

The mediating effect of advanced information systems between quality management practices and performance

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Abstract

Although many researchers have recently studied quality management practices in enterprises, little previous research has analysed the impact of these practices on overall performance in this field for SME. Moreover, these studies have mostly focused on mega-sized companies or on industrial sectors. The main objective of this study was to examine the motivations for the adoption of quality management practices and the effects exerted by the advanced management information systems as mediating factors in a sector consisting of highly competitive companies with a high mortality rate in recent years: travel agencies. The results were based on a survey completed by 185 travel agencies with less than 50 employees, covering over 5% of the SME travel agencies in Spain. Structural equation modelling was used to analyse the links between the studied dimensions. The findings indicate that quality management practices have a positive, direct influence on the adoption of advanced management information systems and that the adoption of advanced management information systems has a positive, direct impact on financial performance. The results suggest that quality policies facilitate greater use of financial indicators but not in the use of nonfinancial indicators, where the key to better business performance lies. Therefore, the results of this paper indicate that being proactive about quality practices can provide travel agencies a great number of benefits through the implementation of advanced management information systems.

Keywords: quality management practices; advanced management information systems; firm's performance; travel agencies