

QUALITY MANAGEMENT

- Sergei Titov, Evgeny Nikulchev, Gregory Bubnov, Alexander Biryukov, *Impact of Lean Production Initiatives on Quality: Theoretical Analysis and Empirical Research*

Lean production is a well know managerial framework for optimization of organizational processes through waste elimination and cost reduction. Though many researchers pointed to the similarities between lean production and total quality management they do not usually proceed to conclusions about the possible impact of lean production practices on quality issues. The article undertakes the comparative theoretical analysis of lean production and TQM on two levels – on the level of general theoretical principles and on the level of the practical tools and techniques. The authors conclude that lean production practices not only can but should lead to the improvement of the quality of processes and products. The empirical analysis of the results of lean production improvement initiatives in 74 Russian companies leads to the same conclusion. The survey of the participants of lean production introduction projects in Russian companies shows that the number of the defects detected and corrected on the later stages of the value streams in these companies decreased. Hence, lean production can be considered as a set of tools not only for cost reduction but also for quality enhancement.

Keywords: quality management, lean production, TQM, cost reduction, waste elimination, quality of processes, quality of products.

- Dominik Zimon, *Influence of Quality Management System on Improving Processes in Small and Medium-Sized Organizations*

The aim of the publication is to present the results of studies regarding an impact of the quality management system to improve management processes in small and medium-sized organizations. Implementing the agreed goal the author analyzes the impact of the implementation of the requirements of ISO 9001 to improve customer relationships, improve management processes and objectives in the area of quality. The study points to the possibility of improving the quality management system and discusses some problems associated with implementation of ISO 9001 in small and medium-sized organizations.

Keywords: 9001, quality management system, SMEs.

- Veaceslav Manolachi, Liliana Budevici-Puiu, *The Insurance and Evaluation of the Scientific Research Quality within the Institution of Higher Education of Physical Training and Sport from Republic of Moldova*

The constantly socio-economical changes and the bigger expectations towards the researching and educational methods, lead the institution of higher education of physical training and sport to reconfirm the emphasizing of quality, enhancing its part at the moment, but especially for its future and the Moldovan society altogether. Through the insurance and the evaluation of quality is acquired information regarding the significant domains of the initial institution, stressed on scientific research and educational activity. For becoming competitive in researching, the administration of academic institution of profile aims on investing in human and technological resources. It means the development of some attractive strategies of the most clever and creative young people of the field, in researching of doctoral and postdoctoral programs, as well as in the university careers. Additionally we can add the adjustment of a particular importance of university autonomy and the academic freedom that will encourage each teacher to develop its researching domain according to proper interests and capabilities. The university's assignment consists in ensuring a high level of qualitative teaching-learning methods, the scientific research of profile and services towards the community, contributing to a personal and professional development of the students, educating the talents for the future of society and generating the knowledge through an intensively process of innovative research.

Keywords: quality, scientific research, evaluation, higher education, physical training and sport.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

- Petrică Sorin Angheluță, *Green Economy and the Importance of the Education of Human Capital*

A relatively new concept, the green economy can be the solution to many economic problems which humanity has faced in the recent years. This article presents a brief history of the green economy concept. Considering these aspects, we can raise a question referring to the practical implementation of the new concept. In the article, a chapter is assigned to the educational level of the population. This is the factor that emphasizes the importance of the human capital and the level of education of individuals in applying the principles related to green economy. The association of the green economy concept with the human capital and, particularly with the level of education, becomes opportune. Thus, the higher the level of education of community members, the higher the chances of implementing the innovative ideas.

Keywords: green economy, human capital, human factor, education, Romania.

- Gianluca Felicetti, *Tourists' Perceptions Regarding Climate Change Impact on Ecotourism in Protected Areas*

Because ecotourism is climate dependent, understanding tourists' perceptions of protected area destinations and their critical features will be fundamental for sustainable protected areas tourism destination development.

The aim of this study is to assess the most relevant tourists' perceptions regarding the climate change impact on ecotourism in protected areas.

In recent years, only few studies have assessed the implications of climate change for ecotourism in protected areas. The review suggests that climate change affect ecotourism and influence tourist's protected area tourism destination selection.

