

Contextualization of Lean Office for Administrative Process Optimization in Morocco: Critical Analysis and Conceptual Framework

Contextualisation du Lean Office pour l'optimisation des processus administratifs au Maroc : analyse critique et cadre conceptuel.

SRHIR Abdelhak

Doctorant

Faculté d'Economie et de Gestion,

Université Ibn Tofail, Kénitra

Laboratoire de L'Economie et Management des Organisations (LEMO)

Maroc

HOUSSAINI Abdellah

Enseignant chercheur

Faculté d'Economie et de Gestion

Université Ibn Tofail, Kénitra

Laboratoire de L'Economie et Management des Organisations (LEMO)

Maroc

MAMAD Mohamed

Enseignant chercheur

Faculté d'Economie et de Gestion

Université Ibn Tofail, Kénitra

Laboratoire de L'Economie et Management des Organisations (LEMO)

Maroc

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Abstract

This article explores the relevance and necessity of contextualizing the application of Lean Office for optimizing administrative processes in Morocco. Drawing on a systematic review of international literature (Larsson & Ratnayake, 2021; Elias, 2023), we examine the fundamental concepts of Lean Office (Womack & Jones, 2003; Liker, 2004) and its deployment experiences. A significant lack of theoretical and empirical research specifically dedicated to the Moroccan context is highlighted (Ait Abdelmalek & Houfaïdi, 2018; Benhrimida & Dekkaki, 2020), a context characterized by distinct organizational, institutional, and sociocultural specificities (Radnor & Osborne, 2013; Oikaoui & El Oualidi, 2020; Taïbi & Benabdelhadi, 2020). The objective is to propose a contingent conceptual framework to guide future exploratory research and provide a solid theoretical basis for managers and researchers keen to initiate work on Lean Office implementation within Moroccan organizations, thereby contributing to their performance and modernization.

Keywords: Lean Office; Administrative Processes; Optimization; Moroccan Contextualization; Conceptual Framework; Public Sector.

Résumé

Cet article explore la pertinence et la nécessité de contextualiser l'application du Lean Office pour optimiser les processus administratifs au Maroc. S'appuyant sur une revue systématique de la littérature internationale (Larsson & Ratnayake, 2021 ; Elias, 2023), nous examinons les concepts fondamentaux du Lean Office (Womack & Jones, 2003 ; Liker, 2004) et ses expériences de déploiement. Il est souligné un manque significatif de recherches théoriques et empiriques dédiées spécifiquement au contexte marocain (Ait Abdelmalek & Houfaïdi, 2018; Benhrimida & Dekkaki, 2020), qui présente des particularités organisationnelles, institutionnelles et socioculturelles (Radnor & Osborne, 2013 ; Oikaoui & El Oualidi, 2020 ; Taïbi & Benabdelhadi, 2020). L'objectif est de proposer un cadre conceptuel contingent pour guider de futures recherches exploratoires et offrir une base théorique solide aux managers désireux d'initier des travaux sur l'implémentation du Lean Office au sein des organisations marocaines, contribuant ainsi à leur performance et à leur modernisation.

Mots-clés : Lean Office ; Processus Administratifs ; Optimisation ; Contextualisation Marocaine ; Cadre Conceptuel ; Secteur Public.

Introduction

The current dynamic of organizational management is characterized by an imperative pursuit of efficiency and service quality, a demand imposed on both private entities and public institutions worldwide. In this quest for performance, administrative operations constitute the functional pivot of organizations. Their inefficiency generates hidden costs, prolonged delays, and compromised stakeholder satisfaction (Radnor et al., 2014).

In this context, Lean Office emerges as a promising transformation strategy. Derived from the principles of Lean Manufacturing (Jones & Womack, 2018; Seddon et al., 2018), this approach aims at the systematic elimination of waste and the enhancement of delivered value. It offers considerable potential for streamlining administrative processes, which are often complex and intrinsically intangible (Radnor et al., 2019), a potential amplified by the exploitation of information technologies (El Kezazy & Hilmi, 2022; das Chagas Santos et al., 2020).

However, the integration of Lean Office into services, particularly administrative ones, encounters unique obstacles. The immateriality of processes, task variability, and the human dimension make waste identification and optimization arduous (Radnor et al., 2014; Larsson & Ratnayake, 2021). Despite contributions from international literature (Radnor et al., 2015; Carneiro et al., 2017), a striking deficit of research specifically dedicated to Lean Office in the Moroccan context persists (Ait Abdelmalek & Houfaïdi, 2018; Benhrimida & Dekkaki, 2020). This lack is critical, as Moroccan specificities (managerial dynamics, regulatory frameworks, cultural perceptions of change) decisively influence the feasibility and effectiveness of imported methods (Oikaoui & El Oualidi, 2020; Taïbi & Benabdelhadi, 2020; Radnor & Osborne, 2013).

