calculator. It was calculated based on a response distribution of 50%, confidence level of 95%, and a margin of error of 5%. Adding a twenty percent (20%) allowance for non-response, the total sample size is four hundred ninety (490) which is proportioned into small (292) and medium (198) enterprises. The sample size is distributed by calculating the ratio of each respective barangays.

In this research, the authors used an adapted and modified questionnaire as a survey tool to obtain data to solve specific problems. The committee validated the questionnaire before the administration to the respondents and had undergone validation by external validators. The overall mean score of the external validators was 4.57, which can be described as very high.

The questionnaire underwent pre-testing to ensure that the items were reliable and consistent before actual data gathering using Cronbach's Alpha. The result of the reliability test for the total quality management yielded 0.940, which can be described as excellent. For the entrepreneurial orientation, the result was 0.946, which can also be described as excellent. The same goes for the business performance, which got a 0.933 result, likewise described as excellent. The questions adapted for total quality management were from Samson & Terziovski (1999). The questions for entrepreneurial orientation were from Venter (2014). Furthermore, questions adapted for business performance were from Aboramadan and Borgonovi (2016).

Before pre-testing and actual data collection, the authors observed comprehensive standards in this study required by the University of Mindanao Ethics Review Committee. Further, the authors secured a letter from the school requesting permission and certification to conduct the research from the Dean of Graduate Studies that serves as proof that UM Tagum College officially recognizes the research. Moreover, the authors secured a letter of approval from the office of the City Administrator of the Local Government of Tagum and Department of Trade and Industry. After which, the permission letter was given to the owners or managers for approval along with the approved letter given by the City Administrator and Department of Trade and Industry.

Upon approval of the request, the researcher administered and personally distributed the four hundred ninety (490) questionnaires to all respondents from February 22, 2024 to April 3, 2024, including the hired assistants, to help with the distribution in other areas of Tagum. The assistants were given a proper orientation before distributing the questionnaires.

Furthermore, the authors gave the respondents instructions and orientation to guide them upon going along with the questionnaires. This was to ensure an accurate response in answering and retrieving questionnaires. The data gathered was tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted with the prescribed tools.

The following statistical tools were employed in the analysis and interpretation of the gathered data:

Mean. This was used to measure the influence of Total Quality Management and Entrepreneurial orientation on business performance among SMEs in Tagum City.

Pearson r. This was used to define and determine the significant relationship between Total Quality Management and Entrepreneurial Orientation on Business Performance among SMEs in Tagum City.

Multiple Regression Analysis. This was used to determine what particular domain of Total Quality Management and Entrepreneurial orientation significantly influence Business Performance among SMEs in Tagum City.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Level of Total Quality Management

The results of the mean score for Total Quality Management are presented in Table 3, which resulted in an overall score of 4.49, described as very high, with a standard deviation of 0.411. This indicates that SMEs in Tagum City exhibit a very high level when it comes to leadership, people management, customer focus, strategic planning, process management, and information and analysis. The mean score resulted from the data gathered from highest to lowest indicators: 4.56 or very high for customer focus; 4.55 or very high for leadership; 4.48 or very high for strategic planning and process management; 4.47 or very high for people management; and 4.40 for information and analysis.

Table 1 Level of Total Quality Management to Business Performance among Small-Medium Enterprises in the City of Tagum

Indicators	Mean	SD	Descriptive Equivalent
Leadership	4.55	0.471	Very High
People Management	4.47	0.507	Very High
Customer Focus	4.56	0.484	Very High
Strategic Planning	4.48	0.53	Very High
Process Management	4.48	0.504	Very High
Information & Analysis	4.40	0.535	Very High
Overall	**4.49**	**0.411**	**Very High**

Furthermore, the highest mean score for customer focus indicates that SMEs in Tagum City have a strong commitment to understanding the needs and desires of their customers and go above and beyond customer expectations through continuous improvements in their business. This is true to the study of Han et al. (2021) that the primary goal of being customer-focused is to meet the customers' expectations. Husain et al. (2022) also added that customer focus is an asset within a business that can enhance its competitive advantage.

