Abstract

Business Process Redesign/Re-engineering (BPR) has had far-reaching benefits for an enormous range of manufacturing and service industries. Companies increasingly incorporate various dynamic mechanisms such as BPR to fulfill the current climate requirements to improve the quality of products and services and gain competitive advantages. Although hospitality organizations are not exceptions to this situation, this methodology has not gained any significant momentum in the hospitality industry, and the available academic researches have not accordingly addressed the advantages the BPR methodology can bring for this industry.

Understanding how BPR eliminates underlying problems of a particular business process requires a deep study of that phenomenon. This thesis takes a qualitative approach and conducts observational research over six months to study a breakfast service process of a five-star hotel in Vienna to explore the possibilities of redesign and quality improvement. Furthermore, this paper acknowledges a significant level of complexity around the notion of service quality. Thus, while the thesis focuses on the process-oriented quality improvement practices, at the same time, it reviews the customer-oriented notion of quality and recognizes the subjective nature of social phenomena impacting service quality.

The empirical evidence and causal process analysis indicate three critical factors triggering a chain of problems in peak times. Firstly, the tasks and workstreams are highly sequential, making the process considerably sluggish when the restaurant's occupancy rate remains high for at least one hour. Secondly, the results revealed that the persistence of the communicative barriers causes interrelated issues such as irregular and low-quality interactions and, correspondingly, more delays. Lastly, the findings indicate a degree of inefficiency in the shift management procedure, which produces excessive operational pressure in peak times. Therefore, new process designs attempt to eradicate these fundamental issues by utilizing more robust logic and computer-aided systems.

Keywords: Business Process Redesign/Re-engineering (BPR); Quality improvement; Information technology (IT); Service quality; Hospitality industry