ABSTRACT

In its reality, the world is more complex than we expect it to be predicated and controlled; so, by minor view to issues and suppose many phenomena to be independent, it would be impossible to understand their totality and complexity. Utilizing appropriate scientific tools can provide us with useful information to manage decision making to improve methods to carry out operations and apply resources; one of these scientific tools is system dynamics approach. Therefore, based on stages in the methodology of system dynamics and by taking experts comments, in the present study, causal relations between influential factors in improvement of customs service are identified. So, by knowing these causal relations, one can allocate resources and prioritize activities leading to influence on other factors following with the best results. Finally, after validation and having the confirmation of the experts, the researcher has presented a causal model to improve customs services.
INTRODUCTION

Customs plays an important role in economy, especially that of developing countries. In addition to its financial role in earning money, it has an influential role in the commerce. Further, customs service plays valuable roles in implementation of policies of a country. Since, customs service is a guarantee to price control and domestic production support, existence of a right management pattern will bring about brilliant results in a country. The sensitivity and importance of export of goods and services has led to identifying the tools and factors that are involved and trying to expand exports. The customs service is one of the effective factors in the development of exports of goods and services. Therefore, increasing the quality of customs services is of paramount importance. To improve customs services, several influential factors must have been taken into account. In today’s developing and dynamic environment, managers are faced with plenty of variables to make the most appropriate decision or have the best choice. Causal loop diagrams are considered as an important tool to show feedback structure of systems. Having been used for a long time in scientific issues, these diagrams are so common in business world and can be considered as the best alternative to rapidly obtain a hypothesis on the reasons of dynamism, deduction and understanding mental models of individuals and groups; further, they are appropriate tools to relate important feedbacks which play a role in creating the problem.

In most of the developed countries, customs mechanism depends upon efficient use of human resources and equipment to improve services. To find a way to form the truth as a system instead of a series of independent issues would be necessary to make a suitable plan. Any system is defined according to collectivity and interaction among its constituents. To improve a system, its totality should be modified as a whole, not each part, separately. Because improvement of constituents of a system may not lead to improvement of its totality, it even can be worse (Ahmedvand & Arab, 2009).

The system dynamics approach provides holistic view. This approach was introduced in early 1960s by Forster at MIT University (Sterman, 2008). It is a branch of system thinking which studies totality of a system without tangling itself with ambiguous and complex terminology. System dynamics is a method to study and manage complex systems with feedback. The reason for using system dynamics is having a comprehensive view of improving customs services. Traditional techniques ignore the dynamics of customs services improvement and can’t understand the complexity of the issues. Therefore in this chapter with a system dynamics approach a casual modeling are provided to improve customs services.
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