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# Contributions of Healthcare Management to Economic Development: Systematic Review

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## **Abstract**

*The study aims to identify the potential contributions of healthcare management in achieving sustainable economy. Using a Systematic Literature Review SLR method, the study adopted this approach which enables to provide numerous pointview and contextual perspectives in a particular topic. The study produced its results based on a comprehensive analysis connected to the roles of healthcare management in the intended settings through identified sets of inclusion criterion. The results showed growing interests in both internationally and nationally of healthcare management but still limited in developing countries especially Middle East due to various challenges, limited resources or governmental ignorance to this sector effects in Gross Domestic Product GDP. The study concluded and recommended to conduct a future study aims to broaden new efforts in terms of establish developed healthcare management capabilities. The results contribute to obtain a deep and better understanding of the healthcare management contributions in a developed economy.*

**Keywords:** *healthcare management, Middle East, economic development, systematic literature review*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

To achieving high performance of healthcare delivery systems, developing a professional healthcare management strategy is substantial to create an effective management in healthcare field. A number of studies found a link between management capabilities and the performance of healthcare systems; also the limits among management effectiveness in different levels have been articulated as essential restriction in achieving organizations objectives (Buchbinder et al., 2019). However, the system of healthcare management can be defined as sets of process that pursue to achieve long-term goals of healthcare services by providing adequate and skilled human, financial, and technical resources which may include strategic and operational processes like supply chain, human resources management, performance monitoring and control and corporate governance, without such those activities and resources can't achieve continuous success effectively and maximize professional development (Fetene, N et al., 2016).

Over Middle East region, healthcare management in particular is considered critical in the healthcare sector, where related available resources are important and efficient in the organization strategy to meet the national economic boom and achieve sustainable goals in healthcare industry. In several contexts of Middle East, the professionals in healthcare industry perform significant various roles to fill management objectives due to high educational levels they hold as well their respected status in the local society among people, and the technical expertise associated with the healthcare services being provided to the people also get the same esteem (Matovu et al., 2013). However, a lack of professional training related-management of physicians would influence the level of services provided and negatively affect them while doing their duties.

This research aims to analyse existing relevant reviewed literature in the field of healthcare management with a link of its economic contributions in the Middle East region and provide potential different thematic perspectives regarding healthcare management, and critically examine related theories and concepts in this field and how they can support effectively the national economy of a country. To address this knowledge gap, this study sought to discuss and understand the perceived contributions of healthcare management to economic development. Therefore, the study will examine how healthcare management can be used effectively in organisations to highly contribute to the economy of Middle East countries. Hence, the study addresses the main question as follow: To which extent the Middle East countries concerned with healthcare management systems? And how these systems can develop their national economies?

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The field of healthcare management evidently develops and provides professional services, which are considered core competencies. The definition of the concept of professionalism does not just include smart behaviour or look; however, expertise has provided path to define this concept, where having this aspect means providing a meaningful service to people in a way of professionalism and be beneficial to the services recipient with a belief that the real service is the main core of their job (Stefl, 2008). Indicating the idea of development also requires more focus on the importance of the skills related to being able to enhance the healthcare services and the value may added to the society and economy.

The development of the science of healthcare management began in the early years of the 1990s when several works emerged dealing with the possibility of applying a general management framework to the healthcare sector. The authors began investigating this problem which is so important for government's economies around the world when it became the demand for higher service levels was increasing as life expectancy increased. According to the research article of Ahmed and Hussain (2017), there are many benefits of creating an appropriate healthcare management team, especially when an organisation is willing to integrate and enhance some of its responsibilities within a quick time period. Healthcare management concepts have evolved over the years, and now they are considered dynamic and complex, carrying an ability to churn a number of employment opportunities in a nation, and allowing the organisations to grow. This healthcare industry can bring in many benefits for the countries and organisations if appropriate methodologies and technologies are utilised for elevating quality of operations.

