

# Enterprise management, enterprise culture and production process on product quality in the food industry: Basis for product quality continuous improvement framework

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## Abstract

The study aimed to examine the enterprise management, enterprise culture and production process in food enterprises in China to become the basis for developing a product quality continuous improvement framework. The study utilized the self-made questionnaire as the data-gathering instrument. Participants of the study were 300 employees or managers from food enterprises in Shandong provinces. Weighted mean and rank were used to determine the impact of enterprise management on food quality in terms of leaders' attention, work arrangement and work evaluation; assess the impact of enterprise culture on product quality as to corporate social responsibility, employee engagement and attitude to customers; Evaluate the impact of production process on food quality with reference to raw material procurement, production technology and quality inspection. Spearman rho was used to test the significant relationship as part of the non-parametric tests. All analyzes were performed using SPSS version 28. The study revealed that the respondents had a strong agreement on their enterprise management comprising leaders' attention, work arrangement and work evaluation. They agreed on enterprise culture in terms of corporate social responsibility, employee engagement and attitude to customers. They also agreed on the enterprises' production process in terms of raw material procurement, production technology and quality inspection. There was a highly significant relationship between enterprise management and enterprise culture. It also found that there was a highly significant relationship between enterprise management and production process and a highly significant relationship between enterprise culture and production process. A Product Quality Continuous Improvement Framework was developed.

**Keywords:** enterprise culture, enterprise management, production process

## **Enterprise management, enterprise culture and production process on product quality in the food industry: Basis for product quality continuous improvement framework**

### **1. Introduction**

Food is the material basis for human survival, and an important guarantee for the harmonious and stable development of economic society. But in daily life, food safety incidents occur from time to time. Food safety has become a matter of great concern and attention, leading to the demand for high-quality and safe food to become the first choice of the people. Food quality and safety has gradually become the lifeline for food enterprises to achieve sustainable development. The precondition for food enterprises to achieve survival and development is to put food quality and safety first, so food enterprises that cannot guarantee product quality and safety will be eliminated from the market. Therefore, how to improve food quality is a key topic for all food enterprises, and also an important topic of general concern for the whole society.

Enterprise management is the process of overseeing and controlling the operations of an enterprise. It encompasses all aspects of the business, including strategic planning, work arrangement, work arrangement, employee encouragement, quality management and other aspects. Enterprise management plays a crucial role in ensuring product quality in the food industry. Chen, & Lan, (2019) suggests that effective enterprise management, including quality control measures, can positively influence food safety and product quality outcomes. Liu, et al. (2021) implies that effective enterprise management systems, including food safety management and quality control, can positively influence product quality and safety outcomes.

Enterprise culture has a profound influence on product quality in the food industry. When an organization establishes a culture that prioritizes quality, engages its employees, encourages continuous improvement, and fosters a customer-centric approach, it sets the foundation for producing safe, reliable, and high-quality food products. Wang, et al. (2020) implies that a positive and strong organizational culture that emphasizes safety and quality can contribute to the effective implementation of food safety measures, which can impact product quality. According to the findings of Dhakal, (2018), A culture that prioritizes quality, employee engagement, and innovation can positively influence overall organizational performance, which can indirectly impact product quality.

The production process has a direct and significant impact on product quality in the food industry. The way food products are manufactured, processed, and handled at each stage plays a crucial role in determining their safety, consistency, and overall quality. By implementing best practices, adhering to industry standards, and continuously monitoring and improving processes, food manufacturers can produce safe, consistent, and high-quality products that meet consumer expectations. Akpinar, & Topuz, (2018) discusses how different processing methods, such as thermal processing, freezing, and drying, can influence the nutritional content, sensory attributes, and overall quality of food products. Haq, et al. (2019) highlights the importance of effective production processes and quality control measures in ensuring safe and high-quality food products.

This paper investigates and studies the impact on product quality using three variables of enterprise management, enterprise culture and production process, proposes measures to improve product quality, which is conducive to people eating safer and healthier food.

