

## ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship plays an important role in today's dynamic business world as a driver of innovation by creating new products, services and new organizations. Entrepreneurship has been a concern of both academics and practitioners during the last decade as the ultimate outcome of utilization of finite resources efficiently and effectively to achieve organizational objectives. One of the key factors of achieving organizational success is the application of Total Quality Management (TQM). In particular, this study examines; (i) what entrepreneurial characteristics support the implementation of TQM best practices and (ii) how entrepreneurs implement TQM best practices. The study examines the proposed research objectives by referring to the case organization of Lanka Harness Limited, an automobile seatbelt sensor switches and harness manufacturing organization for world's leading automobile brands. The organization adheres to strict quality standards where the defect tolerance rate is one part per million (1 ppm) outputs. The case organization has no competitors thus making it a unique organisation that has achieved the highest quality standards. An interpretivist, inductive research approach was used to explore the said research objectives using data collected by conducting Semi Structured Interviews with Mr. Rohan Pallewatte and Ten employees of the organization using purposive sampling. The results from the semi structured interview with Mr. Rohan Pallewatte showed Mr. Pallewatte's perseverance, leadership, empathy, trust, integrity, passion, grit, kindness, loving, father figure, knowledge and other entrepreneurial characteristics support the implementation of TQM best practices. Training, inculcating a quality culture, trust culture coupled with Toyota Production Quality Management System resulting a unique Lanka Harness System, adopting lean manufacturing techniques developed by Japanese quality systems were recognized as how entrepreneurs implement TQM best practices. Therefore, this study contributes to expand the boundaries of knowledge pertaining to entrepreneurial orientation and TQM especially in the Sri Lankan context. The study concludes with a discussion of the insights generated by the findings linking with theoretical knowledge and directions for future research.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurial Orientation, Corporate Entrepreneurship, Total Quality Management, Automobile Sensor Manufacturing