ABSTRACT

Industrialisation is vital for economic development. In India, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) play an important role in economic development. The New Economic Policy has thrown challenges to the Indian small and medium enterprises. SMEs need new innovations, approaches and techniques to stay in a business. Adoption of Total Quality Management (TQM) is essential for the growth and development of SMEs. It is also crucial for the sustenance in the competitive world. In this context the research was undertaken to study Total Quality Management in SMEs. Five objectives were formulated and tested with well formulated hypotheses. Tamil Nadu is one of the well developed states in terms of industrial development. Hence, the researcher has chosen Tamil Nadu state for the study. In India total quality management initiatives were first set by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). Hence, the SMEs registered with CII were chosen for the present study. The study uses both primary and secondary data; relied more on primary data. A pre-tested interview schedule was used to collect data from 208 respondents. Stratified systematic random sampling method was used to select the respondents. Statistical techniques such as ‘t’ test, paired ‘t’ test, discriminant analysis and multiple regression analysis were applied for the analyses of primary data. The thesis is divided into nine chapters. The study found that SMEs attach importance to the TQM components. The TQM implementation was found moderate in most of the SMEs. Certified, award status and market were found high in TQM implementing SMEs. The impact of TQM on organisational performance was found significant in certified and awarded firms and in firms catering to international market. The study has suggested that SMEs should focus on the training and formulation of quality circle for the sustained implementation of TQM components. The role of academic institutions in promoting TQM culture in SMEs has been emphasised in this study. The study further recommends the involvement of government in promoting TQM through training and cluster development programme. Finally, the study also has indicated areas for further research.