**Objectives of the Study** - This study aimed to evaluate the enterprise management, enterprise culture and production process and develop a product quality continuous improvement framework. Specifically, this paper aimed to determine the impact of enterprise management on food quality from three dimensions: leaders' attention, work arrangement and work evaluation; assess the impact of enterprise culture on product quality from three dimensions: corporate social responsibility, employee engagement and attitude to customers, evaluate the

impact of production process on food quality from three dimensions: raw material procurement, production technology and quality inspection and test the significant relationship among enterprise management, enterprise culture and production process. . Finally, develop a Product Quality Continuous Improvement Framework.

## 2. Methods

**Research Design** - The study adopted a descriptive research design to describe the characteristics of a population or phenomenon. It is often used to collect data on the prevalence of a particular condition, the distribution of a characteristic, or the relationships between variables. Descriptive research design is typically used in the early stages of research, when the researcher is trying to get a better understanding of the problem or phenomenon that they are studying. It can also be used to provide background information for more in-depth research. There are a number of different methods that can be used in descriptive research design, including surveys, interviews, and observations (Creswell, 2014). The researcher seeks to gather information from the respondents by providing and distributing survey questionnaires. This descriptive type of research contributed to the efficient collection of data from respondents.

**Participants of the Study** - The participants of the study are managers or employees of 10 well-known food companies in Shandong Province. Shandong Province is a coastal area with relatively developed economy and numerous food enterprises. The 10 food companies are well-known in Shandong Province. They not only have advantages in production equipment and technology, but their products also have their own characteristics and are highly praised by consumers so managers or employees from the above food companies are selected as the survey subjects, which has a wide range of representativeness. In order to identify the respondents from the 10 food companies, the proponent sent a request letter to the institution to ask for the total number of workers in the institution. Out of 2038 total workers in these 10 food companies in Shandong Province, the sample size was 377, with an effect size of 0.50, a power probability of 0.95 or 95% and an alpha level of 0.05 or 5% using Google Rao soft.

**Data Gathering Instrument** - The survey questionnaire is a set of questions that are used to collect data from a population. It is a type of research instrument that is used in descriptive research design. A survey questionnaire is a good data gathering instrument used in quantitative research. It is a structured set of questions that is used to collect data from a large number of people. The questions are typically closed-ended, which means that the respondents can choose from a set of pre-determined answers. This makes it easy to collect and analyze the data. The study used a self-made questionnaire as the data gathering instrument. The questions were carefully crafted for each dimensions in the three variables. The sources used in crafting the questionnaire are as follow: Academic journals. This includes the academic journals publish articles that include questionnaires. These questionnaires were used as a starting point for creating own questionnaire. Another one is the commercial websites. Questionnaire available are good option that was used in preparing the questions.

The first part of the questionnaire is the profile of the respondents. The second part determined the enterprise management as to leaders' attention, work arrangement and work evaluation. The third part evaluates the corporate social responsibility, employee engagement and attitude to customers and the fourth part is the production process which was assessed in terms of raw material procurement, production technology and quality inspection. The pre-test of the questionnaire shows that the Cronbach's  $\alpha$  and CR values of each variable are both higher than 0.77, indicating that the scale has good reliability.

**Data Gathering Procedure** - The questionnaire was done through literature analysis and integrated expert opinions, and then distributed the questionnaire online through the questionnaire star research platform for pre-survey. After the questionnaire was revised and improved under the guidance of the adviser, the questionnaire was distributed online through WeChat and email. After the preliminary design of the questionnaire was completed, eight experts were invited to conduct a pre-test of the questionnaire, which further improved the questionnaire structure and language expression. The pre-test of the questionnaire shows that the

Cronbach's  $\alpha$  and CR values of each variable are both higher than 0.77, indicating that the scale has good reliability. After the questionnaire was confirmed, researcher prepared a letter of intent as a request by the researcher to collect data from the respondents. After the collection of data, the researcher interpreted and analyzed the results.