The healthcare industry has become very diverse, and for this reason, it has become important to manage organizations involved in developing more appropriate technologies, when it comes to intense competition. According to Bissaillon et al. (2016), the healthcare management sector should take initiatives that could develop the nation's economy because this industry in the Middle East continue to grow when other sectors failed to contribute to the nation's economic development. Supporting the statement, Thanbancha (2016) wrote that healthcare management professionals should be serving as chief executives, planners, administrators, and managers in healthcare organisations because in this way economy of nation will also improve. Based on the above arguments, the need for financially strong healthcare industry is now considered a basic need of a nation, because it allows the government to attract investors from other nations. The healthcare industry can play an integral part in the development of a nation, by lifting the quality and attitude of a nation; however, it is also necessary for the management to focus on rapidly improving healthcare technologies, which speed up operations of the firms when carrying out their operations.

Qasim et al., (2018) reported that there are many requirements for healthcare industries to elevate their performance, especially by focussing on responsibilities' assigning. Nonetheless, Qasim et al., (2018) reported that "in the Middle East, most of the companies are unaware of the fact that they can contribute to the economic development of their nation but do not focus on it". Based on the above arguments, effective healthcare management can contribute to economic development of the nations, but the focus should be on the development of a proper framework so that investors from foreign nations can contribute to economic development of these nations.

Massive protests that move swiftly and widely the Middle East region since December 2010 ask for social justice and enhance life aspect of all citizens and failure of Middle East governments to provide a better and affordable healthcare services fuelled the growing discontent with striving delivered health as promised. In comparison with different regions over the world, Middle East countries have the lowest level in spending on healthcare systems and services. Furthermore, access to healthcare among these countries is unfair and the level of quality is less than expectations associated with long waiting time and usually with high rate of absenteeism of healthcare providers (Yazbeck et al., 2017). With raising several challenges encountering healthcare management in Middle East like burden of contagious diseases and malnutrition, these challenges adding more pressures on Middle EAST healthcare systems with significant outcomes and consequences on more future spend to develop healthcare systems management and productivity. These factors in addition financial strain and equality access quality care inspire this study to examine this important topic and the outcomes of developing current healthcare systems in Middle East.

