

Key Success Factors of Total Quality Management (TQM) for the Hospitality Sector: A Critical Review of the Literature

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Abstract

The main aim of this paper is to find the key practices of TQM, implementable into hospitality sector by reviewing the literature of both service and manufacturing sector, and to outline key practices of TQM to develop a comprehensive and feasible quality framework for managers of SMEs to adopt the best TQM practices that enhance operational efficiency through quality improvement and to achieve optimal results. The researcher has applied a systematic literature review strategy to achieve the overall aim of this study. The systematic literature review has focused more on explaining the concepts comprehensively and in an organised manner. In this regard, the outline of the literature has been designed in such a manner, to go from a general perspective to a broader perspective to provide an in-depth discussion of the research topic. Data relevant to the research has been collected from scholarly articles and previous studies, to provide a clear understanding of the topic. Finally, this research makes an original contribution in the academic field as it enhances the knowledge of TQM among the managers and quality practitioners concerning key TQM practices, which are directly associated and can be implemented in the hospitality industry.

Keywords: Total Quality Management • Critical success factors • Customer satisfaction competitors • Service Industry • Manufacturing Industry

Introduction

In the present business era, organisations are operating in a highly competitive environment as there has been the continuous introduction of new competitors in the industries. Therefore, quality becomes an important issue, which not only needs to be addressed but considered also as a competitive edge within the hospitality sector [1] which can improve market share, profitable outcomes and the operational performance of any company [1,2]. Researchers and experts have continually argued about the importance of improving product quality and their service level in the intensely competitive business environment. In this regard, Gimenez et al. [3] proposed that significant improvement in the extent of product quality and service level provides organisations with an opportunity to increase their operational and financial performance, as well as the profitability of the companies in the long-term. Considering the importance of total quality management, both developing and developed nations have relied on it to ensure that they achieve superiority over their competitors in terms of quality and consistency [4].

Further, the previous studies tried to find the core practices of total quality management, but those studies were very limited [5] not clear and confident regarding key TQM practices which are directly associated and could be implemented in the hospitality sector. However, their ultimate findings revealed that TQM has several factors which apply to service and manufacturing sector. Further, a long list of factors and incomprehensive knowledge of TQM [1], were provided without clarification in respect to the hospitality industry, also the lack of purpose to make TQM more attractive and easier to implement in the organisations, particularly in hospitality, where company's financial and competitive performance can be enhanced through quality improvement. After a detailed and considerable analysis of TQM studies, the researcher summarised that there is a clear lack of an

adequate and feasible model of TQM for the hospitality industry. Besides, in a challenging and fierce competition in the industry, hotels are under pressure in terms of quality improvement [6-9]. Therefore, a demanding needs situation exists to assess TQM in the hospitality sector especially to assist the hotels to implement the most suitable and ideal TQM practices in their domain to ensure financial and competitive growth through quality improvement.

Moreover, through this study, the limited information about total quality management in the hospitality sector would be increased as the study has presented an in-depth analysis of the underlying factors of total quality management. This will eventually expand the availability of information for future researchers.

Literature Review

TQM concept

The concept of quality refers to the standard of anything that is examined and/or measured against something that is of the same domain or is considered as the benchmark in any regard. In a research study carried out [10] has been stated that quality has a pragmatic interpretation in manufacturing, engineering and business as the superiority or non-inferiority of anything. This can also be defined as something suitable for its purpose along with satisfying the expectations of consumers.

Further, quality has also become an institutional standard pivotal to the effective performance in the market, a standard that organisations (irrespective of whether it is private, public or voluntary) are anticipated to approve to acquire legitimacy in the society.

Moreover, the concept of total quality in hospitality sector arose in the late 1980s. In 1980 the notion of Total Quality Management was considered as a strategic policy which had been implemented by focusing all the resources of an organisation to achieve quality excellence [11]. In the 1980s, a new phase of management and quality control began. In this era, most of the western companies started to introduce their initiatives of quality after observing the success of Japan in employing quality issues.

In this manner, the concept of total quality management became the centre of focus for the western companies and their movement for quality.

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The concept of total quality management developed as a catchall phrase for strategies that are quality-focused for the broad spectrum. It has been specified in the research study [12] that total quality management refers to making and installing permanent changes in the climate of the organisation to ensure that employees can improve their ability to provide demanded services and products that might create value for the consumers.

