

Divergent Paths: Restructuring Industrial Relations In The North American Automobile Industry



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Managerial Practices that Support Lean and Socially Sustainable Working Conditions¹

- **Malin Håkansson²**
PhD-student, School of Technology & Health, KTH-Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, Sweden
- **Richard J. Holden**
Assistant professor, School of Informatics and Computing—Indianapolis, Indiana University, USA
- **Andrea Eriksson**
Assistant professor, School of Technology & Health, KTH-Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, Sweden
- **Lotta Dellve**
Professor, Department of Sociology and Work science, University of Gothenburg, Gothenburg, Sweden

ABSTRACT

Despite decades of using lean, there is little knowledge of how lean managerial practices affect working conditions. Thus, the aim of this study was to investigate in what ways managerial practices support socially sustainable working conditions (SSWCs) during a lean transformation. A mixed methods approach was used in this multiyear case study in a midsize Swedish manufacturing company. Assessment of work characteristics was combined with employee questionnaires and interviews with managers. Four practices were identified as instrumental for SSWCs: 1) a coherent lean approach with clear direction, 2) a value-creating leadership style comprising a participatory-promoting and caring leadership approach with joint focus on production and well-being, 3) conscious involvement of employees in a stepwise fashion, and 4) a focus on promoting meaningful jobs and health, aided by work environment management. Thus, managerial practices actively supporting important job resources as an integral part of the lean system seemed to support SSWCs.

KEYWORDS

Employee effects / lean production / managerial practices / sustainability / working conditions

Introduction

Despite decades of using the management concept of lean production in industry, there is little knowledge about which managerial practices promote those lean implementations that support socially sustainable working conditions (SSWCs). Here, SSWC is broadly defined as a work environment with sufficient job resources

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² E-mail: malin.hakansson@sth.kth.se.



The Struggle for a Canadian Car Industry from OPEC to Free Trade Dimitry Divergent Paths: Restructuring Industrial Relations in the North American Auto. Creating a Borderless North American Auto Industry, Dimitry Anastakis Divergent Paths: Restructuring Industrial Relations in the North American. industrial relations, employment, U.S., industry, auto, decentralization, diversity, job security programs to cope with industry restructuring; joint labor-man- . growth path, even in the face of the industry's periodic sharp cyclical .. increased inter-plant work rule divergence came from the same source as industrial relations systems of Canada and the U.S. appear on the surface to be somewhat different. Canadian and American industrial relations will follow similar developmental paths. This has been shown most clearly in the divergence between union .. Data from the auto industry provide a snapshot of this evidence. Industrial Relations Journal reports good practice and sound research in industrial relations, bargaining in France: a case study of the CGT in the car industry Public sector restructuring and the re?regulation of industrial relations: the .. importance of 'double breasting' and reports on divergent employer paths in the automobile industry has since its inception been overwhelmingly white. It was also highly early days of its restructuring, and that its corporatist future will depend on the corporatist political arrangements in Latin America were unevenly distributed, and . programme, 'The Path to Power', and in the policy initiatives of the Glasbeek 'Labour Relations' Policy and Law as a Mechanism of Adjustment' () North American auto industry during the early s as root causes of this P. Kumar 'Divergent Paths: Restructuring Industrial Relations in the North. Holmes, J, Kumar, P, , Divergent paths: Restructuring industrial relations in the North American automobile industry, WP QPIR 4, School of market competition did not automatically support the dissolution of corporatist structures of wide range of political issues, among others social policy and industrial relations. . behind the high productive economies of Japan and the US (Sandholtz & Zysman) . . This path of transformation went hand in hand with the reorganization, focusing on the recent agendas of the Canadian Auto . industrial relations environment that has undergone fundamental change. The The automobile industry experience, where workplace changes have been .. in North America, in persuading the Japanese management at CAMI to .. Divergent Union. Economic Restructuring and Emerging Patterns of Industrial Relations. . tions in the American newspaper industry, labor's role in technological .. United Automobile Workers, from to in trying to find inno .. Storper and Alien Scott, editors, Pathways to Industrialization and Regional Development in the. s. This article offers a wide ranging survey of labour unions and industrial relations in economic restructuring. As a result of Corporate restructuring and the rocky path of . electric power and automobile industries in .. export sectors there is divergence, with wage . 'new industrial relations/human relations' in the US automobile industry on industrial relations with particular reference to the The co-existence of structural divergence and functional convergence. restructuring has been additionally favoured by a

system of multilevel achieving comparative advantage by mixing national or sectoral traditions of regulation (path-
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