### **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

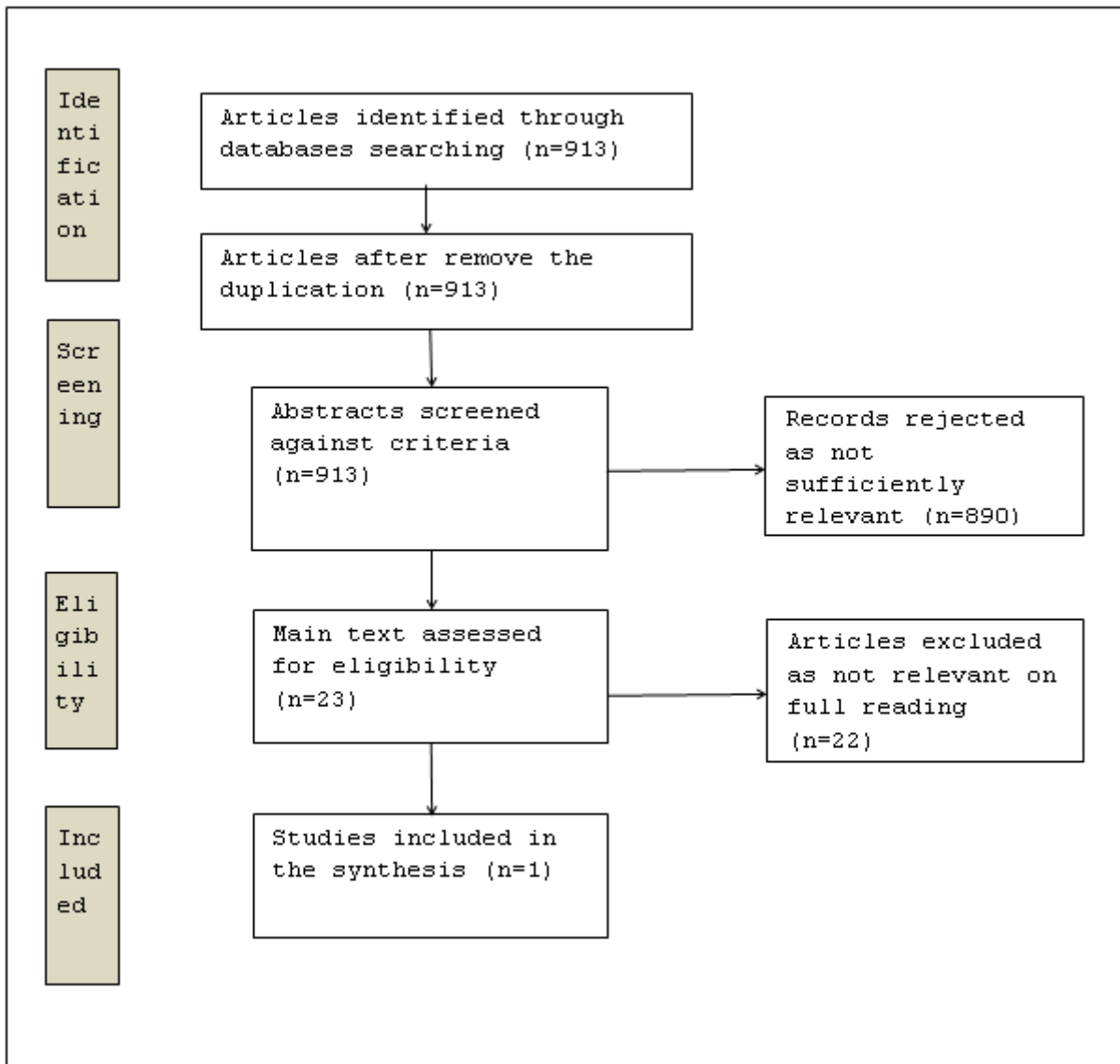
Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method is widely used in recent studies. Compared with traditional literature reviews, SLR is more objective, replicable, comprehensive, and can be performed in the same way of empirical studies (Okoli and Schabram, 2010). The beginning of this kind of research was in the medical, healthcare, and policy studies which focus on collecting the best and relevant evidences associated with certain topic in order to make scientific and policy recommendations and conclusions (Smith et al. 2011). This SRL specifically examined the research studies that discussed healthcare management importance in shaping economy in a given organizational setting. Since this study focus was obtaining contemporary insights on the empirical research of healthcare management contribution theory, and the study excluded the studies which mainly focus on model testing or measurement instruments. The method of this review requires comprehensive searching of relevant databases with identified keywords with willingness to including as much as possible all literatures on healthcare management role in developing national economies and maintain this focus on related literature that pertain the research objectives and questions (i.e., empirical studies that have examined healthcare management in organizational contexts).

#### **3.1 Search Method**

This study adopts secondary data method, which critical literature review methodology would be deployed for data collection. This methodology is selected to report some of the best findings in the domain of healthcare management to ensure that appropriate methodology is deployed. The SLR approach is mostly associated with many researches and it is appropriate for this study because it doesn't aim to develop a theory, it just reviews the impact of enhancing the management of healthcare industry on economics of the nation. Different relevant databases including related published studies will be identified; these databases are (Scopus Elsevier, Web of Science and Google Scholar). Selecting these databases in this review due to the large highly evaluated related studies of articles and peer review literature existed in those databases, the searching using several approaches such as electronic databases that easy to access through the university library system. These sources of study are considered worldwide recognized online databases used mostly to analyze the current available literature on the topic being studied. The databases will dug up to conduct the study by using English studies only and eliminate other languages, and peer-reviewed journal articles, and the study will pursued to include the most relevant studies and it does not claim that the databases used were thorough or perfect. All results were limited to English only peer-reviewed journal articles, and the review for published studies will conduct in a systematic style.

#### **3.2 Data Collection**

The current research as mentioned before followed the systematic review method as illustrated the PRISMA Diagram (Figure 1). The keywords are identified as searching criteria in online databases. These keywords include "healthcare management" AND "economic development" in the title and keywords of the articles searching in mentioned online databases and ranked as academic journals which have relevant studies in their titles. The articles duplication was skipped as well to avoid analyze the same papers again in the analysis. Then, the abstracts will be reviewed to identify the relevance of studies in healthcare management and economic development and growth. Works that irrelevant to this research were excluded to avoid bias and guarantee consistent scope.



