

Total quality management in the health-care context: integrating the literature and directing future research

ABSTRACT

Background: Synergistic integration of predictors and elements that determine the success of total quality management (TQM) implementations in hospitals has been the bane of theoretical development in the TQM research area. Thus, this paper aims to offer a systematic literature review to provide a foundation on which research on TQM can be built and to identify the predictors of successful TQM in the health-care context. Materials and methods: A systematic literature survey was adopted in this paper, involving the review of 25 relevant researched articles found in the databases Science Direct, EBSCO, MEDLINE, CINAHL and PubMed. Result: The systematic literature survey reveals five variables to be core predictors of TQM, signifying how important these variables are in the successful implementation of TQM in the health-care context. Also, it is revealed that the identified core predictors have positive effects on an improved health-care system. However, the systematic survey of the literature reveals a dearth of studies on TQM in the health-care context. Conclusion: As TQM has become an important management approach for advancing effectiveness in the health-care sector, this kind of research is of value to researchers and managers. Stakeholders in the health sectors should introduce and implement TQM in hospitals and clinics. Nevertheless, this study has limitations, including that the databases and search engines adopted for the literature search are not exhaustive.

Keyword: Total quality management; Total quality management implementation; Health care; Commitment; Systematic literature review; Critical success factors