



UNIVERZITA
MATEJA BELA

V BANSKEJ BYSTRICI

Lenka Veselovská

ACHIEVING FLEXIBILITY: A NEW TREND IN SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CFL	contract flexibility
VFL	volume flexibility
PFL	product mix flexibility
DFL	delivery flexibility
MFL	manufacturing flexibility
FXP	flexible promotion
FXT	multiple modes and types of transport of raw materials and products
PRT	pressure to reduce production time of product or service
SFP	creation of stocks of finished products for special orders
INR	insurance against the risk of adverse events
FPI	frequent product innovations
PFC	penalizations for failures to comply with the terms of supply of raw materials
GTM	application of game theory methods in parameters settings of production factors
ELO	external logistics organization
FSC	flexible supply contracts
BUP	preparation of back-up plans and crisis management teams
MPU	mathematical programming utilization in supply chain management
RDP	creating possibilities for rapid redeployment of human and material resources between process and / or facilities
RLU	reverse logistics utilization
LCP	long-term capacity planning
CEF	expectations forecasts
SSC	selection of suppliers based on predefined criteria
CCC	corporate culture focused on change
IRD	investments in research and development
IRA	implementation of risk analyses

ROQ	raising order amounts for raw materials reserves
FPS	utilization of flexible planning systems
MPL	periodical analysis of market conditions and product life cycle
CPS	creating partnerships
COC	customer orientation as a main strategic concept of enterprise
CLO	continuous improvement, learning organization
ESI	economic supply incentives
PSP	product standardization and postponement
CPC	creating plants closer to key customers
ISP	effective flow of information in whole supply chain and sharing of information with partners
APP	frequent adjustments in pricing policies
IQS	implementation of quality systems such as ISO, TQM, etc.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays companies face severe competition which puts significantly increased pressure not only on their quality requirements, but also on effectiveness of their production processes. It is the goal of company's operations management to ensure the best possible outcome and gain the competitive advantage which enables company to establish a desirable market position. However, it is not a single set of managerial decisions which makes it possible. A strive for excellence is a continuous process which does not only involve establishing a good market position, but it also focuses on implementing measures necessary to maintain it. Cost minimization is one of the original goals of all companies, which is nowadays viewed more as an essential part of companies' financial management. One of the newer ways companies can achieve excellence is through implementing specific measures in order to achieve flexibility of their processes.

The main objective of this monograph is to explore the extent of utilization of various measures to increase supply chain flexibility in Slovak enterprises operating in manufacturing industry and to create a framework for modelling metrics of supply chain flexibility. This publication is divided into three main parts. Firstly, we provide the motivation for this study which also includes a brief literature review of researched topics such as supply chain definition, various flexibility characterizations and we also briefly focus on methods designed to increase supply chain flexibility. Secondly, we provide findings of empirical research conducted on a sample file of Slovak manufacturing enterprises. Research methodology is also explained in detail since this empirical study was conducted on a representative sample of Slovak enterprises. The last section of this publication describes the proposed models and frameworks created on the grounds of both literature research

and findings from the empirical research. We also include model assessment in terms of its practical applications and the discussion including possibilities for further research.

Lenka Veselovská
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