**Ethical Considerations** - The research was based on academic ethics and is transparent to the research process and findings. The questionnaire used was researcher made based on the research of existing scholarly works and studies. In the course of the questionnaire survey, there have been questionnaire reminders to assure the surveyed that the data provided will be kept confidential. If it is shared with others without the respondents' consent, it is an unethical behavior. When designing the questionnaire, the name of the respondents was not involved, and the number 0 was assigned to the missing data or wrong input.

**Data Analysis** - The research made use of the different statistical tools to count, code and interpret the data. These include the following: One is the frequency distribution and weighted mean for descriptive statistical analysis, in order to quantitatively obtain the overview of the relevant variables. The second is analysis of variance to test the significance of the difference between the means of two or more samples. The third is the use of Pearson correlation test for all variables to verify the correlation between the variables, which provides a preliminary basis for the subsequent regression analysis. Finally, after the previous descriptive statistics and correlation statistics analysis, the thesis used multiple regression to empirically test the relationship among enterprise management, enterprise culture and production process. The use of the above tools was based on research goals. In addition, all data were processed using the statistical PASW version to analyze the research results.

### 3. Results and Discussion

**Table 1**

*Impact of Enterprise Management on Food Quality*

Key Result Areas	Composite Mean	VI	Rank
Attention of Leader	3.40	Agree	1
Work Arrangement	3.39	Agree	2
Work Evaluation	3.30	Agree	3
Grand Composite Mean	3.36	Agree	

Summarized in Table 1 is the result of the level of the respondents' assessment on Enterprise Management. The composite mean of 3.36 reveals that the respondents' level of Enterprise Management was moderately evident where Attention of Leader topped the list (3.40) and Work Arrangement got the second rank. Though assessed positively, Work Evaluation obtained the lower mean value and rated the least.

The item "Attention of Leader" received the first rank with a weighted mean score of 3.40, it indicates that respondents perceive that the attention of leaders within the company is valued and highly regarded. Leaders' attention can lead to higher levels of employee engagement, commitment, and job satisfaction, ultimately contributing to improved product quality. Wang, & Chen, (2018) suggests that leadership's emphasis on product quality can have a positive impact on employee behavior, facilitate the formation of a quality culture within the company, create a serious work atmosphere, and thus ensure product quality.

The item "Work Arrangement" received the second rank with a weighted mean score of 3.39. The positive score suggests that the work arrangement within the company promotes organization and efficiency. Well-planned work arrangements can optimize resources, streamline processes, and ensure that tasks are assigned and completed effectively. Gao, Qiu, & Zhao, (2019) implies that a favorable work arrangement, characterized by high levels of work engagement and job autonomy, positively influences employees' intrinsic motivation and their adherence to food safety protocols, indirectly impacting product quality.

The item "Work Evaluation" received the third rank with a weighted mean score of 3.30. The moderately

satisfactory score suggests that there may be opportunities to improve the work evaluation process. A more satisfactory work evaluation process can positively impact employee engagement. When employees perceive that their performance is accurately assessed and recognized, it enhances their motivation, job satisfaction, and commitment to the organization. Gao, Chen, & Zhao, (2020) implies that a supportive work environment, combined with fair and effective performance appraisal, positively influences work engagement and employees' commitment to following food safety protocols, indirectly impacting product quality.

**Table 2***Impact of Enterprise Culture on Product Quality*

Key Result Areas	Composite Mean	VI	Rank
Corporate Social Responsibility	3.38	Agree	2
Employee Engagement	3.25	Agree	3
Attitude to Customers	3.40	Agree	1
Grand Composite Mean	3.34	Agree	

Summarized in Table 2 is the result of the level of the respondents' assessment on Enterprise Management. The composite mean of 3.34 reveals that the respondents' level of Enterprise Culture was moderately evident. the item "Attitude to Customers" received the first rank with a weighted mean score of 3.40. It indicates that the company places a strong emphasis on customer satisfaction and prioritizes a positive attitude towards customers. The company strives to produce food that meets customer satisfaction. Gummesson, (2017) implies that adopting a positive attitude towards customers and involving them in the value creation process can contribute to overall customer satisfaction and potentially impact their perceptions of product quality.

