
Editorial

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Biographical notes: Harm-Jan Steenhuis is an Associate Professor of Operations Management and Chair of the Management Department at Eastern Washington University. He received an MSc in Industrial Engineering and Management and a PhD in International Technology Transfer from the University of Twente, the Netherlands. Currently, he is involved in research on international manufacturing and R&D-level technology transfer in industry–university cooperative research.

Erik J. de Bruijn is a Professor of Business Management in Non-Western countries at the Technology and Development Group, University of Twente. He received his MSc from the University of Massachusetts and his PhD from the University of Twente. Since 1971, he worked as a Project Coordinator and Consultant for the Netherlands government in various industrialisation projects in developing countries. Currently, he teaches International Business Management and is the Chairman of the Technology and Development Group, School of Business, Public Administration and Technology, University of Twente.

1 Introduction

The idea for this special issue was initiated at the Cancun meeting: POMS Expanding Constellation in May 2004. This led to a call for papers that was circulated towards the end of 2004. The reviewing process started in May 2005. Over 20 people intended to submit a paper and eventually 15 submissions were received, which went through a double-blind reviewing process. In the first round of reviews several papers were rejected and similarly in the resubmission round some papers were rejected, resulting in six papers.

While all the papers have a common element of addressing the current important issues concerning international manufacturing, they also show important differences. They illustrate the diversity of topics relevant to international manufacturing and a variety of research approaches.

This special issue is organised as follows: First, there is a discussion of strategic issues. These issues play an important role when companies are deciding whether to get involved in international manufacturing. The paper by Crowe et al. used survey research to internationally compare approaches towards manufacturing strategy. The paper by Goentzel et al. uses a modelling approach for strategic resource allocation and material flow decisions in global supply chains. Second, once a company has decided to get involved in international manufacturing, some form of technology or knowledge transfer to another country occurs. This is addressed in the third and fourth papers. Pathak et al. use a case study approach to discuss issues of learning and technology management in an international partnership. De Bruijn and Steenhuis use secondary data analysis to explore patterns of location shifts in passenger car manufacturing. Third, when companies operate in multiple countries, their operations in these countries may be different due to the different environments. This aspect is addressed in the paper by Winroth et al. Their paper is based upon a literature review and internationally compares how automation decisions are made. Lastly, success in international manufacturing is by no means certain and sometimes foreign plants are divested. The paper by Strach and Everett, based on the case study methodology, describes the divestment experiences of an electronic company.

We expect that this issue provides food for thought for all those interested in international manufacturing. We are grateful to Dr. Ishikura from Osaka Gakuin University for his help to get this special issue realised.