

## IMPLEMENTATION OF TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT (TMQ) TO IMPROVE SERVICE QUALITY IN HOSPITALS

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### **Abstract**

This literature research aims to analyze the effect of implementing Total Quality Management (TQM) on improving the quality of services in hospitals. This research method involved a systematic review of scientific journals, case studies, and academic publications related to TQM in the healthcare sector. Based on a critical analysis of various literature sources, this study concludes that TQM, as a management philosophy that focuses on continuous improvement and customer satisfaction, plays a crucial role in establishing and evaluating quality health service standards. Core elements such as data-based performance measurement, business process management, and systematic development of human resource quality are recognized as key drivers in improving hospital performance. This research also reveals that TQM success depends on top management commitment, employee involvement, and cohesive strategy implementation throughout the organization. Frequently encountered obstacles include organizational cultural resistance and the need for adequate employee training. The findings of this study indicate that hospitals that effectively implement TQM not only achieve higher quality of service but also create a progressive work environment, which ultimately contributes to patient satisfaction and the long-term success of the institution. Recommendations are offered to facilitate ongoing TQM implementation, including the development of integration frameworks and change management strategies. This study provides insights for healthcare practitioners as well as policy makers in their efforts to improve service standards in hospitals through the implementation of TQM practices.

**Keywords:** Total Quality Management, Quality, Hospital Services

### **INTRODUCTION**

In the world of health, service quality is an important aspect that directly influences patient satisfaction and the image of a hospital. Improving the quality of service is a major urgency, in line with increasing public awareness of their rights as consumers of health services. Patients not only

expect adequate clinical aspects of care but also comprehensive service aspects, including speed, comfort, attention, including clear communication from health workers (Erkan & Unal, 2022). Hospitals as service providers are not only required to provide optimal treatment results but also positive experiences to patients (Mahdikhani, 2023).

Increasing competition between hospitals also emphasizes the need to improve service quality. In this era of globalization and information, patients have wider access to choose hospitals. Hospitals that are able to provide high quality services have a greater chance of being chosen by the public, while maintaining patient loyalty (Ming, 2023). In line with this, aspects of service quality are determining indicators in decision making by patients and their families. Patients who are satisfied with a service will be more likely to return or recommend the hospital to others (Khasanah et al., 2023).

No less important, improving service quality also correlates with patient safety. Errors in the service process can endanger patient safety and have the potential to cause legal problems for hospitals (Subehat, 2022). Therefore, implementing high service standards ensures that every patient receives safe treatment, where medical errors can be minimized. Initiatives such as the implementation of TQM (Total Quality Management) can provide a systematic framework for hospitals to continuously improve the quality of services, including aspects of patient safety.

Furthermore, government regulations and international quality standards also encourage hospitals to continue to improve the quality of their services. Hospitals are required to meet standards set by national and international accreditation agencies as proof of their commitment to quality health services. Fulfillment of these standards not only increases credibility and increases insurance payments for patients but also shows the hospital's social responsibility in providing quality health services (Ahmed, 2022). The urgency to improve the quality of service is one of the keys for hospitals to survive and develop amidst the current challenges of the health industry.

Total Quality Management (TQM) is a strategic solution implemented by various organizations, including in the health sector, to improve the quality of their services (Pratiwi & Bahriah, 2023). TQM is a managerial approach that is centered on quality, based on the participation of all members of the organization, and aimed at achieving long-term success through customer satisfaction (Richard, 2024). This approach not only focuses on the end result of a product or service, but also on the process to achieve it, which involves every aspect of hospital operations. The introduction of TQM in hospitals

helps ensure that every individual in the organization is responsible for the quality of services, from medical personnel to administration, and that they collectively work towards continuous improvement.

Implementation of TQM in hospitals paves the way for systematic implementation for continuous process improvement. Through this method, hospitals can identify service quality problems, analyze fundamental causes, and develop innovative solutions (Aljasmi et al., 2023). TQM encourages a culture where mistakes are viewed as opportunities to learn and grow, not as failures. Thus, each team member is actively involved in problem solving procedures and encouraged to make positive contributions (Claessens et al., 2023). This creates a supportive environment for quality initiatives, where all employees feel empowered to suggest changes that can improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and responsiveness of services to patient needs.

