The main objectives of the *International Journal of Productivity Management and Assessment Technologies* (IJPMAT) are to develop, promote and disseminate knowledge in the areas of productivity, efficiency, and performance management. The measurement of organizational productivity, performance, and efficiency is an essential part of change and contributes to general welfare of organizations and, to a larger extent, societies. By measuring productivity and efficiency, it is possible to evaluate the performance of an organization by comparing it with benchmarks of international best practices. Thus, from a societal point of view, productivity management is of high importance and value. The international dimension of the journal is emphasized to overcome cultural and national barriers and meet the needs of accelerating technology and changes in the global economy. Novel and fundamental theories, algorithms, technologies, and applications support this mission.

This first issue aims to develop and promote an international discussion forum for academicians, professionals and practitioners working and interested in research and practice of various fields of productivity, efficiency and performance measurement and management for different organizations.

The paper “Efficiency Study on Proposed Merger Plan of State Bank of India (SBI) and its Subsidiaries: A DEA Perspective” by Debaprosanna Nandy and Manas Kr. Baidya address that the Indian Banking industry is undergoing unprecedented changes driven by consolidation through mergers and acquisitions like rest of the world. Merger of State Bank of India (SBI) and its subsidiary banks have been considered for several years. SBI has already merged State Bank of Saurashtra and State Bank of Indore with itself. SBI management proposes to merge its five remaining subsidiaries with itself in the next one or two fiscal years. This paper measures and examines technical efficiency of SBI and its subsidiaries before and after merger of SBI and its associates.

“A Study on the Contribution of 12 Key-factors to the Growth Rates of the Region of the East Macedonia-Thrace (EMTH) by Using a Neural Network Model” by E. Stathakis, M. Hanias, P. Antoniades, L. Magafas, and D. Bandekas shows a new methodological framework regarding the measuring of the contribu-
tion of some key-factors on the regional growth rate and forecasting the future development rates, based on Neural Network Models (NN Models). It is a serious attempt to be studied the contribution of twelve key-factors to the change of the Regional Gross Domestic Product of the Region of East Macedonia - Thrace during a long-term of growth process, by creating and using a suitable Neural Network Model. More specifically, twelve key-factors are studied for the first time, in order to be investigated, scientifically, firstly their percentage contribution to growth of the regional economy and secondly, after that, to be predicted how much the RGDP—under certain conditions—will be changed. In other words, also for the first time, it is used a NN Model with inputs the twelve key-factors in order to be evaluated and measured, at the best precise, their percentage contribution to the RGDP. The final results show that our NN Model is applicable to our well-adapted data and we conclude that the most important factors—growth drivers— are “Gross Business Expenses for R&D expressed as % of RGDP,” “Domestic Consumption of electricity” and “Industrial Production Index. The novelty of the approach lies, first in linking this analysis to the broader issue of regional growth, second in using a great number of determinants influence the regional growth. The model seems to be useful to all stakeholders, since it can be used, after the necessity adaptations, for any region that pursues sustainable growth, through suitable growth policies.

Saleh Alwahaishi, Ahmad Jaffar, Ivo Vondrák, and Václav Snášel in their research article “Business Process Models Representation by Deducing Interpretative Evidences on Intuitively Common Symbols” mention that through quantitative analysis, previous researchers had proven a significant preference towards a specific set of notations for modeling business processes. The drawn conclusion revealed a significantly correlated coefficient preference to Norm Process Chart for using easily recognizable symbols to intuitively elicit clear understanding in representing business process models. Further interpretative analysis to qualitatively enhance these findings will only prove and strengthen the above claimed beyond reasonable doubt. The approach is to measure respondent level of accuracy in interpreting different case studies modeled using three different modeling techniques shown to respondents in different randomized sequences. The analysis includes correlating the finding against the time taken as well as respondents’ level of confidence in interpreting these models. The significantly correlated results again confirmed beyond reasonable doubt Norm Process Chart being respondents ultimate choice. Further comparative analysis between results from an earlier investigation against the latter, revealed similar patterns in respondents’ responses despite respondents dispersed ethnicity and educational backgrounds.

The paper “Selection of Concrete Production Facility Location Integrating Fuzzy AHP with TOPSIS Method” by Golam Kabir and Razia Sultana Sumi attempts to evaluate and select the concrete production facility location, which is an important strategic decision making problem for both public and private sector. The multi-dimensional, multi-criteria nature of the concrete production facility location problem limits the usefulness of any particular single objective model. In this study, social, economical, technological, environmental and transportation factors and sub criteria, have been derived to make the optimal concrete production facility location selection decision more realistic and effectual. In this paper, an improved and more appropriate concrete production facility location evaluation and selection model has been developed by integrating Modified Delphi and Fuzzy Analytic Hierarchy Process (FAHP) with Technique for Order Preference by Similarity to an Ideal Solution (TOPSIS) method. A numerical example is presented to show applicability and performance of the proposed methodology followed by a sensitivity analysis to discuss and explain the results.

I hope the papers selected for this inaugural issue will be a source of useful results for productivity management and its assessment using different modern tools and technolo-
gies for different organizations and provide a direction for future research in this area. I am grateful for the valuable contributions offered by the authors, associate editors, editorial review board members, international advisory board members and researchers across the globe for the success of the inaugural issue of IJPMAT. The valuable support offered by Ms. Heather Probst, Ms. Jamie Wilson, and their teammates of IGI Global for this inaugural issue is highly appreciated. I would like to invite the researchers across the globe to submit their research papers for the future issues of IJPMAT.

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