

Total Quality Management in the Greek public sector

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Abstract

Total Quality Management (TQM) has been extensively examined in the private sector, whereas study results in the public sector have been restricted internationally, particularly in Greece. According to the available literature, quality models developed and applied for the public sector can lead to remarkable and necessary results for the continuity of the operation and sustainability of the organizations, such as cost reduction, improvement of facility management, citizen satisfaction, and overall organizational performance improvement. The purpose of this research is to investigate the key TQM practices employed in the Greek public sector. As a result, we used mixed research methods, including 15 semi-structured interviews with public sector personnel in charge of TQM implementation in their organization and 420 responses of an on-line structured questionnaire. Specifically, we used content analysis to analyze the interviews before developing an online structured questionnaire. Based on the quantitative data, exploratory factor analysis was used to test convergent and discriminant validity. The most significant TQM practices, according to this study, are leadership commitment, human resource management emphasis, customer/citizen focus, strategic planning, and education. Finally, the study has significant theoretical and practical implications because it adds to the existing literature and provides critical information to public sector executives in order for them to understand key TQM practices and make the best decisions regarding organizational quality and performance improvement.

Keywords: Greece, mixed research methods, performance, public organizations, TQM