This gap raises the following research question: How can Moroccan organizations effectively implement and adapt Lean Office to optimize their administrative workflows, taking into account the country's organizational, institutional, and sociocultural specificities?

To address this issue, this article relies on a systematic review of the international literature covering the period from 2012 to 2022. Keywords such as "Lean Office", "Lean Administration", and "Process Improvement Office" were used to search databases including PubMed, Scopus, and Google Scholar, with the aim of analyzing the experiences and challenges associated with Lean Office practices.

The present study is structured into five main sections. Following a presentation of the adopted methodological approach, we examine the conceptual foundations of the Lean Office. The results of the literature review are then presented, followed by a discussion of their implications for the Moroccan context. Finally, a contingent conceptual framework and concrete strategic recommendations for successful implementation are proposed, before concluding with the contributions of this research and future perspectives.

1. Methodological Approach for the Literature Synthesis

This study relies on a rigorous documentary synthesis to identify, evaluate, and consolidate relevant scientific contributions. This approach was chosen to ensure an impartial and exhaustive representation of knowledge, minimizing the biases inherent in narrative reviews (Tranfield et al., 2003). The process was guided by the PRISMA principles (Moher et al., 2009), ensuring transparency and traceability.

To build the analytical corpus, strict inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied. Only high-quality scientific articles published in peer-reviewed journals (empirical studies, case applications, theoretical analyses, critical syntheses) were retained. Non-peer-reviewed documents (unpublished conference communications, editorials, company reports) were excluded (Grant & Booth, 2009). The publication period of 2012 to 2022 was targeted to capture recent developments in Lean Office. An essential criterion was the explicit focus on Lean Office in administrative services, excluding works on Lean Manufacturing or other sectors.

Document collection was systematically conducted via PubMed, Scopus, and Google Scholar. These platforms were selected for their broad multidisciplinary coverage. The primary keyword was "Lean Office," complemented by related terms such as "Lean Administration" and "Process Improvement Office" for optimal comprehensiveness. The selection process began with 596 identified documents. An initial screening by title and abstract reduced this number to 74. A second phase of in-depth full-content review eliminated duplicates and off-topic documents, resulting in a final corpus of 14 articles for analysis.

2. Conceptual Foundations and Specificities of Lean Office

This section explores the trajectory of the Lean concept from its manufacturing origins to its application in administrative services, highlighting the challenges and specificities of this

transition. It notably mobilizes the principles of the Toyota Production System (TPS), the foundation of Lean, and draws upon contingency theory to analyze the adaptation of these principles to diverse contexts.

2.1. From Lean Manufacturing to Lean Office

Historically, Lean principles were forged within the Toyota Production System (TPS), primarily to optimize manufacturing processes (Womack & Jones, 2003; Liker, 2004). The essence of Lean Manufacturing lies in the systematic elimination of seven types of waste (overproduction, waiting, transport, over-processing, inventory, unnecessary motion, defects) to maximize customer value. However, the transposition of these principles to the service sector, and particularly to administrative offices (hence the term Lean Office), has not been without its challenges.

The inherently intangible nature of administrative services represents the primary major challenge (Radnor et al., 2014). Unlike a production line where physical products and their defects are visible, administrative "products" (files, information, decisions) are less concrete, making the identification and quantification of waste (waiting for approval, data re-entry, interpretation errors) more subtle and complex (Maleyeff, 2006). Larsson and Ratnayake's (2021) article, for instance, highlights the difficulty of visualizing information flows and identifying waste in knowledge-work office environments. Furthermore, administrative processes are often characterized by high variability, frequent interruptions, and a strong dependence on human interactions, which makes complete task standardization difficult (Maleyeff, 2006). Sabur and Simatupang (2015), as well as Carneiro et al. (2017), note that the nature of information and knowledge makes their control more challenging, and a low percentage of generated information truly adds value.

