

BPM in practice: Who is doing what?

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Where innovation starts

Context

- BPM is a “theory in practice” subject:
 - direct motivation for research is industrial context of business processes
- BPM **research** flourishes
- BPM widely applied in **industry**
- Positive signs for interaction
- But:
 - Do we – as researchers – know sufficiently well **what is going on** in industrial BPM projects?

Research set-up

- **Cooperation with Deloitte Consulting in the Netherlands:**
 - Access to all recent BPM-related projects (offering, project documentation, consultants)
- **General idea:**
 - Compare characteristics of the projects with those of the organizations carrying them out
- **To fight major source of bias:**
 - Replication in Germany with Ravensburg-Weingarten University of Applied Sciences

Selection of BPM projects

- **Project:**

- has process focus
- meant to facilitate or assist – future – organizational change
- is (partly) conducted within an organization in the Netherlands
- has been ended in 2005 or later
- involves consultants still being active

- **Examples:**

- Development of processes to market a new product through an online sales channel
- Improvement of customer satisfaction through improvement of sales processes.

33 projects
included

Approach

Organizational characteristics

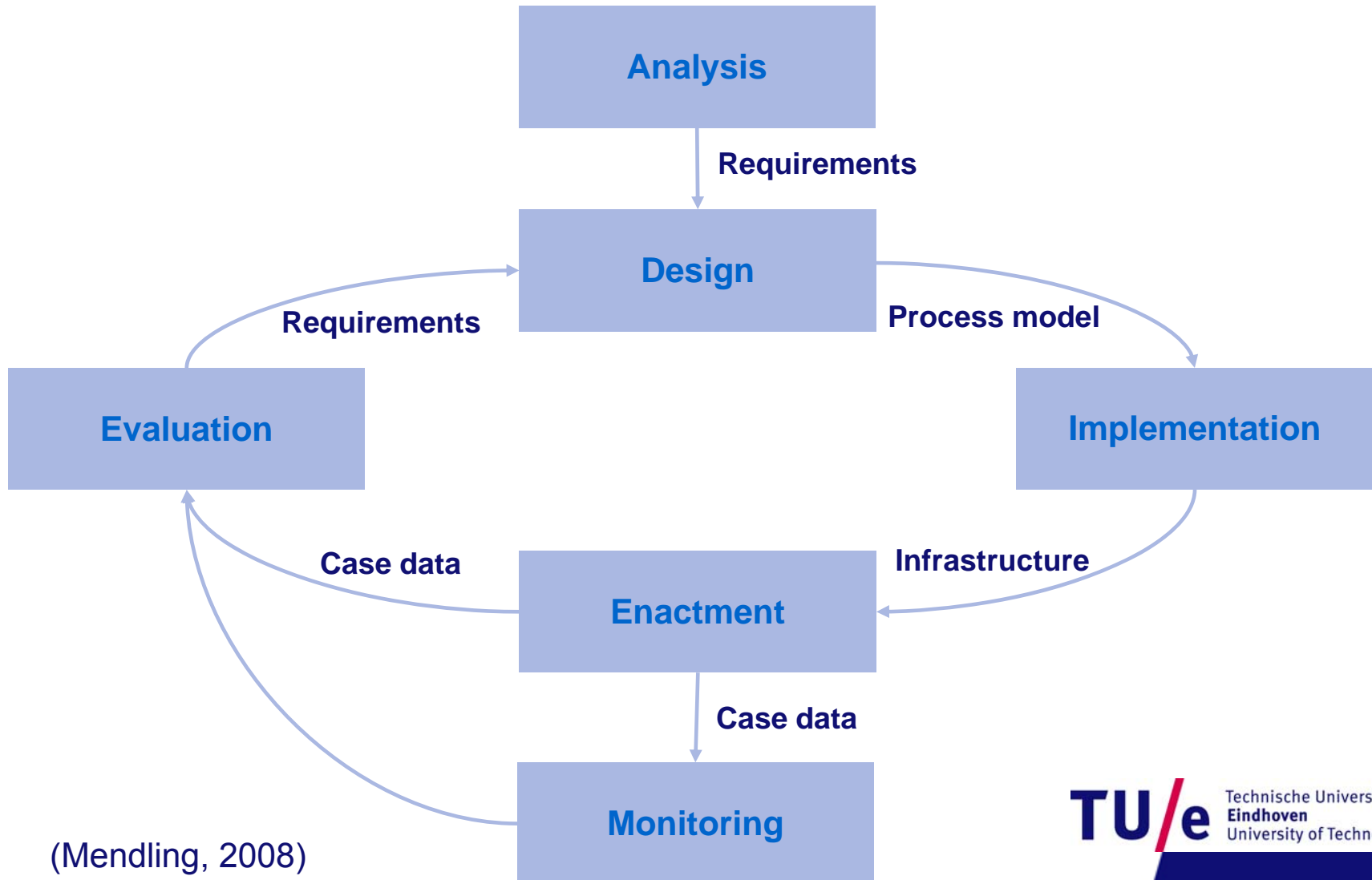
- **Organization size**
 - Number of employees (4 classes)
- **Profit motive**
 - Profit
 - Non-profit
- **Manufacturing / non-manufacturing**
 - Manufacturing
 - Non-manufacturing (i.e. service , government)
- **Predominant strategic orientation**
 - Operational excellence (OE)
 - “best total cost”
 - Customer intimacy (CI)
 - “best total solution”
 - Product leadership (PL)
 - “best product”

Relation?