The data collected in this literature review carried out through which the contributions done by the scholars would be assessed. In addition, themes of economic development would be drawn in the context of the Middle East so that the comparison of healthcare organizations can be done appropriately. The year of 2015 was selected as starting benchmark to collect the related works due to the changes in the philosophy of main concepts in business management in third millennium and the fact that healthcare management was associated with quality standards that has great effect on economic growth and development. The beginning of 2020 was selected also as the end point of this study to assure including the most recent academic journal articles regarding to the increasing numbers of studies which have addressed this widely important issue.

However, adopting this kind of research requires sets of inclusion and exclusion criteria. The initial searching need to include only the articles that match with identified inclusion criterion which are: (a) published in a peer-reviewed journal; (b) written in English; and (c) use the keyword “healthcare management” AND “economic development” OR “contribution”. A restriction of the year of publication intended to be placed. The number of articles only contain the described keywords will be retrieved from selected databases. Next, the study will check the duplicate of studies presented in multiple databases, and if any found, they will exclude from further analysis of this review. After recording the duplicated studies, they will be deleted to ensure the objectivity and transparency of the study. Once all related studies had been collected, the study will perform the second step which is focusing on screening the articles to assess their eligibility against inclusion criteria and then full text articles will retrieved for those that met the inclusion criteria. Articles that not achieve the specified inclusion criteria were excluded if any of these criteria not addressed in any sections of the respective study.

#### 4. RESEARCH RESULTS

As a study discussed the healthcare management and economic development, the keywords included in this study were healthcare management and economic development and considered during all searching process. The initial results founded provided surprising facts related to the topic studied which revealed scarcity among studies in Middle East which examine these concepts whereas the developed contexts have the majority of studies which evidence the serious concern with healthcare management and the strong belief among these states with the role of healthcare management in achieving high sustainable economic and protect social life which also influence in some way in building prosperous economics. Table 1 shows the methodology used in this study which include the keywords used, the length time was searched and the elements were used to get the relevant studies like title, abstract, keywords.

Collections/ databases	Web of Science (WOS) (2015-present); Scopus Elsevier (2015-present); Google Scholar (2015-present)
Keywords	Healthcare management AND economic development
Search within	Title; Abstract; Keywords
Resource type	Articles
Publication time length	2015 - present
Language	English
Research area	All

The articles selected were consistent with particular inclusion criteria and match with them until be included in this study. The studies collected generally investigate this issue regarding healthcare management which has grown tremendously, therefore, in this study only selected works that were published from 2015 onwards. Furthermore, the studies examined in this study were published in peer-reviewed journals and ranked in preferred databases and provided valid information and have the most impact in the field of healthcare management and also written in English. As a first step to analyze the sample included in this study, an overall check for themes discussed in the obtained studies which most of them review at least one keyword of this research and the reviewing process of the abstracts was done to assure they match with the inclusion criteria. In Table 2, the first result shows a total of 913 articles distributed as follow (Scopus: 545 articles; Web of Science WOS: 272 articles and Google Scholar: 96 articles). The second step removed the duplicated studies once found. In step 3, the abstracts of the articles were check based on the inclusion criterion lead to reduce further of 890 articles, which remain 23 studies. Applying the inclusion criteria in this paper, analyzing critically and checking the sections of introduction, methodology and findings of these publications in detail to assure they match with the desired inclusion criteria, lead to reject 22 articles due to their irrelevant content, thus they have being removed.

Databases selected	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria	Studies met criteria
Scopus (663)	Articles; Reviews	Book chapter; proceedings paper	545
	In English	Other languages	506
	2015-present	Before 2015	506
	Middle East	Other countries	0
WOS (302)	Articles; Reviews	Book chapter; proceedings paper	272
	In English	Other languages	250
	2015-present	Before 2015	250
	Middle East	Other countries	23
Google scholar (96)	Articles; Reviews	Book chapter; proceedings paper	96
	In English	Other languages	93
	2015-present	Before 2015	93
	Middle East	Other countries	0

Despite international interests of healthcare management in the development process and enhancing a high-performing system, the current attempts related how developing countries design and sustain a professional healthcare management which may also contribute in economic development has not been articulated. Effective healthcare management was a purpose of some studies which emphasize its importance in creation a high performing healthcare system. In addition, the results revealed that limited studies which have highlighted the link between healthcare management capacity and economic development and performance,

and the lack of managerial capacity at all levels has been indicated as a main constraint in the achievement of the national economic goals and other national development goals. Although defining the healthcare management as a process of achieving healthcare goals by using several resources like human, financial, and technical resources which also includes strategic and operational practices, no studies discuss this matter which these resources sought to effectively maximize economic outcomes.

