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João Varajão
University of Minho

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Editorial

The mission of the *IJISPM - International Journal of Information Systems and Project Management* is the dissemination of new scientific knowledge on information systems management and project management, encouraging further progress in theory and practice.

It is our great pleasure to bring you the third number of the fifth volume of IJISPM. In this issue readers will find important contributions on Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems implementation in small and medium enterprises (SME), government-driven open source projects, Project Management Offices (PMO) in the public sector, and Business Process Management (BPM).

The first article, “What are the requirements of a successful ERP implementation in SMEs? Special focus on Southern Africa”, is authored by Victoria Hasheela-Mufeti and Kari Smolander. As the authors state, many ERP were developed based on the best practices of organizations in which they were developed. These organizations are usually large, and in developed countries. However, small organizations in other parts of the world are also implementing ERP. Implementing a system based on different practices that differ from yours is certainly bound to come with issues. The objective of this article is to identify challenges experienced by SMEs when implementing ERP systems, and to suggest requirements of achieving successful implementations in SMEs in Southern Africa. A thematic analysis methodology was used to explore identified challenges from fourteen SMEs and to identify themes within the data. The study suggested that a successful ERP implementation requires sufficient and appropriate training, reliable internet connection, involvement of end-users, change management, as well as sufficient demonstration of the prospective ERP system.

As Katja Henttonen, Jukka Kääriäinen and Jani Kylmäaho state in the second article “Lifecycle management in government-driven open source projects – practical framework”, in many parts of the world public sector organizations are increasingly interested in collaborating across organizational (and even national) boundaries to develop software solutions under an open licence. However, without sound lifecycle management practices, the full benefits of open collaboration are not achieved and projects fail to achieve sustained success. This paper introduces a lifecycle management model and framework for government-driven open-source projects and reports about its use in a real-life case study. The focus is on lifecycle management activities which take place between deployment and end-of-life. The framework was developed iteratively through a series of focus group discussions with representatives of public sector organizations. After the framework had been taken into use in a real-life case project, individual qualitative interviews were conducted to collect experiences on its benefits and weaknesses. According to the initial evidence, the deployment of the framework seems to have brought concrete benefits to the project, e.g. by contributing positively to community growth, software quality and inter-organizational learning.

The third article “Are PMOs really that momentous for public authorities?” is authored by Siw Lundqvist. PMOs are frequently referred to as necessary, or even indispensable, for carrying out projects in multi-project settings, which often occur in public authorities’ IT-projects; particularly in times of today’s sweeping digitalization. Hence, this research studied Swedish public authorities and their Information Technology (IT) departments’ use of PMOs; a survey was directed to IT project managers. Findings showed that even though PMOs are commonly described as significant, those that applied PMOs were fewer than those that did not. This research searched for correlations between the existence of PMOs and 88 variables that resulted in relatively few, mostly weak correlations. A hypothesis test did not show significant association between PMOs’ usage and project models’ usage. The research contributions are principally that PMOs do not appear to be that significant after all for public authorities, and to have reasonable expectations on PMOs. For practice, the implications foremost concern the importance of understanding conceivable pros and cons.



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As Latifa Ilahi, Sonia Ayachi Ghannouchi and Ricardo Martinho state in the fourth article “BPFlexTemplate: A Business Process template generation tool based on similarity and flexibility”, in large organizations with multiple organizational units, process variants emerge due to many aspects, including local management policies, resources or socio-technical limitations. Organizations then struggle to improve a business process which has no longer a single process model to redesign, implement and adjust. In this paper, the authors propose an approach to tackle these two challenges: decrease the proliferation of process variants in these organizations, and foresee, at the same time, the need of having flexible business processes that allow for a certain degree of adjustment. To validate the approach, were first conducted case studies where the authors collected six real-world business process variants from two organizational units of the same healthcare organization. Then was proposed an algorithm to derive a template process model from all the variants, which includes common and flexible process elements. The approach was implemented in a software tool called BPFlexTemplate, and tested with the elicited variants.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the distinguished members of the Editorial Board, for their commitment and for sharing their knowledge and experience in supporting the IJISPM.

Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to all the authors who submitted their work, for their insightful visions and valuable contributions.

We hope that you, the readers, find the International Journal of Information Systems and Project Management an interesting and valuable source of information for your continued work.

The Editor-in-Chief,

João Varajão

University of Minho

Portugal



João Varajão is currently professor of information systems and project management at the *University of Minho*. He is also a researcher of the *Centro Algoritmi* at the *University of Minho*. Born and raised in Portugal, he attended the *University of Minho*, earning his Undergraduate (1995), Masters (1997) and Doctorate (2003) degrees in Technologies and Information Systems. In 2012, he received his Habilitation degree from the *University of Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro*. His current main research interests are in Information Systems Management and Information Systems Project Management. Before joining academia, he worked as an IT/IS consultant, project manager, information systems analyst and software developer, for private companies and public institutions. He has supervised more than 80 Masters and Doctoral dissertations in the Information Systems field. He has published over 300 works, including refereed publications, authored books, edited books, as well as book chapters and communications at international conferences. He serves as editor-in-chief, associate editor and member of the editorial board for international journals and has served in numerous committees of international conferences and workshops. He is co-founder of CENTERIS – Conference on ENTERprise Information Systems and of ProjMAN – International Conference on Project MANAGEMENT.

www.shortbio.net/joao@varajao.com