Level of Entrepreneurial Orientation among SMEs in Tagum City

The resulted mean scores for Entrepreneurial Orientation are presented in Table 2 with an overall score of 4.30, described as very high with a standard deviation of 0.491. This result indicates that the respondents exhibit a very high level of Entrepreneurial Orientation in terms of autonomy, innovativeness, risk-taking propensity, proactiveness, and competitive aggressiveness, which collectively contribute to a highly dynamic and driven mindset within SMEs.

The highest to lowest indicators are as follows: 4.378 or very high for innovativeness; 4.371 or very high for autonomy; 4.36 also described as very high for proactiveness; 4.29 or very high for competitive aggressiveness; and 4.13 or high for risk-taking. The highest score in innovativeness indicates that SMEs in Tagum City believed that innovation is essential to their business' future success wherein they placed significant value on fresh and innovative goods and services. This also means that SMEs in Tagum City actively seek emerging opportunities to enhance their products and services. It is also with these results that the researcher interpreted that SMEs' owners, managers, and employees use their creative skills to brainstorm new ideas or solutions to launch new products and services.

Table 2 Level of Entrepreneurial Orientation to Business Performance among Small-Medium Enterprises in the City of Tagum

Indicators	Mean	SD	Descriptive Equivalent
Autonomy	4.371	0.542	Very High
Innovativeness	4.378	0.56	Very High
Risk-Taking	4.13	0.634	High
Proactiveness	4.36	0.606	Very High
Competitive Aggressiveness	4.29	0.614	Very High
Overall	**4.30**	**0.491**	**Very High**

Based on this table, innovativeness has the highest score compared to other indicators. Hence, Small and Medium Enterprises should promote a work environment that fosters and encourages creativity and innovation among their employees to brainstorm new ideas and solutions. SMEs must also offer learning and development and explore training that will unleash creativity to launch new ideas and services that are unique in the market.

According to Hernandez-Perlines et al (2019), innovativeness is the most critical dimension of entrepreneurial orientation, through innovation businesses can stay ahead of the curve, anticipate market trends, and create new opportunities for growth and success. Anjani & Yasa (2019, p. 2) also added that it is with innovativeness that companies engage to and endorse novel concepts that could result in the creation of new technological goods, services, or procedures.

Level of Business Performance among SMEs in Tagum City

The overall mean score for the business performance is 4.54 presented in Table 3 which can be described as very high with a 0.581 standard deviation. This indicates that the business performance is very high in the items of financial performance and non-financial performance.

Table 3 Level of Business Performance among Small-Medium Enterprises in the City of Tagum

Indicators	Mean	SD	Descriptive Equivalent
Financial Performance	4.53	0.564	Very High
Non-Financial Performance	4.55	0.468	Very High
Overall	**4.54**	**0.457**	**Very High**

The total mean score for Non-financial performance is 4.55 which is the described as very high while the overall mean score for financial performance is 4.53 which is indicated also as very high. High mean score in non-financial performance attests that SMEs in Tagum City effectively handles and address issues that may affect the overall business performance of their business. It is also with these results that the researcher interpreted that SMEs in Tagum City are efficient in ensuring that they are dedicated to a system of standards and quality to satisfy their customers. Moreover, through these results the researcher interpreted that SMEs in Tagum City are committed to a timetable to achieve the target output of their business and in order to attain this, owners or managers must recruit the right staff with the right skills and experience.

Significance on the Relationship between Total Quality Management and Business Performance

The computation results are provided in table 4. The results showed a p-value of .001, which is below than the 0.05 significance level, indicating that the null hypothesis was rejected. This suggests that there is a considerable correlation between total quality management and business performance. The results also revealed that the r value is 0.752, this also indicates that a positive correlation exists between total quality management and business performance, and the r-squared is 0.5655 indicating a 56.55% of the business performance is explained by total quality management.

