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AN EXTENSION OF A THREE COMPONENT MODEL OF ORGANIZATIONAL
COMMITMENT TO THE AREA OF COMMITMENT TO ORGANIZATIONAL
CHANGE IN FACILITIES IMPLEMENTING LEAN PRODUCTION

Abstract

This research looks to answer the question: “Should firms implementing lean production (JIT) focus their Human Resource Management (HRM) efforts on developing employees that are committed to the organization, or committed to the organizational change to lean production to help predict “taking charge” behavior among their employees?” To answer the question, this research will examine the three-component model of organizational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1993, 1997) which is an independent variable, its extension to the area of commitment to organizational change (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001; Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002) which is another independent variable and the discretionary behavior that is correlated with the different forms of commitment which is the dependent variable.

The specific change utilized in this study is the change from traditional mass manufacturing practices to Lean Production. Manufacturing facilities throughout the United States are in a very competitive market. To combat this competition, many manufacturers are changing the way that they produce products by switching to a different type of manufacturing known as “Lean Production” or “Just-in-Time (JIT)” production (Drickhammer, 2003).

This is a quantitative study that utilizes survey methodology to gather data on employees’ commitment to the organization, commitment to organizational change (lean production principles), and discretionary behavior. This study took place in three different manufacturing organizations in the United States. All three organizations have proceeded along a similar path of lean production implementation.

Utilizing the popular change to lean production, this study investigates whether organizational commitment or commitment to organizational change explains a higher percentage of the variance in explaining discretionary behavior. In this study, discretionary behavior is identified as “Taking Charge Behavior”. This behavior is in line with the desired behavior of employees in facilities implementing lean production (Liker, 2004; Schonberger, 1982; Monden, 1993; Henderson & Larco, 1999; Womack & Jones, 1996).