By understanding tourists' perceptions, appropriate strategies and potential actions may be settled to be resilient with the climate change impacts on ecotourism in protected areas. Therefore, understanding tourist's perceptions regarding climate change impact on ecotourism will be an important tool in successfully guiding decision-making connected with climate change impact on ecotourism in protected areas, and finally informing policy elaboration.

Keywords: ecotourism, climate change, local community, protected area and tourism.

FOOD SAFETY MANAGEMENT

- Iuliana Bratu, *The Need of Implementing and Ensuring a Traceability System in Food Industry*

This article aims to highlight the key elements required in the implementation of a traceability process, in food industry. It highlights the need of awareness from the economic operator, that a traceability system needs to exist, enabling the identification of product lots and their relation to lots of raw materials, from the packaging that comes into direct contact with the food product. The traceability must be ensured and documented until delivery to the customer. When problems arise, it is known that the entire lot will have to be withdrawn from the market. This could only be achieved through a traceability system that enables a precise identification of the inadequate lots.

Keywords: traceability, quality management system and food safety/SMCs, legal requirements, process.

- Alessandro Bonadonna, Stefano Duglio, *A Mountain Niche Production: The Case of Bettelmatt Cheese in the Antigorio and Formazza Valleys (Piedmont – Italy)*

Both agriculture and tourism are two extremely important drivers for mountain areas. In particular, the former plays a primary role in mountain territories, also regarding such aspects like the multi-functionality of agricultural businesses that increasingly differentiate their offer, integrating the latter component into their activities. In this context, the European Union has created a new tool dedicated to food products, called

“Mountain Product term”, by EU Regulation no. 1151/2012.

The aim of this study is to assess the economic implications of the market of Bettelmatt cheese, a niche product of excellence in the panorama of cheese production of the mountains of the Verbano-Cusio-Ossola, in the Piedmont Region.

So as to pursue the objectives of the research, initially all commercial farms who are members of the Association of Bettelmatt Cheese Producers were identified. At a later stage, the companies implicated in marketing, identified by the producers as the main purchasers of the rounds, were involved. The collection of data was carried out by semi-structured interviews as to the business activities involving Bettelmatt, information and perception about the optional quality term “mountain product”.

The results obtained emphasise that, in general, all producers should respect the guidelines provided by the regulations and, therefore, they should be permitted to use the wording “Mountain product”. The distributors note some elements of criticality of the product i.e. the high wholesale cost of the product and the limited availability of the product i.e. 5,000 rounds per year, that currently limits an adequate dissemination of the product.

Keywords: niche local products, Bettelmatt, territorial development, tourism, quality systems.

- Emanuele Schimmenti, Giuseppe Daddi, Antonio Ascianto, Valeria Borsellino, Caterina P. Di Franco, Mariarosa Di Gesaro, Marcello D’Acquisto, *Agriculture in a Sicilian Inland Area: Strategies and Motivations of Conversion towards Multifunctional Activities*

The main topic of the paper concerns multifunctional farms, their activities and motivations for starting up, and on the other hand visitor satisfaction.

To this purpose, a preliminary sample survey was carried out addressed to 13 farms in 3 Sicilian provinces. The aim was to identify positive and negative aspects of the services offered. The most relevant findings of the survey are the variety of activities and services, a widespread use of internet services, efficient means of communications and a significant growth in labour force. On the other side, long time is generally needed in order to obtain administrative authorizations or to carry out farm plants, as well as excessive pay-back time.

Keywords: farm multifunctionality, connected activities, Sicilian rural area, diversification strategies.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT

- Ion Verboncu, Mircea Mihai, *The Role of the Methodology-Based Approach to Management and in the Effectiveness of the Organisation*
One of the main means to increasing the effectiveness of the managerial practices in the Romania organisations, but also to better equipping the managers with the tools they need, is the methodology-based approach to management, which focuses on using modern management tools and methodologies. Whether we refer to management systems – like profit centre-based management, management by objectives, project management, budget-based management or to managerial methods and techniques – like diagnosing, delegating, scorecard, creativity methods or cost-based management – it’s unanimously accepted that the managerial instruments have great influence on the efficiency and effectiveness to executing the management processes, and indirectly, on the efficiency of the other types of business and support processes. If we add to these some rigorous methodologies to ensure projecting, re-projecting and maintaining of the functioning of the management in the organisation and of its components, then we have the clear image of what we call managerial-based methodology. The promoters of this practice and also the main beneficiaries of the advantages that a methodology-based approach brings are the managers in the organisation from the CEO to the first-line managers, and it’s most clear proof is the performance at the end of a planning period. This article here aims to provide details on the content of the methodology-based approach to management, on its impact upon the quality and management efficiency. It also aims to bring to the attention of field specialists its link to the organisational bureaucracy.

