

Internal lean practices and performance: The role of technological turbulence

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Abstract

Drawing upon resource dependence theory, this study investigates the linkages from supplier partnership and customer relationship to internal lean practices. Furthermore, this study investigates the linkages from internal lean practices (ILP) to operational performance and organizational performance, and assesses the contingency perspective of these relationships with respect to technological turbulence. The study is based on a questionnaire sent to 228 manufacturing companies in the Republic of Ireland, and the relationships proposed analyzed with structural equation modeling and OLS regression. The results reveal the importance of supply chain relationships, in particular through supplier partnership and customer relationship, in that they are positively associated with ILP. Further, the study finds that ILP are positively associated with both operational and organizational performance. This study also adds to the understanding of the circumstances under which ILP impact performance in that technological turbulence was found to negatively moderate the linkages between ILP and operational performance and ILP and organizational performance. While lean practices can stimulate improved operational and organizational performance, this relationship is not monotonic and is timely to consider the rate of technological change at the time of implementing lean manufacturing.

Keywords

- Customer relationship; Supplier partnership; Operational performance; Organizational performance; Technological turbulence