According to a study [6,13-15] it had been determined that there is no significant concrete definition and uniform approach of the notion of Total Quality Management, it has been defined by different authors in different ways [16].

- Quality “Can be judged by the customer”.

It is further stated by a study [17] in his landmark book (Out of the Crisis); “Quality can be defined only in terms of the agent. Who is the judge of quality? In the mind of the production worker, he produces quality if he can take pride in his work. Poor quality, to him, means loss of business, and perhaps of his job. Good quality, he thinks, will keep the company in business”.

- “TQM is a continuous improvement process for individuals, groups and whole organisations. What makes TQM different from other management processes is the concentrated focus on continuous improvement” [18].
- “TQM is a management approach that ensures mutual co-operation of everyone in an organisation and associated business processes to produce products and services that meet and, hopefully, exceed the needs and expectations of customers” [19].

Entry of TQM in the hospitality sector

In the hospitality industry, TQM was first used when Quality Assurance (QA) was introduced in the 1980s. In 1980 the notion of Total Quality Management was considered as a strategic policy which had been implemented by focusing all the resources of an organisation to achieve quality excellence [20]. Specifically, the implementation of quality management in the hospitality industry started in 1982 when the American hospitality industry implemented QA Systems and achieved excellent outcomes. Quality has great importance in the hospitality industry [21]. Further, in the last decade, many hospitality organisations have shown more interest in the concept of TQM. However, few hotels have heard about TQM and therefore there is still a lack of literature about TQM in hotels. According to the study [14] hotels as a significant part of hospitality industry, it is viable to suggest that quality management had started from the year 1980 in the hotel service industry, the study also suggested that hotel industry still struggles to keep on pertaining an ideal performance and improved revenue streams [14]. According to the study [1] that studies on TQM and hospitality are limited. It shows total 88 studies published from 2011 to 2018 data extricated from online sources such as Emerald, Science Direct, ELSEVIER, Deepdyve, Research Gate, Pro Quest, etc. Mostly studies were on manufacturing side and only 15.91% of the total 88 studies are on hospitality, further stated that particularly on hotels, only 9.09% of the total 88 studies are on hotel sector. After a detail and considerable analysis on TQM studies researcher concluded that there is a clear lack of appropriate model of TQM with applicable practices in the literature, particularly in hotel sector.

- This is further supported by Sule et al. They found that implementation of TQM in the hotel enterprises are very scanty and highly insignificant therefore this area needs to address and explored further. As expectations of customers and potential customers have escalated, hospitality organisations have found the implementation of quality to be an important competitive component in the global market. Moreover, the studies conducted by a study [22] also indicated limited efforts towards establishing a link between market competition intensity and total quality management processes and practices in the hospitality industry, especially hotels. Therefore, demanding needs exist to find the

key practices of TQM in hospitality sector specially to assist hotels, to implement most suitable and ideal TQM practices in their domain to ensure quality improvement and financial growth through quality process.

Critical Success Factors of TQM

According to CSFs of TQM can be described as “the best practices of TQM implementation” [23]. Saraph, et al. defined critical factors as “critical areas of managerial planning and actions that must be practised to achieve effective quality management in business unit”. The main objective of the technique of CSF is to determine the main activities in which a company must focus its attention. Other additional objectives would be to assist in the planning of activities and resources, as well as to delineate the key areas by facilitating the assignment of priorities within it [24]. Further, in the contemporary business era, companies need to identify and evaluate the key quality factors of total quality management before its implementation because successful TQM implementation often associated with CSFs, is responsible for achieving business excellence [6,24-26].

Thus, it is required to understand the concept of TQM and its success factors to determine the level of commitment and resources required for its successful implementation [25]. Total quality management is a complicated procedure that also considers the company's management style, policy, culture and size. There is no one standard procedure or formula that can be followed to identify the key factors of TQM. Therefore, an extensive literature review was carried out by the researcher to explore the concept and key practices of TQM by leading authors who demonstrated various approaches in the quality improvement process, such as Deming, Crosby, Feigenbaum, Saraph, et al., Ahire, et al., Flynn, et al. Black and Porter, Yusof and Aspinwall, etc.