Despite these challenges, the literature reveals that many Lean tools and principles, such as Value Stream Mapping (VSM), Standardization, 5S, and Kaizen, have proven effective in visualizing information flows, reducing cycle times, and improving quality in office environments (Larsson & Ratnayake, 2021; Carneiro et al., 2017; Freitas et al., 2018). Studies like those by Sabur and Simatupang (2015) or Carneiro et al. (2017) demonstrate the successful application of VSM to reduce engineering hours and optimize administrative processes, while Yokoyama et al. (2019) and Freitas et al. (2018) emphasize the effectiveness of work cells,

Kaizen, and PDCA. The success of this transition often relies on a contextual adaptation of the tools rather than direct application.

2.2. Specificities and Challenges of Lean Office in Administrative and Public Services

While Lean has been successfully applied in various service sectors such as healthcare, finance, and education, its deployment within administrative and public services reveals distinct particularities:

- **Complex Value Objectives:** Unlike the private sector, where value is often clearly defined by the end customer, public administration pursues multidimensional objectives. "Value" in this context encompasses user satisfaction, but also regulatory compliance, equity, and transparency. These targets, sometimes contradictory, can complicate waste identification and the prioritization of Lean efforts (Radnor & Osborne, 2013).
- **Heightened Resistance to Change:** Public administrations are often characterized by rigid hierarchical structures, a strong culture of seniority, and an aversion to risk. These factors amplify resistance to change compared to the private sector (Radnor et al., 2014). Employees may, in fact, perceive Lean as a threat to employment or a source of new constraints (Pontes et al., 2020; da Silva et al., 2015).
- **Regulatory and Institutional Constraints:** The public sector operates under a legal and regulatory framework that is generally heavier and less flexible. This can limit the room for maneuver necessary for a radical overhaul of processes (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Many processes being legally defined, their optimization becomes complex without prior legislative reform.
- **Heterogeneous Digital Maturity:** Although digitalization is a central objective for many administrations (El Kezazy & Hilmi, 2022), the maturity of information systems and their interoperability vary considerably between departments. This heterogeneity can significantly affect the effectiveness of Lean initiatives, which inherently depend on the fluidity of information (das Chagas Santos et al., 2020; Freitas et Freitas, 2020).

These distinct particularities underscore the crucial importance of developing a Lean approach specifically adapted to the complex realities of the administrative sector, at both strategic and operational levels. To synthesize these major differences, Table 1: Characteristics and Challenges of Lean Office in Administrative and Public Services offers a structured

comparison between the characteristics of Lean in the private sector and in administrative and public services.

Table 1: Characteristics and Challenges of Lean Office in Administrative and Public Services

Category of Specificity	Key Characteristics and Specific Challenges of Lean Office	Bibliographical References
Nature of Processes	<p>-Intangibility of Outputs: Processes handle information and knowledge, rendering value less tangible than a physical good.</p> <p>-Challenges in Visualization: Information flows are less visible than material flows, making the identification of waste (waiting times, errors, data re-entry) more complex.</p> <p>-High Variability: Tasks are often non-repetitive and influenced by human interactions, which complicates standardization.</p> <p>-Functional Orientation: Processes are frequently siloed by function, thereby complicating a value stream approach.</p>	Larsson & Ratnayake (2021) ; Freitas & Freitas (2020) ; Carneiro et al. (2017) ; Kholopane & Vandayar (2014) ; Sabur & Simatupang (2015) ; Sousa & Dinis-Carvalho (2020) ; da Silva et al. (2015)
Human Factor and Culture	<p>-Resistance to Change: Fear of job loss, increased workload, and questioning of established habits.</p> <p>-Rigid Organizational Culture: Particularly prevalent in the public sector, characterized by limited autonomy and a weak culture of continuous improvement.</p> <p>-Lack of Managerial Support: Insufficient leadership, absence of clear vision, or dedicated resources.</p> <p>-Need for Training: Necessity to develop a shared understanding of Lean principles.</p>	Sum et al. (2020) ; Pontes et al. (2020) ; Carneiro et al. (2017) ; da Silva et al. (2015) ; Freitas & Freitas (2020) ; Freitas et al. (2018) ; Kholopane & Vandayar (2014) ; Sabur & Simatupang (2015) ; Yokoyama et al. (2019) ; Danielsson (2013)
Objectives and Performance Measurement	<p>-Multiple and Complex Value: In the public sector, value encompasses compliance, equity, transparency, and user satisfaction—which can sometimes be contradictory.</p> <p>-Difficult Measurement: It is challenging to measure the long-term effects of Lean, especially without precise indicators or immediate results.</p>	Carneiro et al. (2017) ; Yokoyama et al. (2019) ; Danielsson (2013)
Institutional and Technological Framework	<p>-Regulatory Constraints: Processes are often governed by rigid standards, reducing flexibility for Lean improvements.</p> <p>-Uneven Digital Maturity: Heterogeneous information systems and limited interoperability act as barriers to process digitalization.</p> <p>-Transformation Costs: Digitalization represents a significant investment in terms of time and resources.</p>	Freitas & Freitas (2020) ; das Chagas Santos et al. (2020) ; Pontes et al. (2020)