Keywords: managerial models, managerial tools, managerial methodologies,

methodology-based approach to management, management quality, management efficiency.

- Valentina Ghinea, *Organizational Culture Dynamics. Modelling of the Organizational Culture Dynamics*

As a continuation of the series of papers focused on the organizational culture dynamics (Ghinea and Ghinea, 2015), the present one aims to repel the perception of the organizational culture as a static element meant to only assure tradition and continuity within an organization, and to introduce it in a different light, as a social complex system, which is also open, dynamic, and ideal-seeking.

Thus, the conceived Gradual Value-Added Leadership Integrator model, G.VALI, explores the inevitability of organizational culture evolution, as well as the impossibility of controlling it by its dynamism decrease. The continuous interconditioning pointed out within and outside the organization justifies the organizational culture consideration as a living organism whose state and evolution is function of more or less obvious individual and group interinfluences.

This requires the thorough understanding of both the existent organizational interconnexions and the multiplier effect that some of its parts have.

Keywords: organizational culture, leadership, dynamics, model, G.VALI, tornado.

- Florentina Andreea Condurache, *The Management based on Profit Centres in a Construction Company*

The most complex and sophisticated management tool known and applied by some Romanian companies is the management on profit centres or based on profit centres. Combination between target management, budget management and cost-hour-production system – from where it mainly takes methodological elements – this management system has appeared and has developed starting from two fundamental requirements of a normal operation within market economy: the first envisages managerial decentralisation, namely the transfer of the centre of gravity in the decisions' substantiation, adoption and application towards their procedural or structural processes, having the status of profit centres or expenses centres, and the second one refers to economical decentralisation, namely using the general budget and, in particular, budgets on management centres, as management economical instruments.

Keywords: management based on profit centres, target based management, management centres, budget, managerial performances, economic performances.

- Mihai Vrîncuț, *Qualitative Techniques for Project Management. Critical Chain and the Knowledge Society*

This article closes the discussion about the applicability of the critical chain planning method in the Romanian project area. We live in a knowledge society, which requires in addition to expanding and deepening the scientific knowledge, an unprecedented dissemination of knowledge to all citizens through new means. In this regard, the methods and techniques successfully used in the project management practiced by other countries, members of the European Union and beyond, should be made known and, with certain adjustments required by the social, economic specificity of our country, applied in companies that practice project management in Romania. One such method is based on critical chain planning, devised by Professor Goldratt, which addresses many of the weaknesses identified by my studies in planning projects in Romania.

Keywords: project management, critical chain project management, theory of constraints, knowledge society.

- Codruța Dura, *Small and Medium Enterprises in Romania – Main Features and Tendencies in the Post-Crisis Period*

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) have nowadays a cardinal role in the development of the European economy, since they represent inexhaustible sources of entrepreneurial skills, innovation mechanisms and possibilities for creating new jobs. In Romania, the 449,044 existing SMEs represent 99.6 % of the total of enterprises and they turn out about 49% of the gross value added, providing jobs for 67% of the total of employed work power.

Considering these aspects, the first part of the paper is dedicated to identifying distinctive features of SMEs and the particularities induced upon the management system that lead to the efficiency of activities performed by this type of enterprises. The second part of the paper studies the current position of SMEs within Romania's economy, the main challenges arising in their activities during the financial crisis and the subsequent evolution trends determined by relevant financial and economic indicators. The final part reveals the conclusions and gives a brief overview of the most recent measures taken on economic and legislative level for supporting this sector, followed by further proposals, potentially able to contribute to enhancing performance of activities.

Keywords: small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), entrepreneurial management, self-financing, employment in SMEs, policies in support of SMEs.