
Editorial

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Organisational management practices began to evolve with the Taylor approach, which was based upon theories of time and methods. Labour costs played a large role in total product cost, as is still the case today in some older sectors of the economy. Nevertheless, it became clear that business needed to extend organisational management into other areas, such as materials control (planning and production control, layout, quality) and financial aspects (costs, inventory, savings). In the more advanced areas of today's industrial sector, labour costs do not exceed 10% of total costs. The management of contemporary organisation can be seen as a scale with two balances. On one side: cost reduction; on the other: the increase in value. Traditional firms normally invest in the former, while modern, competitive firms attempt to increase the value of their products and services. The increase in value is associated with technological innovation and the development of new products and services. Added value can also be achieved via transport systems that carry goods from places where they are abundant to places where they are scarce and then, of course, charging a higher price for those goods. The principal goal of an organisational management strategy is to create efficiency within the enterprise. In order to improve competitiveness in today's world, it is necessary to improve upon certain factors that were considered fixed parameters under the previous paradigm. These factors include product design, a mastery of technological development, improving marketing and logistics, improving stakeholder relations, good corporate governance, transparency, meeting profit targets, and social and environmental responsibility. Today, competitiveness is principally determined by: the development of new materials and processes; the automatisisation of production; logistics and marketing; the development of a good reputation; risk management for the continuity of business; adequate financing of production and distribution; and currency considerations in cross-border trade. It will continue to be necessary to invest in these areas in the coming decades. The absence of stimulus measures designed to improve competitiveness caused an accelerated process of deindustrialisation in many countries beginning in the 1980s. Correcting this problem requires broadening the scope of activity of the operations manager.

The purpose of this special edition is to offer a high-quality selection of contemporary research regarding innovation and the development of organisational management in the current context.