

Review of: "Mediating Role of Outsourcing on The Relationship Between Lean Manufacturing Practices and Profitability"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Dear authors,

Thank you for the opportunity of reading and reviewing your manuscript, which I found especially interesting both for the study topic and for the methodological approach. However, I found some weaknesses that I listed below with some suggestions to address them:

- Abstract should be better structured. Specifically, I missed a clearer statement of your research objectives, as well as some mention of how your study contributes to literature. And as a minor issue, please, take out "(Sobel Z-value = 2.562, $p = 0.010$)."
- Introduction should be re-written by focusing on your research topic instead of your methodological approach. I suggest explaining first what we know about the relationship between lean manufacturing practices and profitability and then what is the research gap that your research covers. Following, research objectives and the way they will be reached should be presented. Finally, you write a paragraph with your contributions to literature and the main practical implications of your research' results.
- I propose you re-writing the "literature review and hypothesis development" section by first explaining why it is important to study the relationship between lean manufacturing practices and profitability and then why you think that such a relationship may be mediated by outsourcing. Next, I think that it would be useful to follow the logic of Baron and Kenny to present the hypothesis. That is, explain first why you think that lean manufacturing practices and profitability are associated (it even could be presented as hypothesis 1), then the association between lean manufacturing practices and outsourcing, and then between outsourcing and profitability (these effects even could be presented as hypotheses 2 and 3). Once you have explained this, focus on explaining the mediating role of outsourcing in the link between lean manufacturing practices and profitability.
- In the "Methodology" section, I missed some information, such as the date in which the questionnaire was applied and who answered the questionnaire. In addition, the first 10 lines of the "Results and discussion" section should be moved here.
- In the "Results and discussion" section, I strongly encourage you to compare your results with other studies' findings.
- I strongly encourage you to broaden the "Conclusions" section by following the typical structure of contributions to literature, practical implications of your research's results, limitations of your research and future research lines.

Finally, both in Introduction and other sections of the text, I encourage you to emphasize the singularity of your research context.

Good luck with your work!