the item "Corporate Social Responsibility" received the second rank with a weighted mean score of 3.38. It indicates that respondents perceive the company's commitment to corporate social responsibility (CSR) to be relatively strong. The company promises to treat employees, customers, and society with a responsible attitude, so the company will ensure that the food produced is qualified. Szczygielska, Poczta, & Lewicka, (2018) examines the impact of CSR on food product quality. It suggests that companies that demonstrate a commitment to CSR initiatives, such as sustainable sourcing, environmental responsibility, and ethical practices, tend to produce higher quality products.

the item "Employee Engagement" received the third rank with a weighted mean score of 3.25, it indicates that respondents perceive the level of employee engagement within the company to be moderately satisfactory. There may be opportunities to further enhance employee engagement within the company. The company can improve reward and punishment measures to increase employee engagement. Jha, & Singh, (2020) suggests that engaged employees are more likely to be committed to quality standards and exhibit proactive behaviors that contribute to enhancing product quality and overall organizational performance.

**Table 3***Impact of Production Process on Food Quality*

Key Result Areas	Composite Mean	VI	Rank
Raw Material Procurement	3.42	Agree	2
Production Technology	3.34	Agree	3
Quality Inspection	3.46	Agree	1
Grand Composite Mean	3.41	Agree	

Summarized in Table 3 is the result of the level of the respondents' assessment on Production Process. The composite mean of 3.41 reveals that the respondents' level of Enterprise Culture was moderately evident. The item "Quality Inspection" received the first rank with a weighted mean score of 3.46, it indicates that respondents perceive the quality inspection process within the company to be highly regarded and effective. This can ensure that the company's food quality is qualified. Singh, & Khamba, J. S. (2018) implies that implementing strict quality inspections is crucial for maintaining and improving product quality.

The item "Raw Material Procurement" received the second rank with a weighted mean score of 3.42, it indicates that respondents perceive the company strictly reviews the purchased raw materials to ensure that the quality of the raw materials meets the standards. Because the quality of raw materials directly affects the quality of the food produced. Vidal, et al. (2019) implies that proper raw material procurement practices, such as supplier assessment, negotiation, and quality assurance, are essential for ensuring consistent product quality and safety.

The item "Production Technology" received the third rank with a weighted mean score of 3.34. Although the ranking is relatively low, respondents perceive the production technology within the company to be moderately satisfactory. Advanced technology allows for more precise and efficient manufacturing processes, better ensuring food quality. Wang, et al. (2020) examines the impact of production technology on food safety and quality in China's dairy industry. It suggests that adopting advanced production technologies, such as ultra-high temperature processing and automated control systems, can enhance food safety, extend product shelf life, and improve product quality.

**Table 4**

*Relationship Between Enterprise Management on Food Quality and Enterprise Culture on Product Quality*

Variables	rho-value	p-value	Interpretation
<b>Attention of Leader</b>			
Corporate Social Responsibility	0.635**	0.000	Highly Significant
Employee Engagement	0.605**	0.000	Highly Significant
Attitude to Customers	0.646**	0.000	Highly Significant
<b>Work Arrangement</b>			
Corporate Social Responsibility	0.641**	0.000	Highly Significant
Employee Engagement	0.571**	0.000	Highly Significant
Attitude to Customers	0.628**	0.000	Highly Significant
<b>Work Evaluation</b>			
Corporate Social Responsibility	0.565**	0.000	Highly Significant
Employee Engagement	0.598**	0.000	Highly Significant
Attitude to Customers	0.630**	0.000	Highly Significant

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

As seen in the table, the computed rho-values ranging from 0.565 to 0.646 indicate a moderate to strong direct relationship among enterprise management on food quality and enterprise culture on product quality. There was a statistically significant relationship between enterprise management on food quality and enterprise culture on product quality because the obtained p-values were less than 0.01. The better the enterprise management, the better the enterprise culture.

