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Measuring Lean Six Sigma and quality performance for healthcare organizations

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Abstract

Purpose This study aims to investigate applications of Lean Six Sigma approaches and quality performance in Malaysian hospitals. It identifies five dimensions of Lean Six Sigma conformance (i.e. continuous quality improvement, Lean management initiatives, Six Sigma initiatives, patient safety and teamwork) and quality performance of the hospitals based on demographics such as gender, types of hospital and working experience.

Design/methodology/approach This study distributed 1,007 self-administered survey questionnaires to hospital staff resulting in 438 useful responses with 43.5 per cent response rate. Research data were analysed based on reliability analysis, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), independent samples t-tests and one-way ANOVA using SPSS version 23.

Findings Research findings indicate that there are significant differences between public and private hospital staff on Lean management initiatives, Six Sigma initiatives, patient safety and teamwork. Private hospital staff perceives Lean management initiatives, Six Sigma initiatives, patient safety and teamwork more favourably compared to public hospital staff. The present study findings also indicate that senior hospital staff (more than 10 years working experience) perceives patient safety and teamwork more favourably compared to other working experience groups.

Research limitation/implications The research focused solely on the Malaysian health sector, and thus, the results might not be applicable to other countries.

Originality/value This research provides theoretical, methodological and practical contributions for the Lean Six Sigma approach and the research findings are expected to provide guidelines to enhance the level of quality performance in healthcare organisations in Malaysia as well as other countries.

Keywords

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