



REVIEW OF DOCTORAL THESIS

Ing. Oksana Koval, Conception of Continuous Process Improvement in Shared Service Centers Based on Lean Methodologies

Author:	Ing. Oksana Koval
Study Programme	6208V038 – Management and Economics
Supervisor	prof. Ing. Felicita Chromjaková, PhD.
Reviewer	doc. Ing. David Tuček, Ph.D.
	Department of Industrial Engineering and Information Systems
	Faculty of Management and Economics
	Tomas Bata University in Zlin
Date of defence	Jun 2018

a) Topicality of the Research Issue

In the context of Lean principals and number of Shared Service Centers in Visegrad countries we can see very specific relationship in the Doctoral Thesis:

Implementation of shared service centers (SSCs) as an effective way to enhance company's competitiveness through cost decrease, process standardization, improvement of efficiency and performance.

Based on plenty of sources we can define that many organizations implement CI in the SSCs to reduce costs and improve customer satisfaction and I have to submit, that the very topical problem has been researched in these Doctoral Thesis.

Logical result is creating of Conception of Continuous Process Improvement in Shared Service Centres Based on Lean Methodologies.

The data was collected in four countries Visegrad Four (V4) group: Czech Republic, Poland, Slovak Republic and Hungary.

b) Goals and Research Questions

Research problems have been defined on the page 24 and the questions in the chapter 2.4.

The author's proposed study was set out to answer the following six research questions with regards to CI and established research objective in the shared service centers:

RQ1: How does CI affect customer satisfaction?

RQ2: What organizational practices can foster impact of CI on customer satisfaction?

RQ3: How does CI affect cost reduction?

RQ4: What organizational practices can foster impact of CI on cost reduction?

RQ5: How does CI affect the simultaneous improvement of cost reduction and customer satisfaction?

RQ6: What organizational practices can foster impact of CI on customer satisfaction and cost reduction?

The primary goal of the dissertation thesis we can find in chapter 2.2. The primary goal of the study is to identify strategies for the effective CI program in the SSCs.

Partial goals of the dissertation thesis are:

PRG1: To study the impact of CI on firm performance.

PRG2: To study the impact of organizational practices on CI – firm performance relationship.

The relationships between main goal, partial goals and research questions we can find in Figure 2.1.

c) Research Methodology

The research methodology of this dissertation thesis, we can find in chapter 3.

The research problems are developed through the following hypotheses that were described in chapter 2 in the context of:

continuous improvement,

- rewards,
- management commitment,
- training,
- goal-setting
- project management.

These scientific hypotheses were (the list was prepared in the context of previous items).

The Hypothesis:

H1: The greater the level of Continuous improvement in the company, the greater Customer Satisfaction can be obtained.

H7: The greater the level of CI in the company, the higher Cost Reduction can be achieved.

H13: The greater the level of CI in the company, the higher Cost Reduction and Customer Satisfaction can be achieved.

H2: Rewards increase the impact of CI on Customer Satisfaction.

H8: Rewards increase the impact of CI on Cost Reduction.

H14: Rewards increase the impact of CI on Cost Reduction and Customer Satisfaction

H3: Quality culture increases the impact of CI on Customer Satisfaction.

H9: Quality culture increases the impact of CI on Cost Reduction.

H15: Quality culture increases the impact of CI on Customer Satisfaction and Cost Reduction.

H4: Management commitment increases the impact of CI on Customer Satisfaction.

H10: Management commitment increases the impact of CI on Cost Reduction.

H5: Training of employees in the improvement techniques increases the impact of CI on Customer Satisfaction.

H11: Training of employees in the improvement techniques increases the impact of CI on Cost Reduction.

H17: Training of employees in the improvement techniques increases the impact of CI on Customer Satisfaction and Cost Reduction.

H16: Management commitment increases the impact of CI on Customer Satisfaction and Cost Reduction.

H6: Goal-setting increases impact of CI on Customer Satisfaction.
H12: Goal-setting increases impact of CI on Cost Reduction.
H18: Goal-setting increases impact of CI on Customer Satisfaction and Cost Reduction.

There is very clearly described the Research design overview in figure 3.1. too. The author used the AMOS software - package "SEM" from the R programming language for testing of hypothesized relations in a model. The data collected from respondents were analyzed with fsQCA to produce a combination of practices that condition effectiveness of CI.

d) Results and Conclusions

The author confirmed the theoretical benefits of his study. For assessment of internal consistency, reliability and the relationship between item sets, the Cronbach Alpha was used. For variables to be reliable and consistent, a Cronbach's coefficient (α) of more than 0.7 were considered for both latent variables of CI and mediators. The higher the value of Cronbach's coefficient α or the closer alpha is to 1.0, the higher the reliability of the measurement item.

To condense data, deduce the convergence level of items, hypothesize concepts in the initial analysis and reduce data lengths into smaller units, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was performed in chapter 4. Factor loadings greater than 0.30 are significant, 0.40 are important while 0.50 or more are very significant. In line with that, factor loadings of 0.50 or greater are considered very significant and such variables can be used for further analysis.

For hypotheses on Cost Reduction (CR) and Customer Satisfaction (CS) with regards to Continuous Improvement, two separate assessments were first established.

After that, the mediation variables (rewards, quality cultures, management commitment, training, and goal-setting) were further introduced to establish the effect of such mediators on the outcomes. To test for the mediation effect of selected variables, an approach proposed by Baron and Kenny was applied. A comparative analysis was then performed between the outcomes of CR and CS.

The author also define the very practical recommendations for effective CI programs because, companies are still struggling to achieve benefits from implementation of Continuous Improvement. Many report difficulties in achieving declared goals and report high failure rates. Author demonstrates, there are multiple ways in which companies can deploy organizational practices to benefit from CI. Further, the research emphasizes that company should consider the fact that CI has different effect on different performance measure.

e) References of the thesis and publication results of the author:
Based on the chapter references I can state that this thesis was based on the excellent literature review. We can find here more than 250 foreign sources. List of the publication on the page

102 sums 12 publications of the author or co-authors (with Oksana Koval). This list can show, that mostly this publications were prepared in the context of the dissertation thesis topic.

f) Defense questions and recommendation:

- 1) Could you describe what differences between your final conception of CI you can expect in SSC in Visegrad countries and in other countries in Europe or world countries? And why? Or why not?
- 2) Could you expect some differences between Visegrad countries?
- 3) Could you describe the form of your final conception (of Continuous Improvement) during the presentation?

g) Conclusion

The processing of the Doctoral complies with the applicable requirements imposed on this type of work. The researched theme suggests that the author has understood the need for Conception of Continuous Process Improvement in Shared Service Centers Based on Lean Methodologies and is trying to contribute to solving the current problems of SSC in Visegrad Countries.

Based on this, I recommend the Doctoral thesis for a defense.



.....
In Zlin, on 10 June 2018

doc. Ing. David Tuček, Ph.D.