Source: Developed by the author

This comparative analysis highlights the inherent challenges in public administration, strengthening the argument for a contextual adaptation of Lean Office, and serves as an essential prerequisite for the analysis of the Moroccan case, which will be developed in the following section.

3. Results and Discussion

The analysis of the 14 articles selected in our systematic review allowed us to identify a coherent set of benefits and challenges associated with Lean Office implementation. This synthesis offers a global understanding of past experiences and serves as a prelude to a discussion on the specific implications for the Moroccan context.

3.1. Key Tools and Benefits of Lean Office

The literature review highlighted the effectiveness of Lean tools adapted for administrative services and the multidimensional benefits of their implementation.

3.1.1. Key Lean Office Tools and Levers

The practice of Lean Office relies on a series of fundamental tools and methodologies, adapted to optimize administrative processes and promote efficiency.

- **Value Stream Mapping (VSM):** This tool is essential for visualizing current workflows, allowing for precise identification of waste. It helps design optimized processes, making operations smoother and more efficient (Larsson & Ratnayake, 2021; Carneiro et al., 2017).
- **Standardization of Procedures:** By defining uniform work methods, it significantly reduces task variability and the risk of errors. This also facilitates the training of new employees and knowledge transfer within the organization (Larsson & Ratnayake, 2021; Sum et al., 2020).
- **5S Method:** This technique aims to optimally organize the work environment (Sort, Set in Order, Shine, Standardize, Sustain). It contributes to establishing discipline and creating a more efficient and secure work setting (Yokoyama et al., 2019).
- **Kaizen (Continuous Improvement):** More than just a tool, it is a philosophy that encourages constant innovation and proactive problem-solving at all hierarchical levels. It

prompts everyone to seek improvements, even minor ones, on a daily basis (Yokoyama et al., 2019; da Silva et al., 2015).

- **Employee Training and Awareness:** These actions are crucial to ensure staff adherence to Lean principles and to develop the necessary skills for their application. They serve as major levers for overcoming resistance and ensuring the success of the transformation (Larsson & Ratnayake, 2021; Pontes et al., 2020).

3.1.2. Benefits of Lean Office Implementation

The implementation of Lean Office generates significant benefits, primarily manifesting on two levels:

- **Operational Benefits:** Process optimization leads to a substantial reduction in processing times and errors, thereby improving service speed and reliability (da Silva et al., 2015; Sum et al., 2020; Carneiro et al., 2017). This translates into improved service quality and better resource utilization (Kholopane & Vandayar, 2014), notably increasing customer and user satisfaction (da Silva et al., 2015; Sabur & Simatupang, 2015). Studies show reductions in processing times of up to over 35% with the integration of Lean Office and digital transformation (das Chagas Santos et al., 2020).
- **Cultural and Organizational Benefits:** Lean Office fosters profound transformations by stimulating organizational learning and embedding a true culture of continuous improvement (Freitas et al., 2018; Yokoyama et al., 2019). It enhances employee involvement and accountability, as they become key players in problem identification and resolution (da Silva et al., 2015; Carneiro et al., 2017). Furthermore, process visualization and standardization improve transparency and collaborative cohesion within teams (Larsson & Ratnayake, 2021; Sum et al., 2020).

3.2. Persistent Challenges and Obstacles

Despite the clear advantages and optimization potential, Lean Office implementation is far from a linear process and is marked by complex challenges. The literature highlights several recurrent obstacles that can compromise the success and sustainability of these initiatives.

- **Resistance to Change:** This is the most frequently cited obstacle. This resistance can manifest as habitual inertia, fear of the unknown, apprehension of an increased workload, or

opposition to questioning established practices and comfort zones (Pontes et al., 2020; Yokoyama et al., 2019; Carneiro et al., 2017; Kholopane & Vandayar, 2014; da Silva et al., 2015; Sabur & Simatupang, 2015).

