INVESTIGATING METHODS AND CHALLENGES OF KAIZEN EXECUTION: A CASE STUDY OF AN ENGINEERING FIRM IN PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

KAIZEN is a system of a continuous endeavor by an organization to improve its business activities and processes, the goal being to improve the quality of products and services so that the organization can meet full customer satisfaction. Kaizen can be an integrated and company-wide approach through collaboration of all the levels of the organization: top management, middle managers and front-line employees. Commitment, genuine participation and motivation of all the three actors are critical factors. The purpose of this study is to assess the methods and challenges faced by ABC Engineering Pvt., Ltd. in executing and sustaining kaizen. Quality circles were established and the 5S’s were deployed as a beginning of kaizen execution in the firm.

This is descriptive research, and its basic aim is to explore and gain additional information about the subject area and to identify areas for further investigation. The study used clustered sampling for the data collection. Top management commitment in building and sustaining a continuous improvement culture, clear communication channels, involvement of all members of the company, training in kaizen methodologies as well as fair and equitable motivational schemes including empowerment has a great impact on the effectiveness of kaizen practices. However, the levels of all the above mentioned factors were not well practiced in ABC Engineering Pvt., Ltd. for ingraining the culture of kaizen. Most of the participants (employees) were dissatisfied with the applications of the above mentioned factors of Kaizen as practiced in the firm.

Keywords: Kaizen, Quality circles, 5S, Waste, Empowerment, Cross cutting quality circle, Standard quality circle

บทคัดย่อ

ไคเซ็นคือระบบการพัฒนาองค์กรแบบไม่สิ้นสุดเพื่อที่จะเพิ่มประสิทธิภาพของกิจกรรมและกระบวนการต่างๆของธุรกิจ เป้าหมายหลักเพื่อที่จะพัฒนาคุณภาพสินค้าและการบริการเพื่อที่จะตอบสนองความต้องการของลูกค้าและความพึงพอใจของลูกค้า ไคเซ็นนั้นเป็นการบูรณาการของการวางแผนการจัดทำโครงการประกอบไปด้วยการรวมมือกันของทุกระดับในองค์กร เพื่อให้บริการดีขึ้น ระดับกลางและระดับล่าง ความมุ่งมั่น ความร่วมมือ และการใช้กลไกในการทำให้ขึ้นงานวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อผจญภัยในการระบบไคเซ็นและศึกษาประเด็นที่ทำลายจาก

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INTRODUCTION

In Japanese, kaizen signifies “continuous improvement.” The word infers change that includes everybody - both managers and workers - and involves moderately little expense (Imai, 2000). The acquaintance with kaizen began after the end of WWII. The Toyota Production Framework is known for kaizen, where all workforce lines are depended upon to stop their moving production line if there should be an event of any variation from the standard, and alongside their chief, prescribe a change to decide the variations from the standard which may begin a kaizen. Kaizen has acquired incredible achievements in the Japanese monetary condition and financial condition, which started in the manufacturing areas.

Katsuki (2008) depicted that Kaizen is something more than a means for improvement since it addresses the daily problems occurring in the workplace and the manner by which these problems are overcome. Kaizen can be applied to any area needing improvement. In spite of the fact that the reason for Kaizen is for the most part in the material assembling areas, as of now most administration areas are occupied with using kaizen as their driving quality management tool. Relevance ranges of kaizen are not restricted to manufacturing, rather they can be connected to various divisions of the economy that require nonstop improvement in their activities.

There are six supportive measurements, which should be available to supplement and support the essential dimensions of Kaizen, as expressed by Suarez & Lingham (2008). These measurements include commitment from top management, training, participation of all individuals from the organization, communication, and cultural aspects in the organization with respect to the positive outlook of workers, and proper motivational plans.

From an economic point of view, an administration is an elusive commodity and can be viewed as the intangible equal to economic merchandise (Suarez, Smith, & Dahlgaard, 2009). Manufacturing companies require exceptional management