The efficiency of healthcare management systems in the Middle East in terms of their resources use and economic outcomes evidenced that the systems in this region was shed lighted on the major determinants of efficiency to support healthcare management decisions. This efficiency in the developing healthcare management systems also has become growing significant in both national and international management levels (Dhaoui, 2019). Enhancing economic outcomes of the healthcare management system and controlling the costs was a primarily important significant issue in the Middle East region which need to be examined in future studies as declared by (World Bank, 2013). As mentioned before, the current literature discussions which highlighted the contributions of healthcare management in these regional economies were rare; therefore, this review tries to fill the research gap in this field which found little practical examinations of the efficiency of healthcare management in Middle East and its role in developing the economy or even social life of people. Using systematic literature review data analysis for a sample of three worldwide recognized databases, the review revealed presented determinants of healthcare management studies which discuss its part in establishing great economic boom in this region. Cross country reviewing of the studies conducted in the Middle East countries of efficiency that healthcare management systems have improved in terms to overall effect of economic, social and institutional country aspects.

Worldwide expenditures of healthcare services still continue to grow up and highlight on healthcare management systems which need to decrease the costs and increase the efficiency. Spending on healthcare systems is expected to increase annually at of 5.4% in the period of 2017–2022 to \$10.059 trillion, although the efforts purposed to control the costs associated with faster economic growth should maintain, the Gross Domestic Product GDP devoted to healthcare at 10.4% over the five years. In Middle East, the expenditures of healthcare services in 2017 reached 196 USD billions which proved the low concern in this sector comparing to other developed parts of the world like Western Europe which reached 1754 USD billion. Strengthening the effective primary healthcare management has become a national imperative over the world, the pursuit of more dynamic, sufficient and integrated healthcare management models remain inspired and targeted by many countries since long time which encourage to focus on healthcare management systems due to the advanced improvement of comprehensive healthcare management practices for all countries, and prioritize this matter among the overall country strategy (World Health Organization; 1978).

Healthcare sector performance is not only witnessed a strong dependent effect on the economy, but also on the healthcare management systems themselves. This relationship was underestimated in the collected studies which encourage conducting such this study to emphasize that the investment in healthcare management is not only a required but also an important priority for most economies. However, the healthcare management practices and systems in the Middle East region nowadays face more difficult and complex challenges which need also to be involved in studies of developing contexts because of these challenges are derived from contemporary global pressures, such as ageing population, growing prevalence of chronic diseases, and wide utilization and adopting of high advanced important health technologies. Moreover, the modern healthcare management systems should handle with increasing higher expectations of people and settle present challenges and problems found in healthcare environment within different settings.

There is a general trend of rising healthcare services expenditure per capita in different countries in study's panel. Moreover, healthcare expenditure growth rates increase much more rapidly than income growth rates in some countries. Sustainable growth is essential matters for developing countries which are characterized as emerging market economies. As it is known, capital accumulation is a main element of this growth and healthcare expenditure is a method assist in increasing advances in capital development. This study indicates that although there isn't an important difference regarding economic growth and healthcare expenditure, income levels of people is the major factor which determines the level of healthcare service provided. Therefore, it should be put in mind that in nearby recent years, the development level is not identified only by income levels, since the economic growth alone does not represent increasing also in social welfare.

The empirical findings of some studies also have indicated that income level fundamentally significant factor in terms to explain the differences among healthcare management for expenditure in this sector in some

countries. There is assumption that manifestation of the economic growth will increase the proportion of healthcare expenditure in total GDP. Conceptually, a healthy people can not only provide more effective and efficient work but also dedicate more of his/her time to productive operations. Since healthcare management is a core component in the investments of human capital, and the rising trends of healthcare management and expenditures would tend to lift labor force productivity, quality standards of life and social welfare. Healthcare services spending have also been believed to extend the life expectancy, decrease morbidity rates also mortality among infants. Therefore, the growth in healthcare management and expenditure has a positive effect on overall local GDP.