TQM advocates for the creation of high service quality standards through continuous training, employee skill development, and accurate performance measurement. Hospitals will continue to assess their processes and use organizational learning to create better services. Qualitative and quantitative tools and techniques such as Six Sigma, kaizen, and PDSA (Plan-Do-Study-Act) are used in TQM to support decisions based on objective data and measurements (Groene et al., 2024). Ultimately, TQM not only results in improved service quality, but also optimizes patient and staff satisfaction, which can contribute to the long-term financial and operational success of health systems.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

The study in this research is qualitative with literature. The literature study research method is a research approach that involves the analysis and synthesis of information from various literature sources that are relevant to a particular research topic. Documents taken from literature research are journals, books and references related to the discussion you want to research (Earley, M.A. 2014; Snyder, H. 2019).

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Implementation of TQM in Hospitals**

Implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) in hospitals begins with commitment from the highest level of management. Strong leadership and a commitment to quality from hospital leaders are key to ensuring that TQM principles can be implemented effectively throughout the

organization. Management must be faithful to this quality-oriented approach and facilitate the resources, training, and support necessary to implement TQM (Swarnakar et al., 2023). Additionally, they need to communicate the importance of these changes to all employees and ensure that there is a thorough understanding of how each individual contributes to the overall quality vision.

Furthermore, hospitals must implement a system to continuously measure performance and service quality. This includes the development of key performance indicators (KPIs) related to service quality, patient safety and operational efficiency. By having reliable data on performance, hospitals can use analytical methods such as cause-and-effect diagrams, control charts, and others to identify areas that need improvement. This process helps in carrying out the PDSA (Plan-Do-Study-Act) cycle to iteratively assess and improve processes and services. Continuously identifying and overcoming obstacles will stimulate continuous quality improvement (Arcaro, 2024).

Developing an inclusive quality culture is essential. TQM is not just about processes and metrics, it also relies heavily on the people who carry it out. Employee training and skills development should be a priority, ensuring that all staff understand TQM principles and are trained in quality improvement techniques. Regular brainstorming sessions, team meetings, and workshops can help strengthen teamwork and innovation. Recognizing and celebrating success in quality improvement is also important to motivate staff and increase their engagement (Saifulloh & Neoh, 2022). By establishing effective communications, encouraging staff participation, and prioritizing patient satisfaction, hospitals can achieve substantial success in their TQM efforts.

In implementing Total Quality Management, strengthening collaboration between departments and improving communication at all levels of the organization are important steps. Hospitals must ensure that all teams communicate effectively and share important information about processes and outcomes. Strategies to improve this may include the use of technology platforms that enable real-time sharing of documents, data, and feedback. The implementation of regular cross-departmental meetings is also vital, where teams from various health disciplines can gather to discuss cases, review patient outcomes, and revise evidence-based treatment protocols (Ansari, 2022). This interdisciplinary collaboration helps ensure that patients receive holistic and coordinated care, ultimately improving the quality of care.

Furthermore, a focus on patient experience and satisfaction is a key aspect of TQM in hospitals. Patients should be treated as partners in their care, not simply recipients of services. This means creating a comfortable, safe, and inclusive environment that actively involves patients and their families in all aspects of care. This approach may include the implementation of patient satisfaction surveys, post-treatment interviews, and focus groups to gather feedback. By actively listening and responding to patient needs and concerns, hospitals can achieve more meaningful and sustainable improvements (Kavukoğlu & İşci, 2023). This engagement not only helps determine areas for improvement, but also strengthens the relationship between patients and healthcare providers.

