

Identifying Muda in a fast food service process in Spain

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Abstract-

Purpose

Identification and elimination of Muda (any activity adding cost but not value from the customer's perspective) is one of the main objectives of Lean service. Whilst there is significant research on implementing lean in manufacturing and some service industries, there is little information related to its application to the fast food service industry. The purpose of this paper is to try to fill in this gap by answering the research question: What type of Muda could be identified from the customer's perspective within the service production processes in the fast food restaurant industry in Spain?

Design/methodology/approach

An exploratory case study has been conducted. Three multinational companies were selected and several sites observed in Madrid, Spain. Three methods were used to gather data: document analysis; direct and participative observation and semi-structured interviews.

Findings

The paper identifies the seven types of Muda: defects, movements, process, inventory, overproduction, transport and delay. The results are discussed for Cases A, B and C, showing that A and B present higher potential for Muda, compared C.

Practical implications

Threefold value for practitioners and managers: waste identification is an opportunity for non-efficient processes improvement; observation/analysis from the customer's perspective reveals that customers perceive these inefficiencies; a guideline/audit tool for future assessments.

Originality/value

The paper contributes to the limited existing literature on lean service in fast food industry and disseminates this information to provide impetus, guidance and support toward increasing the productivity, efficiency, consistency and quality of service.

Index Terms- Service; Lean; Waste; Fast food; Muda; Continuous improvement; Process

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