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Editorial Introduction

Welcome to the Brazilian Journal of Operations & Production Management¹. When Professor Coppini, president of ABEPRO (the Brazilian Production Engineering Association) invited me to be the editor of this journal, I have to confess that I was quite reluctant in accepting it. Nevertheless, I appreciated the importance of this challenge chiefly in the attempt to contribute to the field of industrial engineering and operations management in the country. It is true that there are a few relevant publications in this field in Brazil. Although the articles are usually good material, they are written in Portuguese and, as a consequence, cannot reach the international research community. In this sense, one of the aims of the current journal is to fulfil this gap by publishing competitive papers from the production engineering and operations management community in the English language.

Another relevant objective of this journal is to provide a channel of communication for all those working in the operations management field, whether they work in academic institutions or industry. The journal expects to count on the research community by considering the journal as the outlet for publication of their research work.

More advanced needs that I would expect for the future would be the enhancement of interdisciplinary research within the research topics defined by ABEPRO.²

As stated by Meredith (2002)³, the role of an editor is to help authors get papers published and not to keep the authors out. Hence, a difficult task is to reject a paper. We had fifteen submissions for this first issue. Four of them were rejected up-front by the editor because they simply did not comply with the manuscript guidelines. They were very short communications and some were out of the journal's scope. Meredith (2002) adds that editors usually receive unexpected types of papers, some of which are really strange submissions. This was also confirmed here in the BJO&PM. Other three papers were rejected by the two reviewers and the remaining articles are still in the review process sent to a third reviewer for adjudication. Regarding this issue, the result was five competitive papers from different parts of Brazil and abroad.

¹ Also referred as Industrial Engineering. We are using the terminology employed by ABEPRO.

² Production Management; Quality Operations; Economic Management; Ergonomics and Work Safety; Product Development; Operational Research; Strategy and Organizations; Technology Management; Information Systems; Environmental Management; Education issues in operations management.

³ Meredith, J.R. (2002) Reflecting Back on 7 Years (p. 7-10), in: Introduction: 20th Anniversary of JOM: an Editor's Retrospective and Prospective. *Journal of Operations Management*, Vol. 20, pp. 1-18.

The accomplishment of this first issue would not be possible without the work of our editorial review board. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge them. They have provided the journal with a high level evaluation, surely contributing to the authors and the referral process. The reviewer's insightful comments have helped the authors of the selected papers – a very rigorous process – to enhance their articles. Additionally, there are other persons who dedicated themselves with their support and motivation. Special thanks are due to Adiel Almeida, from UFPE, Marcius Carvalho from CenPRA, and Sílvio Pires from UNIMEP. Their discussions, suggestions and contributions were second to none. Finally, Mr. Waldemar Péres Júnior should be acknowledged for his general English review.

I hope the readers find the articles a useful source within the scope of production engineering and operations management.

In this First Issue

This first issue opens with an article from Australia by Catherine Killen, Robert Hunt and Bradley Ayres on cooperative competitive strategies. The paper highlights the principles of alliances and networks, outlines some government initiatives in this area, and illustrates with a case study of an Australian electronics company which competes with other manufacturers all over the world.

Luiz Scarvada, Sílvio Hamacher and Sílvio Pires then present an article which proposes a model that analyses Supply Chain Management (SCM) configurations as well as it applies it to four supply chains of an European Automaker. The results of such an application have indicated that the two supply chains that have long been established many years ago in Europe show a higher developmental stage of SCM than the supply chain that is under development for the establishment of a new plant that produces completely build up vehicles in an emerging country.

In our third article, Antonio de Castro Vieira and Eugenio Epprecht present an interesting application of generalized linear models solved by using spreadsheet software. The proposal can fit the needs of occasional users, needing to solve not very large problems as well as it can also be advantageous for teaching and training purposes.

The fourth article, Oscar Salviano Silva Filho and Wagner Cezarino shows the problem of selecting an optimal production policy for a make-to-stock process. A modified stochastic dynamic programming algorithm is used as solution technique for this problem and a case study is proposed to illustrate the proposed solution.