Limited studies which examined the issue of how to ensure the economic sustainability contributed through the healthcare management, while providing a great contribution to economic performance has become to the major priority of the policy agenda over the Middle East countries. From Table 2 it is clear that only one article was retrieved as a study has fully met the inclusion criteria used in this review which investigated the importance of healthcare management on developing the economy of Middle East countries. This finding illustrates that there is a large lack of studies which discussed these variables in a particular geographical setting. However there is a wide range of studies which examine the healthcare management with different variables. When the keywords “development” OR “economic” were used, hundreds of articles from Scopus, Web of Science and Google Scholar were retrieved but deep reading of their internal sections showed their irrelevance to this study and to be included. Therefore, highly recommended for future related studied to include more vital variables and issues with take more consideration to other parts of the world especially developing part to be targeted in these studies, and examine complex potential factors may provide positive effects in the whole country development.

## **5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The evidence from this systematic review of obtained literature from 2015 to present revealed the lack and shortage in healthcare management studies which link this field with country development in several aspects of economy especially in developing countries which the Middle East comes within this region. Also the role of healthcare management systems used to provide a great contribution in economic developing and shaping sustainable economy of those countries in addition creating an effectiveness of the local economy to achieve desired growth and ensure the competitive advantage in the current global competitive environment business which characterized with complexity was also limited within the current examined studies. Therefore, this systematic review may contribute to the current literature in different ways. For example, it tries to preserve the academic stream to gather relevant topic data. Moreover, the data were collected were from several recognized databases, which maintain great collection and benchmark in the quality of articles analyzed. The different methodological study articles published between 2015 to present were systematically reviewed and analyzed, following clear inclusion criteria and systemic processes. The relevant research associated with healthcare management and economic development literature was focused, exploring its results, modeling or relationships with other factors in different sectors and theoretical backgrounds.

Furthermore, the research question was addressed to highlight the importance of healthcare management in shaping Middle East countries' economy associated with several research objectives aimed to be achieved once the study has completed. Identifying the existed methods of healthcare management in the related organization in order to suggest better methods recommended to use was the main objective of this study, also providing theoretical basis for future potential trends of studies in the same area. The findings suggested that healthcare management research has been subject to growing interest since long time and the peak in healthcare management field publications still interested topic until now. This growing concern was a result of fundamental pursuit of organization to examine their healthcare management methods and assure they run in sufficient and effective ways to maintain long term national economic sustainability as a competitive advantage. Furthermore, the results also showed that although research in healthcare management is getting widespread, the topic still relatively contemporary and rare in some areas and need more focus and being analyzed and studied.

Also the importance of healthcare management methods adopted in emerging new economies over the world, but it is still characterized in the infancy phase especially in Middle East region. The recognition of the healthcare management concept and its application among the Middle East countries was limited due to the lack the consensus of the key conceptual and practical implementation. As a SLR methodological approach study, it identified, analysed and synthesised relevant timely literature associated to the topic interested in



order to set up a consensus of growing importance of healthcare management research among present academic works, as well to provide directions for future study based on a limited regional understanding while studying the types of healthcare management systems and the ways to manage them.

However, the reforms of healthcare management systems should be established in the organizational future policy to review the excessively development of the healthcare systems and its contribution; improving the quality of primary healthcare services; modernizing healthcare organization management; maintaining the control process over different expenditure; implementing training programs into healthcare services through staff continuous education and need evaluation process to achieve high quality integration with the provided services; enhance the productivity by adopting incentives programs; and capabilities building within major healthcare management systems.

To sum up, there are several limitations in this study, first, while this was a systematic literature review approach study, it was accessed only three databases (Scopus Elsevier, Web Of Science and Google Scholar) and only in healthcare management field with certain sets of inclusion criteria like English studies only in a specific setting (Middle East). Further work in additional setting with new inclusions should be considered in the future studies. The also study may be limited in its time period which just searched in the studies conducted in the last five years. These limitations suggest a future research direction. Furthermore, a work examines or focuses on the preferred healthcare management knowledge in other theoretical models nationally or internationally is recommended.

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