Though much has been written concerning the critical factors of total quality management and their impact on company performance. Saraph et al. were amongst the pioneers [27] that focused on systematically attempting to organise and synthesise the various prescriptions (i.e. critical success factors) that have been used to measure the organisational quality management. The researchers have presented 8 key factors in their study, namely; leadership, employee involvement, training, supplier management, product design, process management, quality data and role of the quality department [16]. Saraph et al. considered these factors as requisites for successful implementation of TQM and to gain the benefits of TQM in the hotel industry. Researchers further pointed out the operational measures to better understand the quality management practices, while building models and theories about the critical factors of quality management to improve quality performance and quality environment.

Whereas, a study [28] presented 10 benchmarks of quality improvement including leadership, continuous improvement, teamwork, quality culture, etc. Further, Feigenbaum considered ‘leadership’ as a key factor in quality improvement by implementing quality in all departments of the organisation through the involvement of the entire manpower. On the other hand, a study conducted by Flynn, et al. presented a list of 7 key factors of TQM including; top management role, quality policy, supplier relationship, employee involvement, process management. These practices are recommended to deploy at an operational level rather than organisational level, through the involvement of the workforce at all levels [16].

From a study conducted by a study [29] to identify key factors of TQM by adapting MBNQA (Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award), is the highest quality recognition award that became highly successful and valued in the US after the Deming Prize, and was first awarded in 1988. This award was established in order to raise the awareness regarding quality management, while recognising the companies across the US that have implemented systems of quality management successfully [30,31]. The findings were based on four hundred plus questionnaires where the response rate was 44%, and came up with 10 key success factors of TQM which were critically important including; strategic quality policy, quality culture, customer and

employee's relationship, supplier management, leadership, communication, teamwork, quality improvement, etc. [16,32]. Further, Black SA [29] argued that TQM has become a significantly important aspect for companies operating in the hospitality industry; therefore, the companies should focus extensively on strategic quality management to achieve the desired goals and objectives in the most profitable manner. Furthermore, they argued that strategic quality management is an important factor for TQM implementation in the hospitality industry.

Moreover, the findings of Ahire, et al. suggested 12 key TQM practices based on the literature, which were more applicable towards manufacturing side. The main objective was to establish a valid and reliable technique to measure quality practices that affect product quality [16]. Further, the findings of Hodgetts et al. indicated that implementation of TQM in the service industry can only be successful if the top management (i.e. managers and senior managers) are actively involved in the process, followed by an extensive focus on the customers, employee training and development, their empowerment and collective decision-making process. Amongst the empirical studies regarding the critical success factors, the research study conducted by a study [27] has been considered the most prominent as it has offered several CSFs concerning the service industry [32].

According to a study [27], the most important factors that can result in the success and/or failure of TQM in the service industry are; leadership, continuous improvement, quality assurance, human resource management and development, working environment, organisational culture and continuous feedback from the customers.

A study [33] indicated that Australian companies have achieved the desired level of quality and customer satisfaction through the successful integration of factors like; employee involvement and empowerment, strategic planning, continuous training and development of employees and extensive management of the customers. Further, in the hotel industry [34] found 7 key factors namely; top management role, training, employee satisfaction, empowerment, participation, teamwork and change [35]. Furthermore, a research study conducted by Dayton, he argued that communication, customer satisfaction, quality management, and teamwork play an influential role in offering the customers superior level services for TQM.

Another study conducted by a study [16] argued that the 7 CSF found in the Turkish SMEs were; top management role and support, quality management concerning suppliers, quality management and QA, employee relationship and training and development of suppliers concerning quality. Further, a study conducted by Sohal, et al. demonstrated 5 critical factors of TQM namely; customer focus, management commitment, total participation, problem solving and statistical quality control. The study conducted by Enz, found nine critical factors of TQM.

Moreover, Khanna et al. noted four success factors, which are:

1. Develop a sustained and visible commitment on the part of management.
2. Educate all participants
3. Establish clear expectations and carefully select a project leader's TQM
4. Select strategically the most important TQM projects

Kumar et al. identified four elements as part of a successful implementation of TQM projects, according to a review of the literature and interviews conducted with leaders in the implementation of TQM:

1. Involve management.
2. Promote and accept cultural changes.
3. Train those involved in the change.
4. Manage and properly select projects

A study [34] found 13 critical factors of TQM from a study conducted

in 3, 4- and 5-star hotels in Iran, based on Kanji's quality model. Further, an extensive list of 17 factors was presented by a study [2] conducted in the Indian service industry including banking, healthcare, hospitality and communication, from information obtained from 162 top and middle-level managers. A study conducted by a study [7] to determine the relationship between TQM practices and company performance in the Spanish service industry presented 5 critical factors. Furthermore, a recent study conducted by a study [35] presented 7 critical factors of TQM implementation namely; leadership, continuous improvement, supplier quality, employee satisfaction, customer focus, training and process management.