Table 4 Significance of the Relationship between Total Quality Management and Business Performance of Small-Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Tagum City

Independent Variables	Mean	SD	r-value	r-squared	p-value	Decision
Total Quality Management	4.49	0.411	0.752*	0.5655	< .001	Reject Ho
Business Performance	4.54	0.457				

*p<0.05

Significance on the Relationship between Entrepreneurial Orientation and Business Performance

Provided in Table 5 are the computation results. The results showed that the p-value was less than the significance level of 0.05, which resulted to the decision of rejecting the null hypothesis. This shows that a significant relationship exists between total quality management on business performance. The results also revealed that the r value is 0.723, which indicates that a positive correlation exists between entrepreneurial orientation and business performance, and the r-squared is 0.5227 indicating a 52.27% of the business performance is explained by entrepreneurial orientation.

Table 5 Significance of the Relationship between Entrepreneurial Orientation and Business Performance of Small-Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Tagum City

Independent Variables	Mean	SD	r-value	r-squared	p-value	Decision
Entrepreneurial Orientation	4.30	0.491	0.723*	0.5227	< .001	Reject Ho
Business Performance	4.54	0.457				

*p<0.05

Regression Analysis on the Total Quality Management and Entrepreneurial Orientation to Business Performance among SMEs in Tagum City

Presented in Table 6 are the computation results for total quality management and entrepreneurial orientation to business performance. The result showed a computed F-ratio of 315.008 and a p-value of 0.001 for the total quality management, which is lower than the 0.05 significance level, which arrived to the decision of rejecting the null hypothesis which means that there is a significant relationship between total quality management and entrepreneurial orientation to business performance.

Table 6 Regression Analysis on the Total Quality Management and Entrepreneurial Orientation to Business Performance among SMEs in Tagum City

Indicators	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t-value	p-value	Decision
	B	SE	Beta			
(constant)	0.515	0.166		3.093	0.002	
TQM	0.570	0.060	0.481*	9.500	< .001	Reject Ho
EO	0.340	0.050	0.343*	6.773	< .001	Reject Ho

Dependent Variable: Business Performance

**p<0.05 R-value = 0.781 F-value = 315.008 R^2 = 0.610 p-value= < .001*

The R-value is 0.781 indicating that total quality management and entrepreneurial orientation have a positive relationship to business performance. The overall R-squared is 0.610, indicating that 61% of the business performance is explained by total quality management and entrepreneurial orientation. The standardized beta coefficients of the variables are as follows: total quality management yielded 0.481 while the entrepreneurial orientation yielded 0.343. Between the two independent variables, the total quality management has the strong influence to the dependent variable which is business performance.

Regression Analysis on the Influence of the Domains of Total Quality Management that Predicts Business Performance among SMEs in Tagum City

Presented in table 7 showed a computed F-ratio of 92.445 and a p-value of 0.001 which arrived to the decision that there is a domain in the total quality management that significantly predicts the business performance.

Table 7 Regression Analysis on the Influence of the Domains of Total Quality Management that Predicts Business Performance among SMEs in Tagum City

Indicators	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t-value	p-value	Decision
	B	SE	Beta			
(constant)	0.492	0.048		2.744	< .001	
Customer Focus	0.204	0.052	0.203*	4.098	0.010	Reject Ho
Information and Analysis	0.162	0.048	0.178*	3.820	< .001	Reject Ho
Process Management	0.161	0.042	0.167*	3.212	< .001	Reject Ho
Planning	0.136	0.050	0.148*	2.606	0.001	Reject Ho
People Management	-0.006	0.050	-0.006*	-0.133	< .001	Reject Ho
Leadership	0.241	0.044	0.234	5.003	0.894	Do not Reject Ho

Dependent Variable: Business Performance

**p<0.01 R-value = 0.763 F-value = 92.445 R^2 = 0.582 p-value = < .001*

The R-value is 0.763 while the overall R-squared is 0.582, indicating that 58.2% of the business performance is explained by the domains of total quality management. The highest to lowest standardized beta coefficients are as follows: customer focus yielded 0.203, followed by information and analysis with 0.178, process management with 0.167, planning yielded 0.148, and people management with 0.006. The domains of total quality management that significantly predict business performance are: customer focus, information and analysis, process management, planning, and people management. It is also noted that the indicator leadership has no significant influence to the business performance which is the dependent variable in this study. Furthermore, the standardized beta coefficient results indicated that the customer focus has the greater influence among the other indicators. This means that a thriving business organization acknowledges the significance of prioritizing the customer in terms of their needs, desires, ideas, and customer's complaints to improving business processes and systems. Since customer focus has the highest standardized beta coefficient among other indicators, SMEs must prioritize conducting customer satisfaction surveys to meet the expectations of the ever-changing needs and demands of the customers. By doing this, SMEs can increase customer loyalty and gain a competitive advantage in the market.