Continuous evaluation and continuous improvement are the foundations of TQM. No process is perfect, and there is always room for improvement. In a hospital context, this evaluation may involve regular audits, both internal and external, to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the practices that have been implemented. Furthermore, applying the principles of kaizen, which means “continuous improvement,” can foster a culture where staff continually look for ways to improve their work. Creating a reward mechanism for improvement ideas from staff can also encourage active participation and innovation (Citybabu & Yamini, 2022). By remaining focused on evaluation and improvement, hospitals can make consistent progress in creating safer and more efficient environments for their patients and healthcare workers.

By ensuring that all these elements are integrated and implemented consistently, implementing Total Quality Management in hospitals not only allows improving the quality of health services but also ensures the long-term sustainability of the system.

### **The Impact of TQM Implementation on Service Quality**

The implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) in health services has a significant positive impact on service quality, with one of the most frequently observed outcomes being increased patient satisfaction. Higher quality of service is achieved through a holistic TQM approach, where the patient is considered at the center of all improvement activities. It includes both the technical aspects of healthcare and the emotional aspects of the patient experience (Baig et al., 2024). With a strong focus on personalized care, clear communication, reduced waiting times, and responsive complaint

handling, patients tend to feel more valued and satisfied with the service they receive.

TQM also has an impact on increasing operational efficiency and effectiveness. TQM principles such as data-based decision making, continuous improvement (kaizen), and staff involvement and empowerment ensure that hospital processes run more smoothly, reduce waste, and increase resource utility. Reducing variance in clinical and administrative processes through standardization of procedures leads to increased consistency in the care provided. This increased operational efficiency not only has the potential to reduce costs, but also contributes to reduced medical errors and increased patient safety (Kazancoglu et al., 2023).

TQM has a direct impact on the quality of clinical services provided. Through continuity of assessment, performance benchmarking, and continuous feedback, health practitioners are encouraged to make improvements in their clinical practice. By focusing on evidence-based practice and continuous education for medical staff, hospitals are able to provide care that is relevant to the latest and best standards in medical science (Swarnakar et al., 2023). This quality improvement has an impact on improving health outcomes, such as higher recovery rates, reduced post-treatment complications, and reduced readmission rates, all of which lead to increased reputation and trust in the health facility.

The implementation of TQM strengthens collaboration between departments and disciplines within health service organizations. A multidisciplinary approach is the key to understanding and solving problems from various perspectives, integrating expertise from various fields to improve service quality (Agarwal & Ojha, 2022). Improved communication and coordination between teams facilitates efficient information exchange and faster, more informed decision making. Teams consisting of individuals from various disciplines and departments can more easily adapt to change and respond to challenges with innovative and effective solutions. This cross-functional collaboration also promotes an organizational culture that is more inclusive and open to learning and continuous improvement (Bagherian et al., 2023).

The positive impact of TQM is not only felt by patients but also by employees. Through the implementation of TQM, each team member feels more valued and has an important role in the quality improvement process. This increases employee job satisfaction, motivation and loyalty. Increased employee involvement in the decision-making process and designing

improvements contributes to a more positive and productive work environment. This work environment that supports professional and personal development not only benefits individual employees but also increases team effectiveness, which ultimately contributes to improving the quality of services provided to patients (Todorović-Spasenić et al., 2023).

With all the improvements in service quality, operational efficiency, patient satisfaction, and employee motivation, hospitals or health institutions that implement TQM will enjoy significant benefits in the form of a strong reputation and public trust. A reputation as a high-quality healthcare provider attracts more patients, top healthcare talent, and possibly investment. This trust and positive image strengthens the market leader's position and differentiates it from competitors, providing a significant competitive advantage (Islam & Salam, 2022). In the digital and social media era where health service comparisons have become easily accessible, strengthening reputation through high quality health services has become an invaluable asset (Alqasmi & Ahmed, 2023).

In conclusion, implementing TQM in the health care sector not only improves the quality of clinical services but also optimizes operational efficiency, increases patient and employee satisfaction, and strengthens public reputation and trust. This shows how important the TQM approach is in building a high-quality and sustainable health care system.