- **Complexity of Intangible Administrative Processes:** The immateriality of administrative services makes precise waste identification particularly difficult compared to more easily observable physical production flows. Visualizing waste (waiting times, unnecessary information movements, re-entry) is less intuitive (Larsson & Ratnayake, 2021; Freitas & Freitas, 2020; Danielsson, 2013).
- **Challenges Related to Information Management:** Lean Office deployment is often hampered by issues with information collection, access, quality, and storage—crucial aspects for the effectiveness of administrative processes (Freitas & Freitas, 2020).
- **Lack of Managerial Support and Insufficient Training:** Insufficient commitment from management in terms of resources, clear vision, and exemplary leadership is a recurring impediment. Similarly, a lack of team training compromises the success and sustainability of Lean initiatives (Sum et al., 2020; Pontes et al., 2020; Kholopane & Vandayar, 2014).
- **Measurement and Interpretation Problems:** The difficulty in measuring the long-term effects of Lean Office design and varied interpretations of the concept itself can also pose obstacles (Yokoyama et al., 2019; Danielsson, 2013).

3.3. Implications for the Moroccan Context, Limitations of the Literature Review, and Future Research Directions

The systematic review highlights an imperative need to **contextualize the Lean Office approach in Morocco**. Existing studies focus on other regions, which prevents a simple transposition of success models. The glaring lack of research on Lean Office specifically in the Moroccan public sector (Ait Abdelmalek & Houfaïdi, 2018; Ennesraoui & Rdait, 2021) makes the direct application of international results risky and potentially ineffective.

Moroccan specificities profoundly influence how Lean principles are perceived and applied. For example, if Lean is viewed merely as a technical "toolkit" for workforce reduction, rather than as a philosophy of deep organizational change (Benhrimida & Dekkaki, 2020; Oikaoui & El Oualidi, 2020), its adoption by agents may be limited. Furthermore, managerial dynamics,

often more hierarchical, can contradict the Lean philosophy which encourages employee empowerment and participation.

Moreover, institutional constraints (Taibi & Benabdelhadi, 2020) and regulatory complexity in Morocco can create rigidities, hindering the agility and flexibility inherent in Lean. The administrative culture, sometimes characterized by risk aversion, can stifle spontaneous continuous improvement initiatives. The uneven maturity of digital infrastructures (Belhaj & Zahi, 2022; Ouajdouni et al., 2020; Benkada, 2024), as well as persistent challenges in human resources (Ziani & El Menzhi, 2025)—whether in terms of skills, motivation, or career management—are also critical factors. All these elements (cultural, organizational, institutional, and technological) indicate that the key success factors for Lean Office identified in the international literature must be re-evaluated and adapted to Moroccan realities. Ignoring these specificities would significantly limit the effectiveness of theoretical and practical transfer of Lean Office to Morocco.