CSF's in-service industry and manufacturing industry (cross comparison)

The application of the concept of TQM is relatively new in the service organisation as compared to factories and industries operating across the globe. It has been indicated that the concept of TQM has rarely been used by service organisations considering its requirements and complexities [27,36,37].

In this regard, a study [38] argued that the significant increase in the competitiveness level, as well as the continually changing demands and requirements, has given rise to the concept of TQM in the service industry. Taking this into consideration, a study [39] have suggested that the implementation of TQM in the service industry is quite different from its implementation in the industrial organisations because industries offer tangible products; whereas the services offered by service organisations are intangible and cannot be measured with ease and convenience. In simpler words, the management can measure and evaluate the quality being offered to the customers, followed by the quality of raw materials being acquired by the suppliers; however, assessing and measuring the quality of service is significantly more difficult [2].

Furthermore, a study [40] argued that TQM tools and practices are significantly different in comparison to the service sector in terms of processes, product quality, operations and customer association and affiliation. Furthermore, Rajendran et al. argued that the quality and process are keenly observed by manufacturing firms; whereas service organisations consider customer approval significantly important. With this consideration, it has become clear that the CSFs of service organisations are significantly different from the manufacturing firms [2,41]. The most important CSFs of TQM in the service industry are based on behavioural and human factors like customer satisfaction, employee satisfaction, as well as the job stress [2,42] in this regard, highlighted that CSFs for companies operating in the service industry include; employee personality, customer satisfaction, top management support and commitment, job stress, information system management and employee satisfaction. Furthermore, the study conducted by Brun indicated that there are approximately 6 CSFs for TQM including; management commitment, effective communication, customer satisfaction, teamwork, training and development and process management.

Similarly, a study [43] indicated that the CSFs for service organisations are customer satisfaction, leadership, training and development, information system management, employee education and communication.

Results

After conducting an extensive literature review, it is evident that a variety of critical success factors was proposed concerning total quality management while relating the critical success factors to both the service and manufacturing industries. However, the majority of the CSFs proposed after 2011 were linked to the previous studies; thus, indicating that the new CSFs were based on the findings of earlier scholars and authors. For this reason, the current study has selected six common critical factors that were listed after an extensive review of the literature and were common in service and manufacturing industry, to make easy the implementation of TQM, particularly in the hospitality industry, which is lacking in the literature [1,5,9].

The below six main and important factors of Total Quality Management were selected by following the proposed criteria by a study [44] the study then suggested three steps to be followed to select the critical factors.

Following are the Arumugam's three steps:

a) The practice or factor should be identified as a core element for both manufacturing and service industries

The application of the concept of TQM is relatively new in the service

Table 1. Hard and Soft Phase of TQM.

Hard TQM	Soft TQM
Statistical Process Control	Top Management Role
Continuous Improvement	Customer Focus
Product Design	Supplier Relationship
Quality Tool and Techniques	Training and Education
Process Management	Empowerment
Benchmarking	Employee Relations

Table 2. TQM Factors and Supporting Literature.

TQM	Year	Supporting Literature
Quality Policy	1993	Oakland and Porter
	1994	Oakland and Porter
	1996	Black and Porter
	1997	Thiagaragan and Zairi; Kanji and Yui
	1999	Ross
	2012	Al-Ababneh and Lockwood
	2016	Bouranta and Psomas
	2016	Ali and Khatoon [46]
Top Management Commitment	1979	Crosby [47]
	1986	Deming
	1989	Feigenbaum; Saraph et al
	1990	Deming Prize; Baldrige Award; European Quality Award; Australian Quality Award; Canadian Quality Award; Kanji
	1993	Juran
	1994	Motwani et al
	1995	Powell [48]
	1996	Black and Porter; Ahire et al
	1999	Zairi
	2000	Oakland
	2005	Psoma and Jaca
	2008	Claver-Cortas
	2009	Deros, et al. 2009
	2014	Milovanovic, V; Misra
2016	Sule, et. al	
2018	Yeng, et al; Sumathi, et al.	
2019	Obeidat, et al.	
Continuous Improvement	1990	Kanji, G. K
	2007	Al-Marri et al.
	2010	Fotopoulos and Psomas; B. et al [49]
	2011	Dixit Garg, T.K. Garg,
	2012	Al-Ababneh and Lockwood
	2014	Misra,
	2015	Yunoh and Ali
	2017	Sule, et al
2019	Obeidat, et al.	
Quality Improvement	1988	Garvin; Juran
	1993	Spechler; Kanji et al
	1995	Powell; Badri et al
	1998	George and Weimerskirch
	1999	Zairi
	1999	Ross
	2014	Misra
Training and Education	1989	Saraph et al
	1990	Kanji
	1994	Motwani et al
	1996	Black and Porter
	1997	Ghobadain and Gaeller
	2001	Mathews et al; Evans and Lindsay
	2014	Milovanovic, V; Misra
	2016	Bouranta and Psomas