Some studies support this viewpoint. Liu, & Xie, (2018) explores the impact of enterprise management on corporate culture in the food industry. It suggests that effective management practices, such as leadership, Work Arrangement, and Work Evaluation, play a crucial role in shaping and nurturing a positive and strong enterprise culture. Barreto, & Cabanelas, (2017) explores the link between enterprise management practices, organizational culture, and employee performance. It implies that effective management practices positively influence organizational culture, which in turn affects employee performance and product quality. The better the management of the enterprise, the more it can enhance the cohesion of all employees, which is beneficial for employees to develop positive work cognition and habits, thus forming a serious and responsible corporate culture, which is conducive to ensuring product quality.

**Table 5**

*Relationship Between Enterprise Management on Food Quality and Production Process on Food Quality*

Variables	rho-value	p-value	Interpretation
<b>Attention of Leader</b>			
Raw Material Procurement	0.611**	0.000	Highly Significant
Production Technology	0.651**	0.000	Highly Significant
Quality Inspection	0.657**	0.000	Highly Significant

Work Arrangement			
Raw Material Procurement	0.584**	0.000	Highly Significant
Production Technology	0.594**	0.000	Highly Significant
Quality Inspection	0.657**	0.000	Highly Significant
Work Evaluation			
Raw Material Procurement	0.592**	0.000	Highly Significant
Production Technology	0.638**	0.000	Highly Significant
Quality Inspection	0.591**	0.000	Highly Significant

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

As seen in the table, the computed rho-values ranging from 0.594 to 0.657 indicate a moderate to strong direct relationship among enterprise management on food quality and production process on food quality. There was a statistically significant relationship between enterprise management on food quality and production process on food quality because the obtained p-values were less than 0.01.

The high significant influence of enterprise management to production process is supported by several research findings. Thamizhvanan, & Rajendran, (2021) investigates the influence of enterprise management on food processing firms' performance in the food industry. It emphasizes the role of management practices, including strategic planning, process optimization, and quality control, in improving production processes and overall performance in the food industry. Kelleher, Barry, & Mehmetoglu, (2017) explores the influence of enterprise management on innovation adoption in the food and drink sector. It suggests that effective management practices, such as innovation-oriented culture, knowledge management, and collaboration, facilitate the adoption of innovative production processes in the food industry. Hamdouch, & Corral, (2019) examines the role of enterprise management in the implementation of lean production in the food industry. It highlights the importance of management practices. Good corporate management plays an important role in improving production processes and improving food quality.

As seen in the table, the computed rho-values ranging from 0.575 to 0.710 indicate a moderate to strong direct relationship among enterprise culture on product quality and production process on food quality. There was a statistically significant relationship between enterprise culture on product quality and production process on food quality because the obtained p-values were less than 0.01.

The high significant influence of enterprise culture to production process is supported by several research findings. Yilmaz, & Kilic, (2018) examines the effect of organizational culture on lean manufacturing practices in the food industry. It suggests that a supportive culture, characterized by collaboration, continuous improvement, corporate social responsibility, and employee empowerment, positively influences the implementation and effectiveness of lean manufacturing in improving production processes. Gebauer, Worch, & Truffer, (2017) explores the role of organizational culture in service innovation in the food processing industry. It implies that a culture that fosters creativity, corporate social responsibility, caring for employee's collaboration, and a customer-centric mindset can drive innovation efforts that impact various aspects of the business, including production processes and service delivery. Santos, Melão, & Sousa, (2018) investigates the impact of organizational culture on food safety management systems in the food industry. It suggests that a culture that prioritizes food safety, promotes responsibility, and emphasizes compliance significantly contributes to maintaining and improving food safety within production processes.

