



SDI Review Form 1.6

Journal Name:	Journal of Economics, Management and Trade
Manuscript Number:	Ms_JEMT_38100
Title of the Manuscript:	The Role of Middle Managers in Becoming Lean: A Systematic Review and Synthesis of the Literature
Type of the Article	Review paper

General guideline for Peer Review process:

This journal's peer review policy states that **NO** manuscript should be rejected only on the basis of '**lack of Novelty**', provided the manuscript is scientifically robust and technically sound. To know the complete guideline for Peer Review process, reviewers are requested to visit this link:

(<http://www.sciencedomain.org/page.php?id=sdi-general-editorial-policy#Peer-Review-Guideline>)



SDI Review Form 1.6

PART 1: Review Comments

	Reviewer's comment	Author's comment (if agreed with reviewer, correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)
Compulsory REVISION comments	The paper is very interesting for everyone who is in the field of Lean, CI, TPS, TPM etc from theoretical point of view, but from practical point of view too, regarding the starting point of Lean implementation. Very good review article, with strong references (taking into account the number of the references too).	Thanks for the overall assessment and appreciation of our work.
Minor REVISION comments	There are some comments and necessary paper adaption: - In introduction: Authors have to write explicitly why the middle management is more than necessary for success of Len implementation, at some point (maybe some examples or references...) - Is model could easily adopted in any company? If not, what type of industry authors had in mind?	In the Introduction section, we have already (extensively) explained why the success of Lean largely depends on middle managers, who are key agents in introducing, implementing and adapting new ways of working at the operational levels of the organization [we refer to various sources, including 6 and 22]. In other words, middle managers "occupy a (network) position between operational and upper management and have deep knowledge about what motivates the employees in their unit or department, which allows them to improve the effectiveness of any change initiative [25,26,27]" (see Introduction section). In the Discussion & Conclusion section, we added a reflection on whether the models (i.e. CMO frameworks) developed in our paper can be easily adopted or not. This addition is as follows: "The CMO frameworks developed in this article are not limited to a particular type of organization or industry, also in view of the broad set of studies (cutting across various industries and types of organizations) we reviewed. Future work can test the validity of these frameworks and possibly also serve to develop context-specific frameworks for a particular type of organization or industry."
Optional/General comments	- Does company cultural condition influence on the Lean implementation? Can we follow the same pattern in all countries regardless cultural differences, etc? - Does managers has to personally believe that Lean is the best philosophy for company improvement or company decided to follow it and then Lean is compulsory for all employees? Should managers personally involve themselves into this, or they could implement lean without having desire to do this kind of job?	In the Discussion & Conclusion section, we have addressed each of these two comments as follows. Cultural conditions indeed appear to influence Lean implementation, as we have also extensively argued in the (first version of the) paper in terms of Lean requiring changes in <i>organizational culture</i> (i.e. management philosophy). Your question here seems to be about <i>national cultures</i>. The role of national culture has not been addressed in the literature on CI and Lean, and therefore we argue in the revised Discussion & Conclusion section that future studies should explore the role of national culture in each of the two CMO frameworks as well as in how it affects the co-existence and interaction between these two frameworks. Regarding the personal beliefs of the manager: it is unclear which managers you are referring to. In our article, we clearly distinguish (in the case of larger organizations) between top managers and middle managers. We also demonstrate, in our synthesis of the literature in the two CMO frameworks, that top managers that not walk their talk in terms of Lean as a managerial philosophy <i>and</i> practice, are not going to fundamentally change the organizational processes. The role and beliefs of middle managers are also extensively addressed in the literature review and synthesis in sections 3 and 4 of the article.