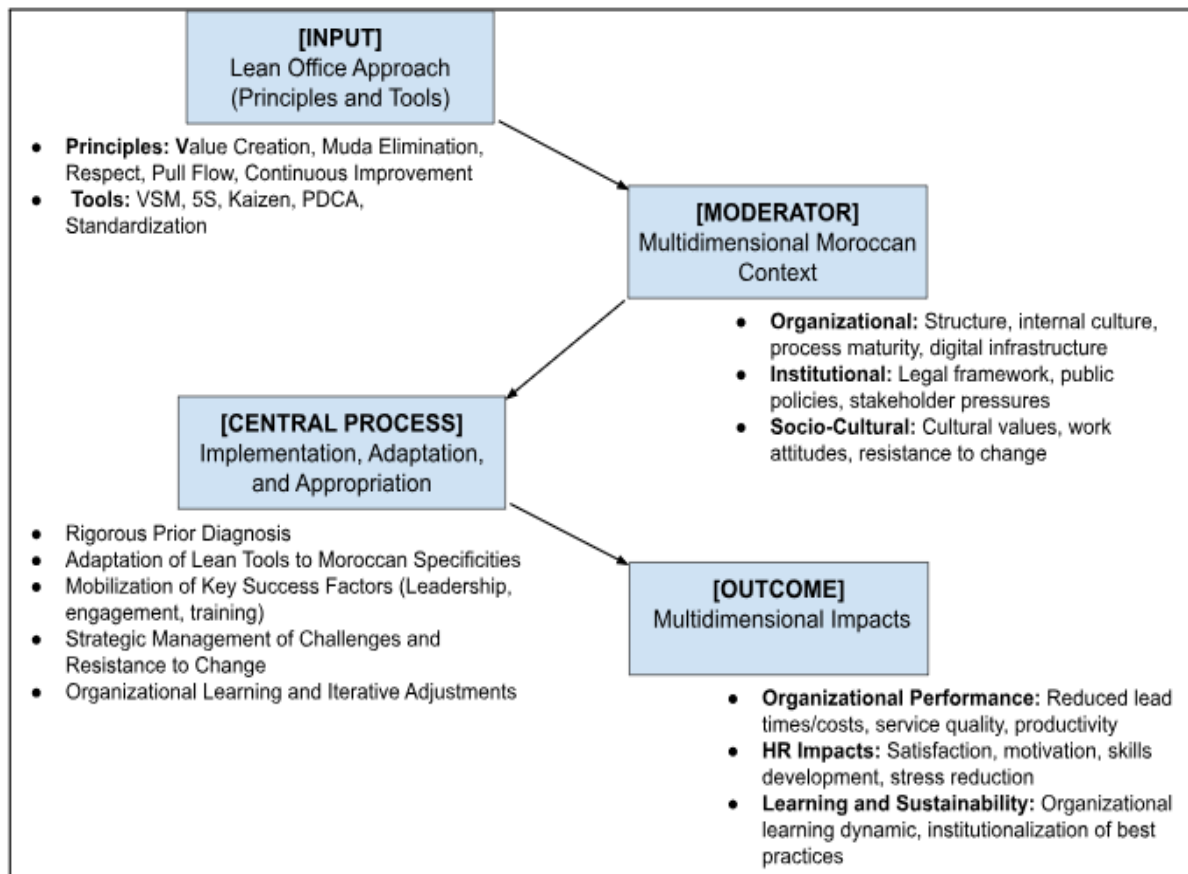
Despite its rigor, the present literature review has certain limitations. The final number of selected articles (14) is relatively small, and a notable concentration of Brazilian studies (such as Carneiro et al., 2017; da Silva et al., 2015; Freitas et al., 2018; Sum et al., 2020; das Chagas Santos et al., 2020) might limit the generalizability of conclusions to very different cultural and administrative contexts. Furthermore, the evaluation of costs and risks is often less detailed than that of benefits in the analyzed literature (Santos et al., 2020). These limitations pave the way for future research directions that should focus on in-depth empirical studies in the Moroccan context, particularly through case studies or quantitative surveys, to validate and refine the proposed conceptual framework.

4. Conceptual Framework for Lean Office Implementation in Morocco

To guide future research and Lean Office implementation actions in Morocco, we propose an analysis model based on the logic of contingency. This framework posits that the effectiveness of Lean Office is not universal, but depends on its suitability to the specific characteristics of the application environment, an idea supported by the diversity of experiences and challenges observed in the literature (Bodin Danielsson, 2013; Sum et al., 2020; Freitas & Freitas, 2020). Figure 1 illustrates the interdependencies among four fundamental constructs: Input (the Lean

Office approach), Moderator (the Moroccan context), Central Process (Lean implementation and adaptation), and Outcome (multidimensional impacts).

Figure 1: Contingent Conceptual Framework for Lean Office Implementation in Morocco



Source: Developed by the author

4.1. Input Construct: The Lean Office Approach – Principles and Tools

This construct represents the theoretical and methodological foundation of Lean Office. It first encompasses the fundamental principles derived from the Toyota Production System (TPS): value creation for the customer, elimination of waste (Muda), respect for people, pull production, and the pursuit of perfection through continuous improvement (Womack & Jones, 2003; Liker, 2004). To these principles are added proven methodological tools for administrative environments, such as Value Stream Mapping (VSM) (Larsson & Ratnayake, 2021; Carneiro et al., 2017), the 5S method, Kaizen (Yokoyama et al., 2019), the PDCA cycle (Freitas et al., 2018), and process standardization (Sum et al., 2020). This ensemble constitutes the conceptual basis that organizations are called upon to adapt.