**Table 6**

*Relationship Between Enterprise Culture on Product Quality and Production Process on Food Quality*

Variables	rho-value	p-value	Interpretation
Corporate Social Responsibility			
Raw Material Procurement	0.670**	0.000	Highly Significant
Production Technology	0.710**	0.000	Highly Significant
Quality Inspection	0.665**	0.000	Highly Significant

<b>Employee Engagement</b>			
Raw Material Procurement	0.580**	0.000	Highly Significant
Production Technology	0.697**	0.000	Highly Significant
Quality Inspection	0.575**	0.000	Highly Significant
<b>Attitude to Customers</b>			
Raw Material Procurement	0.592**	0.000	Highly Significant
Production Technology	0.710**	0.000	Highly Significant
Quality Inspection	0.702**	0.000	Highly Significant

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

### Proposed Product Quality Continuous Improvement Framework

A proposed Product Quality Continuous Improvement framework was created in order to encourage enterprise leaders and all employees to pay attention to food quality in their work, enhance their sense of responsibility, and ensure the provision of safe and healthy food for customers.

As can be seen from the figure below, an enterprise's enterprise management, enterprise culture and production process are needed for effective product quality continuous improvement. There is a significant positive correlation between any two of these three variables. Enterprise management gives influence to both enterprise culture and production process. enterprise culture can have an impact on production process as well. In this literature study, the organization used as an object in the explanation of the framework is comprised of the selected 10 food companies from Shandong Province.

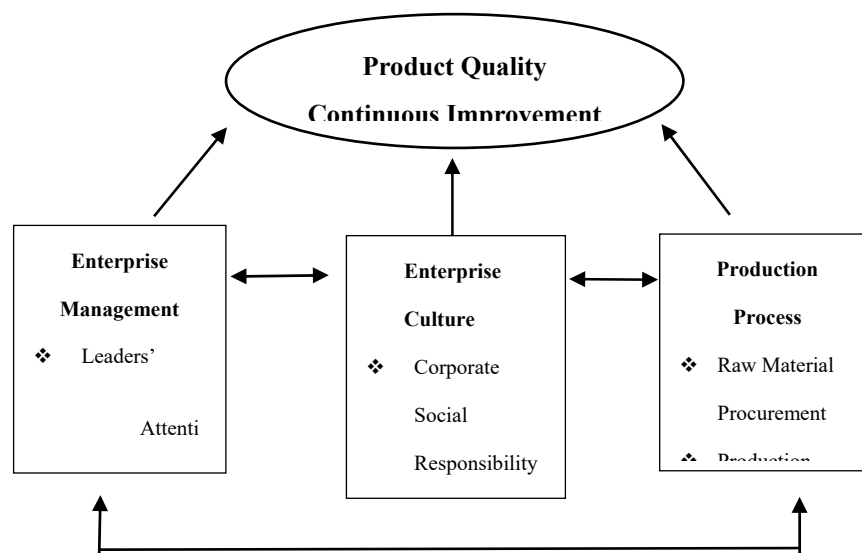


Figure 1. Product Quality Continuous Improvement Framework

### 4. Conclusions and Recommendations

The respondents had a strong agreement on their enterprise management comprising leader's attention, work arrangement and work evaluation. The respondents agreed on enterprise culture in terms of corporate social responsibility, employee engagement and attitude to customers. Also, the respondents agreed on the enterprises' production process in terms of raw material procurement, production technology and quality inspection. There is a high significant relationship between enterprise management and enterprise culture. There is a high significant relationship between enterprise management and production process and a high significant relationship between enterprise culture and production process. A framework for effective Product Quality Continuous Improvement was developed. Based on the conclusions of the study, the researcher came up with the following recommendation. Enterprises may strengthen product quality management, allocate labor reasonably, clarify everyone's responsibilities, and implement appropriate reward and punishment measures. Vigorously publicize the importance of product quality and form a good corporate culture. Continuously monitor the production process, strictly inspect product quality, and promptly eliminate unqualified production equipment. Enterprises



may use the proposed Product Quality Continuous Improvement Framework to improve product quality. Finally, the future researchers may investigate the impact of variables such as big data technology and artificial intelligence on product quality.

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