BPM project characteristics

- **Trigger**
 - Part of an overarching initiative
 - Independent project
- **Business objective**
 - Business performance
 - Business conformance
- **Technology emphasis**
 - Yes
 - No
- **Focus area**
 - Core processes
 - Support processes
 - Both
- **Type of BPM**
 - BPM life cycle phases

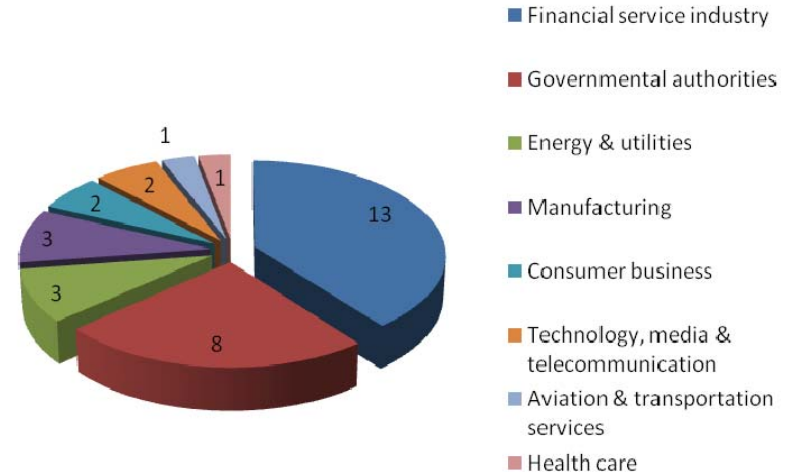
BPM Life-cycle



(Mendling, 2008)

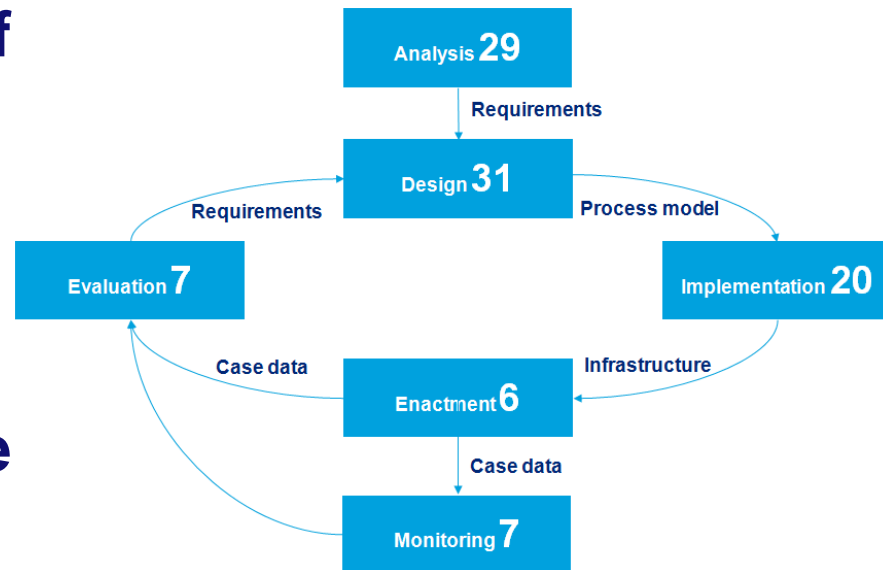
Data inspection

- **Organizations:**
 - **Vary largely in size**
 - From less than 50 up to 40000 employees
 - **Pursue various predominant strategic orientations**
 - OE (11)
 - CI (14)
 - PL (8)
 - **Are active in a large number of industries**



Data inspection - cont'd

- **Projects:**
 - Triggers are very diverse
 - Many projects (18) part of an overarching initiative
 - Business performance improvement is the main objective (25)
 - IT plays an important role
 - Sixteen projects have a technical objective
 - In the other projects, IT is often still involved



Findings

- **Size matters:**
 - smaller organizations mainly involved in “early” stages of BPM life-cycle (i.e. analysis)
 - larger organizations involved in “later” stages (i.e. implementation and evaluation)
- **Strategic orientation** gives the flavor:
 - In operational excellence organizations BPM projects:
 - more commonly independent (rather than part of an overarching initiative)
 - more often non-technical in nature
- Profit motive and manufacturing / non-manufacturing are no distinguishing factors

Implications

- Larger organizations (>1000 FTE) more natural partners for research **advanced** stages life-cycle
- “Operational excellence” organizations more natural partners for research with BPM as **management discipline**
- Organizations with other strategic orientations more focused **on technological** side of BPM
- Organizations conducting BPM projects are not tied to particular domain or profit motive



Closing thoughts

- **Geography**
 - Results only partly reproduced in German study (but at least no contradictory findings)
 - Study has a European perspective:
 - What about the Americas and Asia-Pacific?
- **Size**
 - Larger organizations have the money to hire consultants
 - Smaller organizations may display “natural” business process orientation

Questions?