4.2. Moderator Construct: The Multidimensional Moroccan Context

Crucial for contextualization, this construct modulates the perception and operationalization of Lean through three interdependent dimensions:

- **Organizational Dimension:** This characterizes the internal environment of the Moroccan organization, including its structure, internal culture, process maturity, and digital infrastructure (Belhaj & Zahi, 2022; Ouajdouni et al., 2020). Challenges such as the intangibility and variability of administrative processes, or the limited interconnectedness of information systems, are prevalent here (Radnor et al., 2014; Freitas & Freitas, 2020).
- **Institutional and Regulatory Dimension:** This dimension covers the legal and regulatory framework, public modernization policies (such as e-government), and stakeholder pressures. Institutional theories emphasize the importance of local alignment for the success of organizational isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Taibi & Benabdelhadi, 2020).
- **Socio-Cultural Dimension:** This encompasses dominant cultural values (relationship to authority, informal communication, perception of time and change) as well as attitudes towards work and hierarchy. These factors strongly influence the perception of Lean and can amplify resistance to change (Oikaoui & El Oualidi, 2020; Benhrimida & Dekkaki, 2020; Pontes et al., 2020).

4.3. Central Process Construct: Lean Office Implementation, Adaptation, and Appropriation

This construct represents the "how" of the Lean transformation, acting as an essential mediator between the theoretical approach and the expected results. It is a dynamic and iterative process, deployed through several key phases:

- **Rigorous Prior Diagnosis:** This initial step is fundamental for precisely identifying existing processes, mapping waste, and anticipating potential specific obstacles within the organizational context (Radnor et al., 2014).
- **Adaptation of Lean Tools:** This is not a simple transposition, but a customization of Lean methodologies to ensure their relevance and cultural and organizational acceptability within the Moroccan environment (Carneiro et al., 2017).
- **Proactive Mobilization of Key Success Factors (KSFs):** Strong and visible leadership is essential to drive and sustain the approach (Sum et al., 2020; Pontes et al., 2020; Kholopane

& Vandayar, 2014). This directional commitment must be complemented by active employee participation, via transparent communication and targeted training (da Silva et al., 2015; Sum et al., 2020; Larsson & Ratnayake, 2021).

- **Strategic Management of Challenges and Resistance to Change:** It is imperative to proactively anticipate and address fears or oppositions related to the modification of established practices (Pontes et al., 2020).
- **Organizational Learning and Iterative Adjustments:** Transformation is a continuous cycle where the organization evaluates its progress, learns from successes and failures, and constantly adapts its methods to sustainably embed the Lean philosophy (Yokoyama et al., 2019).

4.4. Outcome Construct: Multidimensional Results and Impacts of Implementation

This final construct evaluates the consequences of Lean Office implementation, beyond mere operational results:

- **Organizational Performance:** This manifests as improved efficiency (reduction in lead times and costs – da Silva et al., 2015; Sum et al., 2020), service quality (Kholopane & Vandayar, 2014), productivity, and innovation potential. Studies reveal significant reductions in processing times (Sabur & Simatupang, 2015; das Chagas Santos et al., 2020).
- **Human Resources Impacts:** This aspect includes the evaluation of employee satisfaction, their motivation (Carneiro et al., 2017), skills development, increased engagement, and the reduction of stress related to inefficient processes (Pontes et al., 2020). Organizational learning is a key outcome (Freitas et al., 2018).
- **Organizational Learning and Sustainability:** This refers to the organization's capacity to evolve towards a "learning organization" status (Freitas et al., 2018) and to sustainably institutionalize Lean practices (Yokoyama et al., 2019).

This framework underscores that successful Lean Office implementation in Morocco depends on a critical appropriation and creative adaptation of Lean principles and tools to the specific and complex realities of the Moroccan context. It offers a roadmap for future empirical investigations, allowing for the identification of relevant variables and relationships to be explored.

5. Strategic Pathways for Successful Lean Office Implementation in Morocco

To maximize the success of Lean Office implementation in Morocco, organizations should adopt a systemic and contextualized approach. This involves not only the application of Lean principles but also the activation of strategic levers that take into account local specificities, with each lever reinforcing the others for sustainable transformation.

5.1. Establish Adapted and Engaging Directional Leadership

Strong and visible leadership is fundamental for any Lean transformation. In Morocco, it is crucial to promote a transformational and "coach" leadership style, aligned with Lean's empowerment philosophy (Kholopane & Vandayar, 2014; Takeda Yokoyama et al., 2019; Freitas et al., 2018), capable of navigating sometimes hierarchical local managerial styles (Lafram & Lamalem, 2021). Directional commitment must be tangible through active participation, resource allocation, and the establishment of governance structures for guiding and overseeing the approach, thereby countering the frequent lack of managerial support (Pontes et al., 2020; Sum et al., 2020).