Employee Empowerment	1993	Juran; Ramirez and Loney
	1999	Ross; Zairi
	2000	Zhang et al
	2001	Evans and Lindsay
	2012	Al-Ababneh and Lockwood
	2014	European Quality Award; Canadian Quality award; Milovanovic,V; Misra
	2018	Yeng, et al

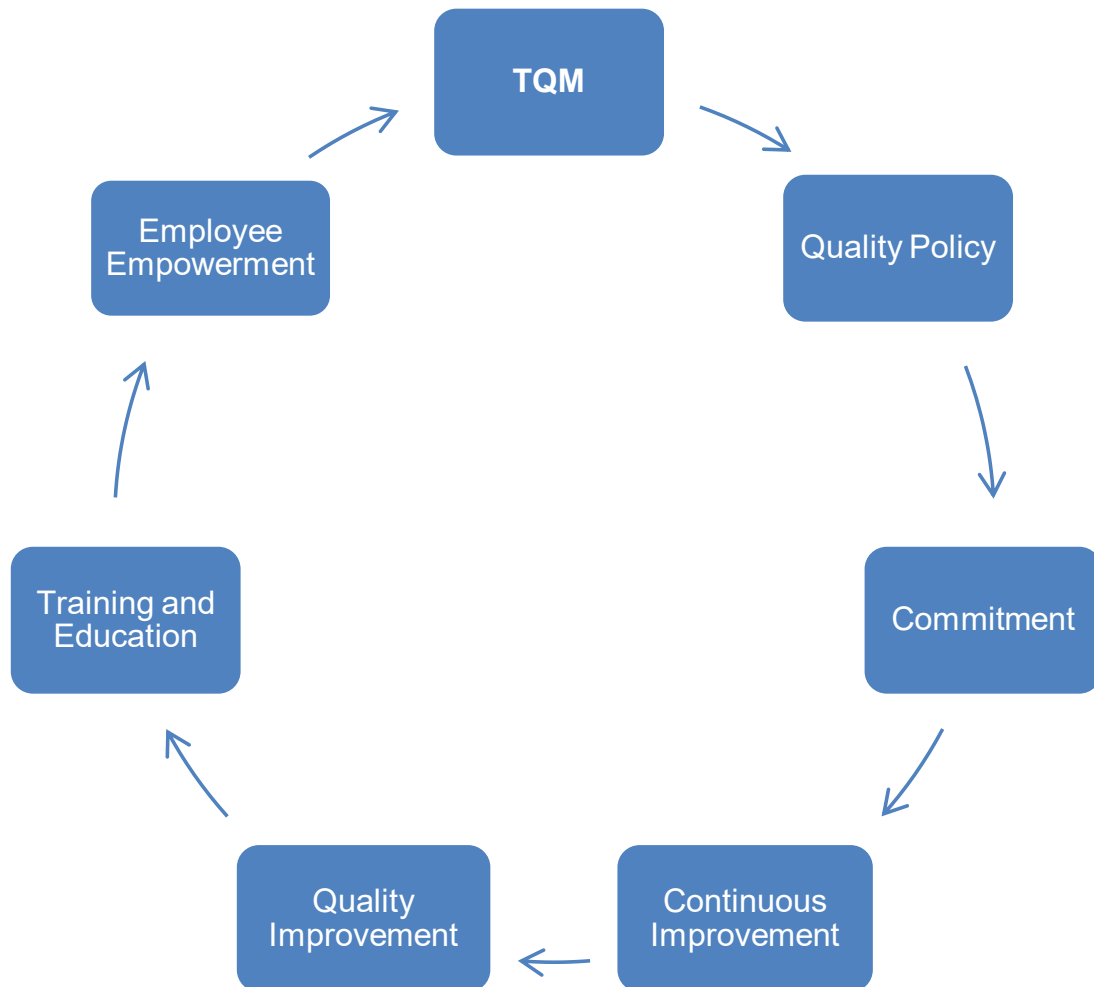


Figure 1. CSFs Selected.