Regression Analysis on the Influence of the Domains of Entrepreneurial Orientation that Predicts Business Performance among SMEs in Tagum City

Presented in the table 8 showed a computed F-ratio of 105.015 and a p-value of 0.001 which arrived to the decision that there is a domain in the entrepreneurial orientation that significantly predicts the business performance.

Table 8 Regression Analysis on the Influence of the Domains of Entrepreneurial Orientation that Predicts Business Performance among SMEs in Tagum City

Indicators	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t-value	p-value	Decision
	B	SE	Beta			
(constant)	1.397	0.145		9.648	< .001	
Proactiveness	0.272	0.042	0.339*	6.503	< .001	Reject Ho
Autonomy	0.283	0.042	0.315*	6.663	< .001	Reject Ho
Competitive Aggressiveness	0.135	0.042	0.170*	3.213	0.001	Reject Ho
Risk-Taking	-0.019	0.033	-0.025	-0.593	< .554	Do not Reject Ho
Innovativeness	0.052	0.045	0.060*	1.155	0.249	Do not Reject Ho

Dependent Variable: Business Performance

**p-value = 0.05 R-value = 0.754 F-value = 105.015 $R^2 = 0.568$ p-value= < .001*

The R-value yielded 0.754 while the overall R-squared is 0.568, indicating that 56.8% of the business performance is explained by the domains of entrepreneurial orientation. The standardized beta coefficients of the indicators are as follows: proactiveness yielded 0.339, autonomy yielded 0.315, and competitive aggressiveness is 0.170. Based on these results the domains of entrepreneurial orientation that significantly predicts business performance are: autonomy, proactiveness, and competitive aggressiveness. It is as well noted in this study that risk-taking and innovativeness with standardized beta coefficients of 0.025 and 0.060 and p-value of <.554 and 0.249 respectively has no significant influence to the dependent variable in this study.

The results of this study indicate that the mentioned domains must be utilized, maintained, and maximized. SMEs must employ proactiveness in their business organization to foster foresight and initiative amongst their employees. Since employees are the key players in executing the plans, projects, and objectives of the business, it is wise for SMEs to cultivate a series of training like leadership training, soft skill training, and hard skill training that can help the employees reach their full potential when solving problems and whenever challenges arise. Autonomy empowers employees to exercise decision-making, creativity, and innovation, which enhances job satisfaction, motivation, and productivity. Competitive aggressiveness is also equally important because in today's cutthroat competition, SMEs must invest in boosting their marketing and take advantage of all social media platforms that are present nowadays. Targeting the market is much easier these days since customers are more technologically inclined and exercising and utilizing all of these will enhance SME's business performance.

CONCLUSION

The authors conclude based on the results that the level of Total Quality Management in Tagum City is very high, the level of Entrepreneurial Orientation is very high, while the level of Business Performance indicates a very high level. In addition, the study found out that there is a significant relationship between total quality management and business performance, and that there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and business performance.

The domains of TQM that significantly predict Business Performance are customer focus, planning, process management, people management, and information analysis. It is noted in this study that TQM is a shipmaster to achieving excellence in quality, customer satisfaction, efficiency, and innovation. Small and medium enterprises must embrace TQM since this highly predicts their business performance. With TQM, businesses can adapt to the complex and competitive market, provide high-quality goods and services, and outperform competitors in meeting customers' needs and demands leading to higher business performance for SMEs.

Moreover, the domains of Entrepreneurial Orientation that significantly predict Business Performance in the City of Tagum are autonomy, proactiveness, and competitive aggressiveness. Entrepreneurial orientation is the approach that encourages small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to be inventive, flexible, and proactive in identifying and exploiting market opportunities. This motivates businesses to take calculated risks, utilize and maximize their resources to pursue growth opportunities that may lead to customer satisfaction, loyalty, and retention leading to enhancing business performance of SMEs.

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