Measuring the Lean Readiness of Kuwaiti Manufacturing Industries

Authors : Mohamad Alnajem

Abstract : Purpose: To measure the readiness of the Kuwaiti small and medium sized manufacturing industries (K-SMMIs) to implement the lean system (LS) through an evaluation of their existing quality practices, and compare such readiness among different product sectors and ownership types. Design/methodology/approach: This study adopts the measurement framework developed by Al-Najem et al. (2013), which establishes six constructs related to lean quality practices, namely: process, planning and control, customer relations, suppliers relations, HR, and top management and leadership. Data were collected from a survey of 50 K-SMMIs operating in different industrial sectors. One research question and two hypotheses were developed and tested using t-test and Levene's test, descriptive analysis, and one-way ANOVA. Findings: The results demonstrate that the K-SMMIs are far from being ready to implement lean. In addition, the study found that product sector and ownership type have no significant impact on the lean readiness in the K-SMMIs. Practical implications: This research provides insight into preparing Kuwaiti, and other SMMIs, to implement the LS by creating an assessment of their existing lean practices and readiness. Originality/value: This research is among a limited number of studies that have addressed lean within the Arab region, and only the second to examine the level of lean readiness of the K-SMMIs. It expands the literature on lean in developing countries, particularly in the Arab region, and can provide guidance to research within other countries in the region.