organisation as compared to factories and industries operating across the globe. In fact, it has been indicated that the concept of TQM has rarely been used by service organisations considering the requirements and complexities. In this regard, a study [38] argued that the significant increase in the competitiveness level, as well as the continually changing demands and requirements has given rise to the concept of TQM in the service industry.

With this into consideration, a study [39] has suggested that the implementation of TQM in the service industry is quite different from the implementation in the industrial organisations considering the fact that industries offer tangible products; whereas the services offered by service organisations are intangible and cannot be measured with ease and convenience. In simpler words, the management can measure and evaluate the quality being offered to the customers, followed by the quality of raw materials being acquired by the suppliers; however, assessing and measuring the quality of the service is significantly difficult [2]. Furthermore, a study [40] argued that TQM tools and practices are significantly different

in comparison to the service sector in terms of processes, product quality, operations and customer association and affiliation.

Furthermore, Rajendran et al. argued that the quality and process are keenly observed by manufacturing firms; whereas service organisations consider customer approval significantly important. With this into consideration, it has become evidently clear that the CSF of service organisations is significantly different from the manufacturing firms [2,41]. The most important CSFs of TQM in the service industry are based on the behavioural and human factors like customer satisfaction, employee satisfaction, as well as the job stress [2]. A study [42] in this regard, highlighted that CSF for companies operating in the service industry include; employee personality, customer satisfaction, top management support and commitment, job stress, information system management and employee satisfaction. Therefore, after in-depth reviewing the literature, the researcher has concluded and argued that there are still some critical factors which are common and prominent in both service and manufacturing industry such as top management role, quality strategy, continuous improvement,

quality improvement, training and development, employee empowerment, though their application depends on the size and nature of the organisation business and its willingness to adopt TQM practices as well

b) Elements should be based on hard and soft TQM

According to a study [45], TQM practices has been classified as hard and soft phase by different authors, some practices are considered as soft elements of TQM (when focus of the practices on service sector and human factors are involved, such as customer satisfaction, training, quality policy, customer focus, etc.) and others considered as hard (where focus is more on manufacturing and production side, less human factors involved, such as quality control, quality measurement, quality tools and techniques, etc.) (Table 1).

c) Included infamous quality awards accepted by academics and practitioners [6,26,44-49].

The critical factors selected are as follows:

1. Quality Policy
2. Top Management Commitment
3. Continuous Improvement
4. Quality Improvement
5. Training and Education

Employee Empowerment

This study aims to prepare a precise and reliable quality framework applicable to hospitality for quality improvement, which eventually helps to improve an organisation's efficiency. Further, most of these factors were discussed by TQM gurus, quality management models and found as common aspects of their studies in the literature, this is also one of the reasons to select the following factors for this study. However, there is no single solution for every situation, each company has its own culture, practices, policies and service delivery process. So, the quality strategy will vary from company to company and accordingly to the situation (Figure 1 and Table 2).

Conclusion

After critically reviewing the literature this study has advanced the TQM theory by providing six critical elements of TQM which has been selected from both manufacturing and service industries, by keeping in view the hard and soft phase of TQM and the wider concept of hospitality businesses. As per researcher opinion, each factor is directly or indirectly relevant to the hospitality industry business and other service sectors as well, where customer service and satisfaction is concerned. Each factor is directly impacting on performance and quality management implementation process.

The study also revealed that the implementation of TQM has been widely accepted in the manufacturing industries, but service industry remains limited in TQM implementation, particularly the hospitality sector. The framework is provided to facilitate TQM implementation in the sector, which will produce positive results in return on overall performance. TQM has played an influential role in the hospitality industry, though the concept has been perceived to be only applicable in the manufacturing industry.

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How to cite this article: Mudassar Hussain, "Key Success Factors of Total Quality Management (TQM) for the Hospitality Sector: A Critical Review of the Literature." *Arabian J Bus Manag Review* 10 (2020): 394 doi: 10.37421/AJBMR.2020.10.394