In our final article, Frank J. Groen, Enrique López Droguett, Siyuan Jiang and Ali Mosleh describe a software for reliability data collection and analysis methodology for reliability assessment of products under development. In particular, the methodology was discussed in the context of the Ford Motor Company applications, and put forward for the treatment of

the following types of evidence: warranty data in terms instantaneous failure rate, test data, engineering judgements regarding impact of design changes and design credits. It is worth mentioning that one of the authors, Ali Mosle, is the editor of the Risk Analysis Journal.

This first issue concludes with some call for papers of national and international conferences on operations management and production research.



Paulo A. Cauchick Miguel
Editor of BJO&PM

ABEPRO's President word

Dear Reader:

ABEPRO (*Associação Brasileira de Engenharia de Produção*) – Brazilian Production Engineering Association was created in 1985, thirty-one years after the first Production Engineering undergraduate course has been established in Brazil. Since then, several events and products were delivered aiming at meeting the needs of the production engineering research community. Some of these initiatives are a Brazilian academic journal – in Portuguese named *Produção*, a virtual journal called *Produção On Line*, and the International Conference on Industrial Engineering and Operations Management held simultaneously and every year, since 1981, together with the Brazilian Production Engineering Conference, the ENEGEP (*Encontro Nacional de Engenharia de Produção*).

Now, ABEPRO decided an old dream to come true: to have an international journal. We hope that this first issue of Brazilian Journal of Operations & Production Management (BJO&PM) is the beginning of a very successful project launched by ABEPRO. Our wish is to have high quality contributions from Production Engineering and Operations Management Community from all over the world. Additionally, we wish to spread out the research conducted in Brazil to the worldwide academic and industrial communities.

We hope you enjoy our journal and support ABEPRO to accomplish this task so the BJO&PM becomes an effective source of knowledge share. ABEPRO is thankful to the authors of the present issue, the staff and all the colleagues that did their best to make it real, specially our current editor Paulo Augusto Cauchick Miguel.



Nivaldo Lemos Coppini
President of ABEPRO

Editorial Point of View

What Really Makes a Contribution to Operations Management

Paulo A. Cauchick Miguel

My experience of editorship is rather recent. However, a question that have intrigued myself for the past years is: what kind of contribution is important to the operations management field? I understand that there are a couple of them. However, it is certain that the main contribution is to create knowledge. One of the means of doing so is by a theoretical development. Other journal editors, much more experienced than myself, have tried to address this issue. For instance, Whetten (1989) has tried to find a simple way to communicate the necessary ingredients of a theoretical contribution. It is an interesting article which discusses the building blocks of theory development, its essential elements and the basis for a legitimate and value-added contribution to theory development. Finally, Whetten (1989) closes the paper by presenting factors that are considered when judging conceptual papers.

There are also other relevant issues on creating knowledge that bring about a relevant contribution. Evidences could come from the field research and a strong research methodology approach must be in place. The approaches can be based on quantitative or qualitative research. In fact, there are a few authors who recently discussed important research approaches applied to operations management such as: action research (Coughlan and Coughlan, 2002), case study (Voss et al., 2002), quantitative modelling (Bertrand and Fransoo, 2002), and survey (Forza, 2002) to name but a few. Of course, there are other issues to be considered since the empirical research in operations management spans a broad diversity of methods depending on the nature of the problem.

Perhaps the 'perfect' situation is when the research combines theoretical development with field research or, more ideally, to put in place the process of conducting theory-driven empirical research. As stated earlier, field research must consider solid and rigorous research methodologies based on scientific methods. When I teach research methodology to my research students (especially the doctoral's), I put strong efforts to make clear that the fundamental goal is to create knowledge or, in other words, to extend the boundaries of a particular research area within the operations management field.

An extremely difficult task of a journal is to offer articles which extend the existing knowledge, and not simply rewrite it. Additionally, robust and rigorous research methodologies must be present and, finally, empirical work should provide both the understanding of the phenomena and the contribution to theory. We do hope that we can get relevant contributions from the articles of the Brazilian Journal of Operations & Production Management. As cited in the Editorial Introduction, this is really a challenge.

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