Author's response to reviews

Title: Lessons from the Business Sector for Successful Knowledge Management in Health Care: A Systematic Review

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Version: 3 Date: 14 June 2011

Author's response to reviews: see over
Thanks are extended to reviewer for his insightful comments. We have used the feedback provided to improve the paper in the following ways:

MAJOR ESSENTIAL REVISIONS

1. In the Results section, page 4, second paragraph, you refer to the claim “… while KM promotes the transfer of tacit knowledge”, which differs from another claim in the first paragraph of the page 5, in the same section (“The predominant focus of many KM strategies is on technology and management of explicit …”). Although both statements are correct, considering the context of writing in each of them, it would be preferable to modify the wording of paragraphs so that it is not contradictory to read.

In both places we have modified the word to indicate that KM strategies encompass both explicit and tacit knowledge, as per the context of the related paragraphs.

2. In the Discussion section, page 13, first paragraph, you write “as described in the introduction of this paper”, then you list a group of ideas; could you explain in what sense are the ideas before listing them? In this explanation you can clarify if, for example, “KM strategies tend to be single initiatives” is an advantage or a disadvantage in the context of your claims. Also, because these are conclusive statements in your review, it is desirable to be clear what you describe.

This section of the paragraph has been revised to now read:

Nevertheless, KM experiences from the business sector can contribute to advancing the current KM status quo in health care. The health care environment, described in the introduction of this paper, can be characterized as such: 1) ICTs as current KM strategies in the health arena are static and do not support knowledge sharing, 2) Communities of practice and networks, as another popular KM strategy in the health arena, require attention in terms of long term sustainability, 3) the dominant evidence-based culture stresses research information, and as a consequence, less attention is devoted to tacit knowledge, and 4) KM strategies in the health arena tend to be single initiatives, which may limit effectiveness and sustainability. Below we elaborate on how to move forward in these four areas.

3. In the Discussion section, page 15, second paragraph, you write “Thus, the reviewed literature suggest...”. This paragraph seems confusing because it gives the impression that the review was on KM studies in the health sector. It would be important to clarify the writing. Moreover, if it is a conclusion, there is not enough evidence in the description of your literature review that supports this argument.
This statement was clarified and made a less definite conclusion in the following way:

“The reviewed literature of KM in the business sector suggests that a holistic or multilevel KM strategy may be useful for health care organizations to enhance embeddedness.”

MINOR ESSENTIAL REVISIONS

4. In the Results section, page 4, fourth paragraph, the acronym ICT had already been defined (section Background, page 1, paragraph 2).

The term “information communication technology” was replaced with ICT on page 4, paragraph 4 in the Results section.

5. In the Results section, page 4, second paragraph, you use the concepts of explicit and tacit knowledge, however, you did not define it beforehand. The article could be read by people without familiarity about the knowledge taxonomy. It is recommended that these concepts are described when first mentioned.

We have clarified the terms tacit knowledge and explicit knowledge on page 1, paragraph 2 in the Background section: “Tacit knowledge can be described as knowledge that is acquired through practice and experience and can be difficult to communicate (sometimes referred to as “know-how”), while explicit knowledge is often more formal, codified in writing and seen to be easier to communicate”.

6. In the Results section, page 10, first paragraph, you duplicated the reference number 6.

The duplication was removed.

7. In the Results section, page 11, second paragraph, you refer to “the challenges that accompany information technology”. The article could be read by people without knowledge about these challenges, therefore, it might be appropriate to describe what are the challenges that you are referring to.

We have added some common challenges that IT might pose for KM in the following phrase: “Finally, the challenges that accompany IT need to be addressed – for example, rapidly evolving technology that demands adaptation, or difficulties in using IT infrastructure in a way that is appropriate for the organization's needs.”

8. In the Results section, page 13, first paragraph, the acronym ICT had already been defined (section Background, page 1, paragraph 2).

“Information communication technologies” was changed to ICTs.
DISCRETIONARY REVISION

9. Two paragraphs start with the same redaction (In the Methods section, page 3, second paragraph; and in the Results section, page 3, third paragraph).

The phrase “The search strategy identified a total of 169 articles” was removed from the methods section and left in the results section.

We trust that we have addressed the reviewer’s feedback, and we look forward to a prompt e-publishing process.

Best regards

Anita Kothari, Nina Hovanec, Robyn Hastie, Shannon Sibbald