5.2. Develop a Culture of Continuous Improvement through Training and Awareness

Lean Office, as a cultural philosophy, requires embedding a culture of learning and continuous improvement. To achieve this, it is essential to design training contextualized to Moroccan operational realities (da Silva et al., 2015; Larsson & Ratnayake, 2021; Pontes et al., 2020), to reposition the Lean approach to counter negative perceptions (Benhrimida & Dekkaki, 2020), and to integrate Moroccan cultural specificities (Oikaoui & El Oualidi, 2020) into pedagogical content and teaching methods.

5.3. Structure a Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation System

The sustainability of the Lean approach relies on structured monitoring. Moroccan organizations should implement a system for tracking performance indicators (KPIs) combining efficiency (lead times, costs – Carneiro et al., 2017; da Silva et al., 2015) and satisfaction (users/clients – Sabur & Simatupang, 2015; Takeda Yokoyama et al., 2019). The formalization of steering committees aligned with the existing structure (EL KEZAZY H. et

HILMI Y., 2022; Pontes et al., 2020) and the establishment of feedback loops are crucial for continuous strategy adjustment (Freitas et al., 2018).

5.4. Promote Transparent and Participatory Communication

Clear, continuous, and inclusive communication is an essential vector for mobilizing Key Success Factors (KSFs) and managing resistance to change (Pontes et al., 2020). In Morocco, it is pertinent to implement a differentiated and permanent communication strategy, adapted to cultural and structural specificities (Oikaoui & El Oualidi, 2020), while encouraging the active involvement of agents through dialogue spaces and co-creation workshops (Freitas et al., 2018).

5.5. Adapt Tools and Align Lean with Strategic Vision

The adaptation of Lean tools to organizational specificities and their alignment with the overall strategic vision are *sine qua non* conditions for success. This involves selecting and adjusting the most relevant tools to local realities (Larsson & Ratnayake, 2021; Kholopane & Vandayar, 2014; Yokoyama et al., 2019). It is imperative to explicitly integrate the Lean approach into the organization's overall strategic project (das Chagas Santos et al., 2020) and to develop necessary competencies, both technical (IS, digitalization – Belhaj & Zahi, 2022) and behavioral (problem-solving, collaboration – Freitas et al., 2018), through continuous investment in human resources (Ziani & El Menzhi, 2025).

Conclusion

This study explored the complexity of administrative workflows and the imperative of their optimization within organizations. Our systematic review highlighted that Lean Office, rooted in the principles of the Toyota Production System (Liker, 2004; Womack & Jones, 2003), offers considerable potential to improve operational performance and service quality, as evidenced by numerous international experiences (da Silva et al., 2015; Carneiro et al., 2017).

However, the implementation of Lean Office in administrative environments is not without obstacles. Resistance to change, lack of skills, and the intangible nature of processes (Radnor et al., 2014) demand rigorous adaptation strategies. The mere transposition of Lean principles without critical contextualization proves ineffective (Ait Abdelmalek & Houfaïdi, 2018). Our analysis reveals a striking deficit of studies on Lean Office in the Moroccan public sector. This

gap is critical, as Morocco's cultural (Oikaoui & El Oualidi, 2020), organizational (Ait Abdelmalek & Houfaïdi, 2018), and institutional (Taïbi & Benabdelhadi, 2020) specificities, combined with challenges related to IT (Belhaj & Zahi, 2022) and HR (Ziani & El Menzhi, 2025), fundamentally shape the relevance and effectiveness of Lean Office. Optimizing administrative workflows through Lean Office represents a major strategic imperative for Moroccan organizations, necessitating a methodical approach and a genuine cultural transformation.

Main Contributions of the Research: This article contributes to the literature by proposing an original contingent conceptual framework for Lean Office implementation in Morocco, which integrates the multiple dimensions of the local context. This theoretical contribution provides a solid basis for future empirical research.

Managerial Implications: The strategic pathways detailed in this study offer a practical guide and concrete recommendations for Moroccan managers and policymakers seeking to initiate or improve Lean initiatives within their organizations. They underscore the importance of adapted leadership, a culture of continuous improvement, and transparent communication.

Limitations and Future Research Directions: The limitations of our systematic review, notably the confined number of analyzed articles and their geographical concentration, highlight the necessity for future empirical research. This work paves the way for in-depth case studies or quantitative surveys specific to the Moroccan context. Such investigations could empirically validate the proposed conceptual framework and provide concrete evidence of the success and failure factors for Lean Office implementation in Moroccan administrations, thereby contributing to the continuous improvement of administrative performance and the modernization of the Kingdom's organizations.

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