Reviewer’s report

Title: Critical Success Factors for the successful initiation of Lean in public hospitals in KwaZulu- Natal: A factor analysis and Structural Equation Modelling study

Version: 2 Date: 07 May 2019

Reviewer: Ernest Tambo

Reviewer's report:

The paper is interesting and provide some vital information on structural modelling of public health lean structures yet authors conclude appear not robust enough and not founded model analysis that CSFs cannot be viewed in isolation, as they all have significance at different dimensions of capability within the organisation, so such analysis required methodological analysis and and deep exploration for more appropriate models suitability.

Major comment

The lean strategy has been well explore elsewhere based on current litterature, but poorly understood and applied in AFRica including SA.

- it is not clear to what extent and how the i Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) impact on observational, descriptive study with quantitative analysis and interpretation?

- qualitative variables seem to have been given less attention and is worrisome based on self-administered, semi-structured questionnaire approach of data collection?

Methodologically it is unscientific to state:During several iterations of EFA structures, some variables were dropped along the way... what are the criteria and if those variables were meaningless why recoding and collating them from the onset?

- The methods need to be revised as the data collection and structuring seem faulty for latent constructs identification and characterisation as I recommend a more robust multivariate analysis

- based on authors conclusion, an appropriate model and approach to data and set criteria should be define to address the inadequacies due to CSFs CSFs cannot be viewed in isolation, as they all have significance at different dimensions of capability within the organisation

Minor comments

- The english language should be greatly improve for coherence and flow to the readership
**Level of interest**
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English**
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

**Declaration of competing interests**
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

None,

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license ([http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal