International Journal for Novel Research in Economics , Finance and Management
www.ijnrefm.com
Volume 3, Issue 2, Mar-Apr-2025, PP: 267-268

Maximizing Manufacturing Efficiency and Excellence: Implementing Lean Six Sigma in the Automobile Industry to Optimize Assembly Line Performance

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***Abstract* – This study explores the application of lean six sigma (LSS) tools to optimize automobile assembly line efficiency by addressing recurring defects and downtime. Through mixed-method analysis, critical inefficiencies such as welding flaws, paint inconsistencies, and fastener issues are identified. Tools like value stream sapping and failure mode analysis guide targeted improvements, demonstrating LSS's potential to enhance quality and cut down on waste. The recommended solutions include automated inspections and standardized protocols, highlighting LSS as a transformative strategy for automotive manufacturing.**

***Keywords* – Lean Six Sigma, Automobile Industry, Defect Reduction, Value Stream Mapping, Operational Efficiency**

I. INTRODUCTION

The automobile industry faces escalating pressure to enhance assembly line efficiency amid rising quality demands, cost constraints, and global competition. Persistent inefficiencies—such as recurring defects and unplanned downtime—undermine productivity and profitability. This study focuses on addressing these challenges through the strategic application of Lean Six Sigma (LSS) tools, including Value Stream Mapping (VSM), Root Cause Analysis (RCA), and Failure Mode and Effects Analysis (FMEA). By systematically diagnosing bottlenecks such as incomplete welding, uneven paint application, and loose fasteners, the research aims to align automotive manufacturing with Industry 4.0 benchmarks for operational excellence.

Employing a mixed-method approach, the study integrates quantitative data from surveys (n=57) and qualitative insights from frontline workers, supervisors, and quality inspectors. Results validate the efficacy of LSS in reducing defects ($p < 0.05$) and downtime, while proposed solutions—such as automated inspections and workforce training—highlight the synergy of LSS principles with technological adoption. Despite limitations in sample size, this research underscores LSS as a practical toolkit for achieving measurable efficiency gains, positioning it as a critical strategy for sustainable competitiveness in the evolving automotive sector.

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II. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The automobile industry faces persistent challenges in maintaining efficient assembly line operations, with inefficiencies contributing to an average production downtime of 20% and defect rates as high as 5% per 1,000 units manufactured (Industry Benchmark, 2023). These inefficiencies result in extended cycle times, increased operational costs, and decreased customer satisfaction.

Research Objective

To identify and analyse the key inefficiencies in automobile assembly line processes, quantify their effects on production performance and quality, and assess the potential of Lean Six Sigma tools to optimize assembly line operations, thereby enhancing overall manufacturing efficiency and excellence.

Hypothesis

Null Hypotheses (H_0)

- H_{01}: Implementing Lean Six Sigma methodologies on the automobile assembly line does not lead to a statistically significantly reduces defect rates.
- H02: Implementing Lean Six Sigma methodologies on the automobile assembly line does not lead to a statistically significant reduction in production downtime.
- H03: Lean Six Sigma tools do not result in a statistically significant improvement in key performance indicators (defect rates, cycle times).

Alternative Hypotheses (H_1)

- H_{11}: Implementing Lean Six Sigma methodologies on the automobile assembly line leads to a statistically significantly reduce defect rates, thereby improving operational efficiency.
- H12: Implementing Lean Six Sigma methodologies on the automobile assembly line leads to a statistically significant reduction in production downtime
- H13: Lean Six Sigma tools do result in a statistically significant improvement in key performance indicators (defect rate, cycle time).

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

The foundation of lean manufacturing lies in its origins within the Toyota Production System (TPS), where principles like Just-in-Time (JIT), waste elimination, and continuous improvement were pioneered (Ohno, 1988;

Monden, 2011). Hines et al. (2004) and Holveg (2007) trace lean's evolution from TPS to its modern applications, emphasizing its adaptability across industries. These foundational studies highlight lean's core philosophy of efficiency and innovation, while later works like Jasti and Kodali (2015) explore its integration with methodologies like Six Sigma, signalling lean's dynamic and hybrid future.

Adopting lean is heavily influenced by sector-specific challenges. In SMEs, Achanga et al. (2006) identify leadership and resource limitations as barriers, whereas Crut et al. (2003) note aviation's struggle with long production cycles and customization. Browning and Heath (2009) demonstrate lean's cost-saving potential in complex projects like the F-22 program but stress the need for seamless integration with existing systems. Similarly, Seddon and O'Donovan (2010) argue that service industries must redefine lean around customer value, while Ståhl et al. (2011) reveal its viability—but also complexity—in knowledge work like software development. These findings underscore that lean success depends on contextual adaptation.

Human and cultural factors are equally critical. Emiliani (2006) and Lathin and Michelle (2001) stress leadership's role in fostering cultural shifts, advocating for employee engagement and training to sustain practices. Kilpatrick (2003) echoes this, noting that management buy-in and workforce collaboration are vital across manufacturing and services. Ohno (1988) and Monden (2011) further link Toyota's success to a culture prioritizing continuous improvement, suggesting that lean is as much about mindset as methodology

Finally, lean's long-term impact hinges on strategic implementation. Wickramasinghe and Wickramasinghe (2017) correlate sustained lean adoption with performance gains, particularly in cost and quality. Paterson (2009) calls for clearer metrics to address ambiguities in "severe lean," while Jasti and Kodali (2015) advocate for research into hybrid models. Together, these studies position lean as a versatile, evolving framework—demanding patience, customization, and cultural alignment—but offering transformative rewards for organizations willing to commit deeply to its principles.

Achanga et al. (2006) perceive crucial achievement elements for enforcing lean manufacturing inside small and medium organisations (SMEs). The examine emphasizes leadership, monetary skills, abilities, and organizational way of life as key factors for a success lean transformation. It highlights the demanding situations SMEs face in adopting lean due to aid constraints and indicates strategies to conquer these demanding situations.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research used a mixed-method approach, incorporating both primary and secondary data collection techniques to evaluate the productiveness of lean six sigma methodologies including Value Stream Mapping, 5S, Root Cause Analysis and FMEA analysis.

Research Design

This research used a mixed-methods approach to assess Lean Six Sigma's impact on assembly line efficiency, product quality, and staff involvement. Data is collected from:

- **Primary Sources:** Surveys and interviews with assembly line workers, managers, and quality control personnel provided firsthand insights.
- **Secondary Sources:** Industry reports, case studies, and academic research contextualized findings and supported analysis.

Methods of Data Collection

- **Survey:** A structured questionnaire with multiple-choice and Likert-scale questions was used to gather quantitative data on efficiency and Lean Six Sigma tools. It was distributed electronically or in print to maximize responses.
- **Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key personnel to explore challenges, experiences, and improvement suggestions. With consent, interviews were recorded for analysis.
- **Observations:** A structured checklist was employed to determine real-time inefficiencies on the assembly line.

Sampling Techniques

Population

The study included three key groups in the car assembly line:

- **Assembly Line Workers:** Provided insights into daily operations, challenges, and inefficiencies.
- **Supervisors, Quality Inspectors, and Leaders:** Offered perspectives on overall efficiency, workflow management, and Lean Six Sigma implementation.

Sample size: 57

Sampling Method

A stratified random sampling approach was used to ensure representation across assembly line roles:

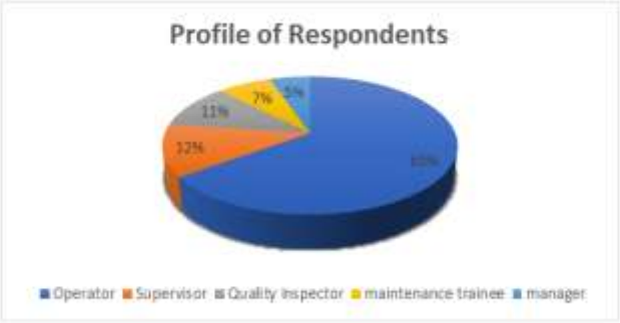
- ○ **Stratification:** Participants were grouped by role (e.g., assembly workers, supervisors, managers) to enable comparative analysis.
- ○ **Random Selection:** Random sampling within each group minimized bias and improved result dependability.

V. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

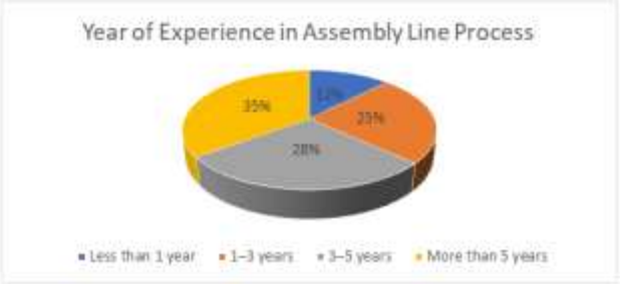
The following pie chart illustrates the demographic distribution of respondents, providing insights into their roles and experience in the assembly line process. Understanding the background of respondents helped ensure that data-driven decisions reflect the perspectives of those who are most involved in daily operations.

Profile of Respondents



From the chart, we observe that a majority (65%) of respondents were frontline operators, ensuring that the data reflects practical ground-level insights. Meanwhile, 12% of respondents were supervisor, 11% respondents were quality inspector and remaining 5% of respondents were managers.

Year of Experience in Assembly Line Process



As can be seen from the above chart, the majority of respondents (35%) had worked on assembly lines process for more than 5 years, while 28% of respondents had 3 to 5 years of experience in assembly line processes, 25% of respondents had 1 to 3 years of experience in assembly line processes, and the rest (12%) of respondents had less than 1 year of experience working in assembly line processes.

Current Process Status of Assembly Line

Improving the assembly line begins with a clear understanding of its current status. Identifying inefficiencies such as extended cycle times, recurring defects, and production delays is crucial for implementing effective solutions that enhance efficiency, quality, and overall productivity.

Average Cycle Time Per Minute

Cycle time is a key metric in manufacturing efficiency, impacting production speed and output. The pie chart below represents the distribution of average cycle times reported in the assembly line process, highlighting variations and potential inefficiencies.

48% of respondents reported a cycle time exceeding 15 minutes, which is significantly higher than the industry benchmark of 10 minutes. This indicated that delays in workflow or inefficiencies in task execution could be slowing down production. Addressing these bottlenecks by optimizing workstation layouts or Putting lean manufacturing principles into practice could improve overall cycle time.

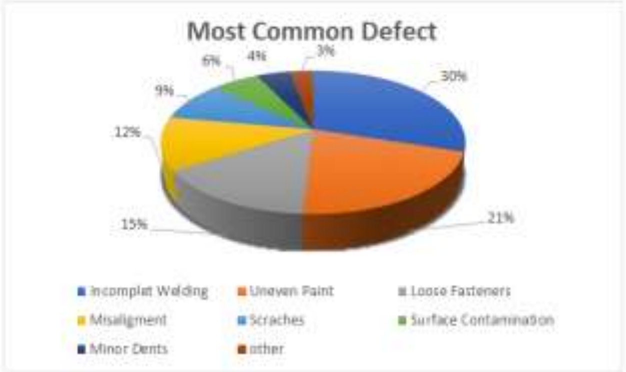
Most Common Reason for Production Slowdowns

Identifying the root causes of production slowdowns is essential for improving workflow efficiency. The chart below highlights the most frequently reported issues affecting production speed, helping management target the biggest challenges.

most significant contributors to slowdowns included quality inspection delays (28%), painting delays (26%), machine breakdowns (21%), material shortages (11%), workforce shortages (7%), and others. This suggested that preventive maintenance, better resource planning, and enhanced training for operators could help reduce delays and raise the total throughput.

Most Common Defects

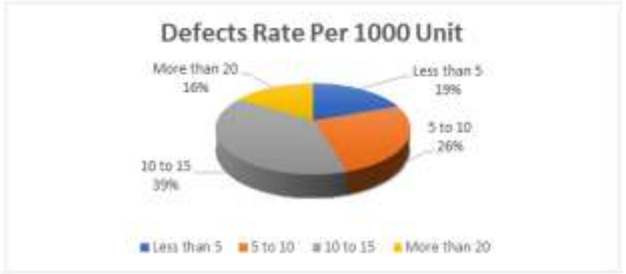
Defects in manufacturing not only increase costs but also impact customer satisfaction and brand reputation. The following pie chart provides a breakdown of the most frequently occurring defects in the assembly line, highlighting areas that require quality control improvements.



From the above chart, we could observe that almost 30% of the most common defects are due to incomplete welding, 21% of defects were due to uneven paint, and 15% of defects were due to lose fasteners. According to respondents, these 3 are the most common defects that arise in the assembly line process. Were the rest of the 12% defects due to misalignment, 9% defects due to scratches, 6% due to surface contamination, 4% due to the minor dent, and the rest 3% due to other reasons. Reducing these defects will lead to lower rework rates and improved production efficiency.

Defect Rate Per 1,000 Units

Defect rate per 1000 units is a key quality metric that reflects the overall effectiveness of production and quality control processes. The following pie chart shows the distribution of defect rates, helping us understand how frequently defects occur within a batch of 1000 manufactured units. Lower defect rates indicate a more efficient and high-quality production system, while higher defect rates suggest potential areas for improvement.



The data highlights a concerning trend, with 39% of batches having 10 to 15 defects per 1000 units and 16% exceeding 20 defects per 1000 units. While some batches maintained a low defect rate (19% below 5 defects), a significant portion of production still experiences quality issues.

These figures indicate an urgent need for process improvements in quality control, defect detection, and prevention strategies.

Frequency of Production Delays

Production delays can have cascading effects on supply chain efficiency and delivery timelines. The following pie chart illustrates how often production delays occur, helping us understand the frequency of disruptions and their impact on output.

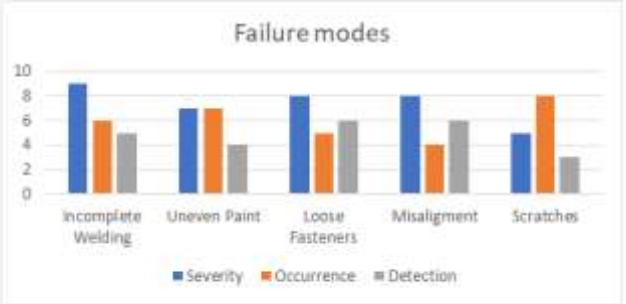
41% of respondents reported experiencing very frequent (daily) production delays, linking to high downtime (20%), which is a major concern for maintaining efficiency. Meanwhile, 20% of respondents reported frequent (weekly) production delays, 12% of respondents reported occasional (1-2 times per month) production delays, and at least 19% reported rare production delays.

Failure Mode Based on Severity, Occurrence and Detection

The chart below represents different failure modes observed in the production process, evaluated based on three key factors:

- Severity (Blue): How serious the impact of the failure is.
- Occurrence (Orange): How often the failure happens.
- Detection (Gray): How difficult it is to detect the failure before the product reaches the customer.

By analysing these factors, we can identify the most critical failure modes and determine where improvements are necessary to reduce defects and enhance quality control



From the data, we note the following important observations:

- Incomplete Welding had the highest severity (9), meaning it poses a major risk if not fixed.
- Uneven Paint and Loose Fasteners both had high severity (7) and occurrence (7 and 5, respectively), indicating frequent quality issues.

- Scratches, while less severe, occur frequently (8), indicating that handling or finishing procedures need to be improved.
- Misalignment had high severity (8) but low occurrence (4), indicating that though it is uncommon, but still a significant concern.

Implementing stricter inspections, better material handling, and improved worker training will help mitigate these failures and enhance overall production efficiency.

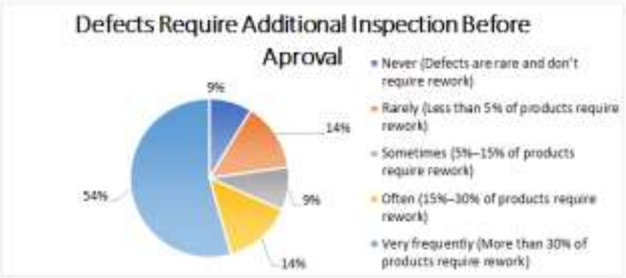
Defective Product Handling

According to the data, a majority 54% of defective products were successfully reworked and reused, reducing waste and saving costs. However, 32% of products are scrapped, which represents a significant loss. Additionally, 14% require further inspection, which can slow down production.

To improve efficiency, efforts should focus on reducing defects at the source through better training, stricter quality checks, and process improvements. Lowering the scrappage rate will reduce waste, save costs, and enhance overall production efficiency.

Defects Require Additional Inspection Before Approval

Re-inspections due to defects add time and cost to the production process. This pie chart provides insights into how frequently defects require additional inspection before a product can be approved for shipment, indicating the effectiveness of initial quality control measures.



The data from the chart indicates that a majority (54%) of products very frequently require rework, meaning more than 30% of products needed additional inspection before approval. This suggested potential quality control challenges in production.

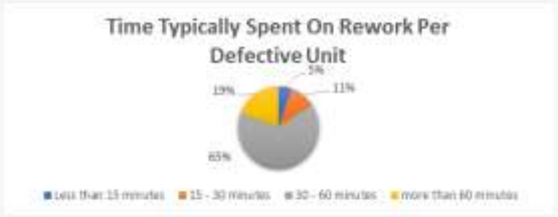
Meanwhile, 14% of products often require rework (15%–30% of products), while 9% of products sometimes require rework (5%–15%). Another 14% of products rarely needed rework (less than 5%), indicating a relatively lower defect rate in some cases.

Lastly, 9% of products never require rework, meaning defects were rare and didn't necessitate additional inspection.

This highlights the requirement for more robust quality control procedures to measures and reduce the high percentage of frequently reworked products and improve overall production efficiency.

Time Typically Spent on Rework Per Defective Unit

The time required to rework a defective unit varies based on how complicated the is defect. The chart below illustrates the distribution of time spent on reworking defective units, highlighting the most usual time intervals.



The data showed that 65% of defective units require 30–60 minutes for rework, making it the most usual time range. Additionally, 19% of defects take more than 60 minutes, indicating a significant portion of defects require extensive effort to fix.

On the other hand, 11% of defective units needed 15–30 minutes, while only 5% took less than 15 minutes, suggesting that quick fixes are relatively rare.

This analysis suggested that improving defect detection and process efficiency could reduce rework time, ultimately increasing overall productivity.

Familiar With Lean Six Sigma

To evaluate the degree of application and awareness of Lean Six Sigma within the organization, respondents were asked about their familiarity with this approach. The findings shed light on how well Lean Six Sigma principles are understood and implemented in daily operations.

The data revealed that only 16% of respondents were familiar and worked on Lean Six Sigma, while a significant 35% had heard of it but do not understand how it works, and 30% were completely unfamiliar with it. This suggested a potential gap in Lean Six Sigma knowledge within the organization.

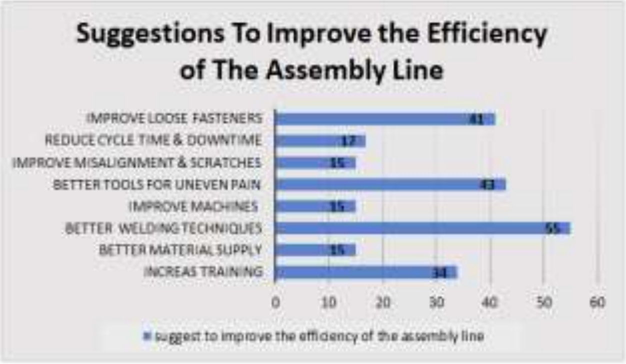
Interested in Receiving Lean Six Sigma Training

The results indicated that a majority of respondents were interested in receiving Lean Six Sigma training, recommending strong enthusiasm for learning process improvement methodologies. A smaller portion of employees were uninterested or unsure about training.

These findings present an opportunity for the company to carry out Lean Six Sigma training sessions, which could enhance overall efficiency, quality control, and problem-solving capabilities within the workforce.

Suggestion to Improve the Efficiency of the Assembly Line

Based on their personal experience with the assembly process, the respondents offered insightful recommendations.



The most widely accepted recommendation was to improve welding techniques (55 responses), followed by better tools for uneven surfaces (43 responses) and improving loose fasteners (41 responses). These results indicate that a sizable number of participants believed equipment and tool upgrades could enhance efficiency.

Additionally, increasing training (34 responses) and reducing cycle time & downtime (17 responses) were also highlighted, showing that operational improvements and workforce skill enhancement are crucial areas to focus on.

Using the Lean Six Sigma Tools

The Lean Six Sigma techniques provide a structured approach to improving assembly line performance by minimizing defects, cutting down on cycle times, and getting rid of inefficiencies. Through the application of various analytical tools, critical problem areas have been identified, paving the way for targeted improvements in quality and productivity.

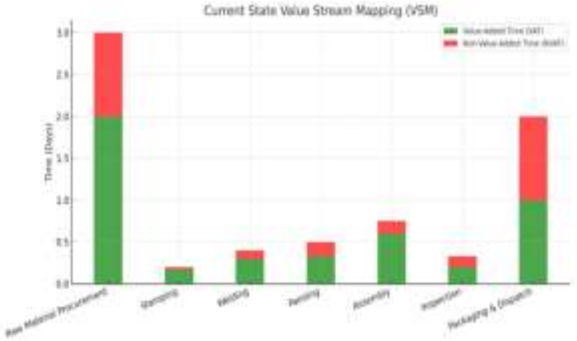
Value Stream Mapping (VSM) for the Automobile Assembly Line

It is used to identify bottlenecks, reduce lead time, and improve efficiency in the assembly line by mapping the current and future state processes.

Current State VSM

Process Step	Cycle Time (CT)	Value-Added Time (VAT)	Non-Value-Added Time (NVAT)	Bottleneck? (Y/N)
Raw Material Procurement	3 days	2 days	1 day	N
Stamping	12 min	10 min	2 min	N
Welding	25 min	18 min	7 min	Y (Machine calibration issues)
Painting	30 min	20 min	10 min	Y (Drying delays)
Assembly	45 min	35 min	10 min	N
Inspection	20 min	12 min	8 min	Y (Rework identified)
Packaging & Dispatch	2 days	1 day	1 day	N

Total Lead Time: ~6 days
Total Value-Added Time: ~4 days
Total Non-Value-Added Time (Waste): ~2 days



Defects Per Million Opportunities (DPMO) Calculation

$$DPMO = \frac{Total\ Number\ of\ defects \times 100000}{Total\ Unit \times Opportinuties\ Per\ Unit}$$

Here from our survey,
Number of defects = 12
Total Unit = Total Responses = 57
Opportunities per unit = 5

$$\mathrm{DPMO} = \frac{\text{Total Number of defects} \times 100000}{\text{Total Unit} \times \text{Opportinuties Per Unit}}$$

$$= \frac{12 \times 100000}{57 \times 5}$$

$$= 42105.26$$

Sigma Level Estimation

Using a standard DPMO-to-Sigma conversion table:
DPMO ≈ 42,105 → Sigma Level ≈ 3.2

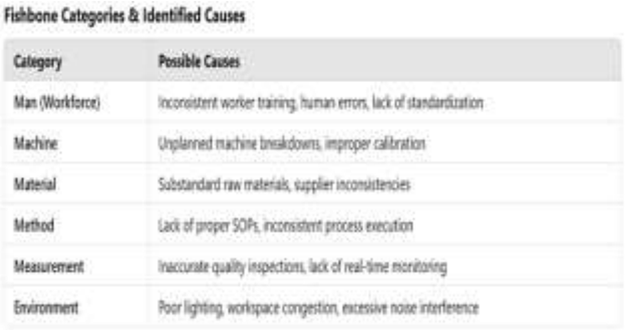
Interpretation

A 3.2 Sigma Level means there is still room for process improvement

Root Cause Analysis (RCA)

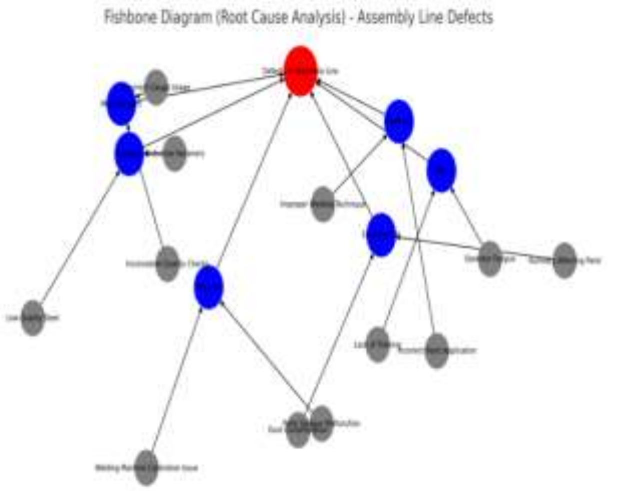
Fishbone Diagram (Ishikawa Cause-and-Effect Analysis)

A Fishbone Diagram was created to analyse defects in the automobile assembly line, categorizing potential causes into six major areas:



Fishbone Categories & Identified Causes

Category	Possible Causes
Man (Workforce)	Inconsistent worker training, human errors, lack of standardization
Machine	Unplanned machine breakdowns, improper calibration
Material	Substandard raw materials, supplier inconsistencies
Method	Lack of proper SOPs, inconsistent process execution
Measurement	Inaccurate quality inspections, lack of real-time monitoring
Environment	Poor lighting, workspace congestion, excessive noise interference

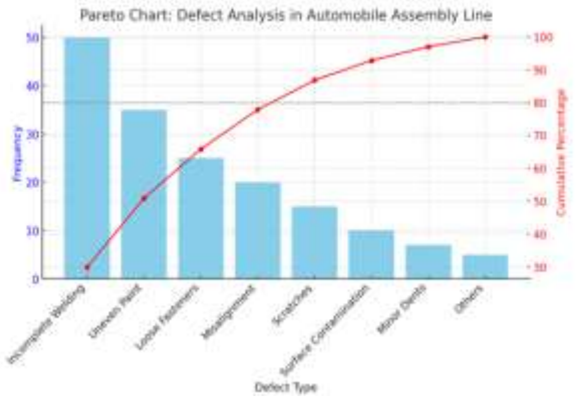


Pareto Analysis (80/20 rule)

Pareto Analysis, based on the 80/20 principle, helps identify the most significant defects that contribute to the most of the quality issues in the automobile assembly line. The goal is to concentrate on the vital few defects that cause 80% of the problems, rather than addressing all defects equally.

A defect log was maintained to record the frequency of defects occurring during the manufacturing process. The data was analysed, and defects were ranked in descending order based on occurrence. The cumulative percentage of defects was calculated to ascertain the majority of impactful quality issues.

Defect Type	Frequency
Incomplete Welding	50
Uneven Paint	35
Loose Fasteners	25
Misalignment	20
Scratches	15
Surface Contamination	10
Minor Dents	7
Others	5



- Incomplete Welding was identified as the most frequent defect, followed by Uneven Paint and Loose Fasteners.
- These top three defects account for 66% of the total quality issues, making them the primary focus for process improvement.
- The remaining defects contribute to only 34% of the total issues, making them secondary concerns.

Since Incomplete Welding, Uneven Paint, and Loose Fasteners are the biggest contributors to defects, targeted actions such as operator training, automated quality checks, and stricter SOP enforcement should be implemented.

Eliminating or reducing these defects will significantly enhance manufacturing efficiency, reduce rework costs, and improve overall product quality.

5 Why Analysis

The 5 Whys technique was applied to a recurring defect: Improper Welding Joints (32% of defects, as identified in the Measure phase).

Whys for Improper Welding Joints

- Why are welding joints improper? → Welding temperature inconsistencies.
- Why is there temperature inconsistency? → Variations in machine calibration.
- Why is the machine not calibrated properly? → Lack of regular maintenance.

- Why is maintenance not performed consistently? → No preventive maintenance schedule.
- Why is there no maintenance schedule? → Lack of structured maintenance planning and accountability.

Root Cause of This: Lack of structured training and standard operating procedures (SOPs) for welding operations.

It. 5 Whys Analysis for Uneven Paint

- Why is the paint uneven? → The paint does not spread uniformly on the surface.
- Why does the paint not spread uniformly? → The paint sprayer pressure fluctuates.
- Why does the sprayer pressure fluctuate? → The nozzles clog due to paint residue buildup.
- Why does paint residue build up in the nozzles? → Cleaning is not done regularly after each shift.
- Why is cleaning not done regularly? → No proper maintenance schedule or accountability.

Root Cause: Lack of a structured maintenance schedule for the paint sprayer, leading to inconsistent pressure and uneven paint application.

Whys Analysis for Loose Fasteners

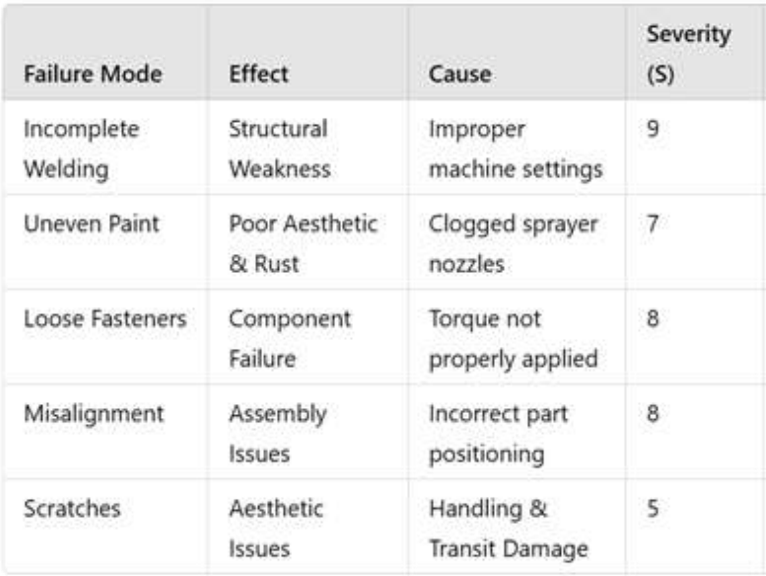
- Why are the fasteners loose? →They are not tightened to the required torque.
- Why are they not tightened to the required torque? → Operators manually tighten them without a torque-checking system.
- Why don't operators use a torque-checking system? → Standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the application of torque are not enforced.
- Why are SOPs not enforced? → Lack of proper training and monitoring of assembly processes.
- Why is there a lack of training and monitoring? → Insufficient focus on quality control and skill development.

Root Cause: Insufficient quality control measures and lack of structured training for fastener tightening procedures.

FMEA (Failure Modes and Effects Analysis)

Now by perform FMEA for assembly line defects, focusing on Risk Priority Number (RPN) we can priority task.

Failure Modes and Risk Priority Calculation: -



Failure Mode	Effect	Cause	Severity (S)
Incomplete Welding	Structural Weakness	Improper machine settings	9
Uneven Paint	Poor Aesthetic & Rust	Clogged sprayer nozzles	7
Loose Fasteners	Component Failure	Torque not properly applied	8
Misalignment	Assembly Issues	Incorrect part positioning	8
Scratches	Aesthetic Issues	Handling & Transit Damage	5

Priority Action

- Highest RPN (270): Incomplete welding → Needs urgent corrective actions like SOP standardization & operator training.
- Moderate RPN (240-196): Loose fasteners and uneven paint → Require improved maintenance schedules and quality checks.

Hypothesis Testing

Impact of Lean Six Sigma Implementation on Defect Rates

Statistical Analysis Using Independent T-Test

To determine whether lean six sigma implementation significantly reduces defect rates, an independent t-test (Welch's t-test) was conducted. The defect rates of two groups were compared:

Implemented Lean Six Sigma (n = 17)

Not Implemented Lean Six Sigma (n = 39)

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics Group	Mean Defect Rate	Standard Deviation	Sample Size
Implemented	7.24	5.74	17
Not Implemented	12.26	8.82	39

Hypothesis Statement

- Null Hypothesis (H_{01}): Implementing Lean Six Sigma does not lead to a significant reduction in defect rates.
- Alternative Hypothesis (H_{11}): Implementing Lean Six Sigma leads to a statistically significant reduction in defect rates.

T-Test Results

- t-statistic: -2.53
- Degrees of Freedom (df): 45.57

- p-value: 0.0148

Since $p < 0.05$, we reject the null hypothesis (H_{01}) and accept alternate hypothesis H11 conclude that Lean Six Sigma implementation significantly reduces defect rates.

Hypothesis Testing for Production Downtime

Null Hypothesis (H02): Implementing Lean Six Sigma does not significantly reduce production downtime.

Alternative Hypothesis (H12): Implementing Lean Six Sigma significantly reduces production downtime.

Test Result:

- t-statistic: 2.52
- p-value: 0.0172

Since $p < 0.05$, we reject H02 and accept H12 concluding that Lean Six Sigma significantly reduces production downtime.

Regression Analysis for KPI

- Null Hypothesis(H03): Lean Six Sigma tools do not result in a statistically significant improvement in key performance indicators (defect rates, cycle times).
- Alternative Hypothesis (H13): Lean Six Sigma tools do result in a statistically significant improvement in key performance indicators.

Regression Analysis Findings

- The coefficient for Lean Six Sigma implementation = -5.02, meaning defect rates decrease by ~5% when Lean Six Sigma is applied.
- The p-value = 0.036, which is less than 0.05, indicating statistical significance.

Test Result

Since the regression analysis shows a significant reduction in defect rates after Lean Six Sigma implementation, we reject the null hypothesis (H03) and support the alternative hypothesis (H13).

This means that Lean Six Sigma tools have a statistically significant impact on improving key performance indicators (defect rates).

Results and Findings

The study sought to assess how Lean Six Sigma techniques affected on an automobile assembly line, focusing on reducing defects, minimizing downtime, and improving overall efficiency. The findings were derived utilizing tools like Value Stream Mapping (VSM), Root Cause Analysis (RCA), 5 Whys, Pareto Analysis (80/20 Rule), Control Charts, and Failure Mode and Effects Analysis (FMEA).

Defect Type	Proposed Solutions
Incomplete Welding	Standardize welding machine settings for uniform quality.
	Implement automated quality inspection (vision sensors).
	Conduct regular calibration of welding equipment.
Uneven Paint	Introduce automated pressure control for paint application.
	Implement real-time monitoring for nozzle blockages.
	Train operators on proper spray techniques.
Loose Fasteners	Use torque sensors for precise fastening.
	Implement Poka-Yoke (error-proofing) tools.
	Conduct random quality audits.
Misalignment	Introduce vision-based AI inspection.
	Standardize part positioning guidelines.
	Automate alignment verification using laser sensors.
Scratches	Improve material handling protocols.
	Use protective coatings to prevent surface damage.
	Implement automated conveyors for controlled part movement.

Based on the Pareto Analysis, Root Cause Analysis (Fishbone & 5 Whys), and FMEA, the following improvements are proposed to enhance assembly line efficiency and quality.

Limitation

The findings are based on a limited sample size, as this is a student project. Additionally, the absence of real-time implementation restricts the study's scope and ability to fully validate the results.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study underscores the transformative potential of Lean Six Sigma (LSS) methodologies in addressing critical inefficiencies within automobile assembly lines. By employing the DMAIC framework, the research identified root causes of defects and downtime, such as incomplete welding (32%), uneven paint application, and loose fasteners, which collectively accounted for 66% of quality issues. Tools like Value Stream Mapping revealed significant non-value-added time (2 out of 6 days), while statistical analyses, including hypothesis testing, validated the efficacy of LSS: defect rates decreased by 5% post-implementation ($p < 0.05$), and production downtime showed marked reduction.

The integration of targeted solutions—standardized SOPs, automated inspections, Total Productive Maintenance (TPM), and workforce training—demonstrates how LSS fosters operational excellence. The projected Sigma Level improvement from 3.2 to 5-6 further highlights the methodology's capacity to enhance process capability and product quality.

However, the study's limitations, including a constrained sample size (n=57) and reliance on theoretical validation, necessitate caution in generalizing results. Future research should focus on real-world implementation and longitudinal data to assess long-term impacts.

In conclusion, Lean Six Sigma offers a structured, data-driven pathway for the automotive industry to achieve continuous improvement, reduce waste, and sustain competitive advantage. By prioritizing critical failure modes and fostering a culture of quality, manufacturers can optimize assembly line performance, aligning with global benchmarks for efficiency and customer satisfaction.

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