### **Challenges and Solutions in Implementing TQM**

One of the main challenges in implementing Total Quality Management (TQM) is integrating TQM methods and principles into the overall organizational culture. Changing organizational culture requires time, patience, and especially commitment from all levels, from the top level to employees at the lowest level (Sentika & Arissaputra, 2023). Experience and research show that without strong commitment from top management, TQM efforts often fail to achieve the desired results. Resistance from employees, who may feel uncomfortable with change or doubt the value of new initiatives, can also be a significant obstacle.

To overcome these challenges, it is important for leaders to model behavior that promotes quality and continuous improvement. Effective training and communication are the keys to empowering employees with the knowledge and skills necessary to implement TQM (Kumar et al., 2023). Leaders must actively demonstrate their commitment to TQM by engaging in improvement initiatives, recognizing and celebrating successes, and providing

constructive feedback. Creating an environment where employees feel supported and appreciated when contributing to TQM initiatives can help reduce resistance to change (Laureani et al., 2023).

Another challenge often faced in implementing TQM is the development and implementation of an effective performance measurement system. Without proper measurement, it is difficult to objectively evaluate whether improvement efforts are achieving the desired results. This can result in wasted resources and loss of motivation among the team. As a solution, organizations can develop clear and measurable key performance indicators (KPIs), which support strategic objectives and enable monitoring of progress in real time. Modern information technology offers tools to collect and analyze performance data efficiently (Susanto et al., 2024). In this case, regular training on how to use data for decision making can help ensure that the entire team is able to contribute to the organization's quality goals.

One of the challenges that often arises in implementing TQM is the difficulty in maintaining consistency and focus on quality improvement initiatives in the long term. Initial enthusiasm can fade with time and daily business pressures, which can cause prioritization of TQM initiatives to decrease. Fatigue due to constant change and an increasing number of initiatives can lead to a decline in employee participation and commitment to the program (Tedjakusuma et al., 2024).

As a solution, companies must build a continuous improvement system that is integrated with normal operational processes. Education and training must be continuous and integrated activities in employee professional development. A reward and incentive system can be implemented to provide recognition for employee efforts in improving quality. Utilization of quality management tools such as Six Sigma and kaizen can encourage a focus on continuous improvement (Habibah et al., 2024). Additionally, setting realistic targets and careful review of progress can help ensure that TQM remains a priority and leads to sustainable results.

The implementation of TQM may also be hampered by the lack of integration of TQM practices across all departments and functions within the organization. Sometimes, only a few departments truly adopt TQM principles, while others stick to their old practices, making quality improvement efforts unbalanced and ineffective (Primaditya et al., 2024).

It is important for organizations to ensure that TQM practices are implemented uniformly throughout the company. This involves alignment of systems and procedures, standardized training among departments, and open



sharing of information about TQM successes and challenges. Cross-functional teams can be facilitated to collaborate on quality improvement projects, thereby encouraging synergy and mutual learning. These coordinated TQM initiatives not only increase effectiveness across the organization but also strengthen a cohesive quality culture (Lasiana & Hidayatulloh, 2022). If all organizational units move together with the same vision and goals, then the possibility of successful implementation of TQM will be much greater.

## CONCLUSION

Evaluation of various studies on the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) in the hospital environment shows that TQM has a significant impact in improving the quality of health services. Core TQM practices, such as an increased focus on patient satisfaction, involvement of all employees in quality improvement initiatives, and an emphasis on a systematic approach to process management, significantly contribute to improving healthcare standards. Adoption of TQM in hospitals not only increases operational efficiency but also reduces the incidence of medical errors, demonstrating a direct relationship between the implementation of TQM and improved patient safety.

Additionally, case studies focusing on hospitals that successfully implemented TQM highlight the importance of strong leadership and commitment from the top for long-term success. Hospitals that implement TQM with a serious and structured strategy, involving continuous employee training and establishing cross-departmental work teams for improvement projects, show better results in terms of patient satisfaction and service quality. This confirms that while challenges in TQM implementation exist, a systematic approach supported by management can overcome these obstacles and result in significant improvements in the quality of service in hospitals.

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