

## **A PILOT STUDY TO EVALUATE THE POTENTIAL AND VALUE FOR ENHANCED OPERATIONS AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT LEARNING IN OMANI COMPANIES**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The aim of this paper is to gain insights into the potential for enhanced Operations and Project Management learning in Omani companies. Using a pilot study of Omani managers, insights are drawn into the current strategic status that operations has within Omani companies in the private and public sector and the potential that it has to enable competitive advantage and advance the diversification of the Omani economy. The unit of analysis are selected Omani managers in the Muscat area as well as past or present students on the University of Bedfordshire's MBA programme which is delivered in partnership with Majan College in Oman. The authors conclude that overall, Omani companies do not appear to be advanced in the use of quality systems compared with European companies and therefore there is potential to improve this situation via the teaching of Operations Management courses such as that offered by the UoB MBA.

Most of the literature around the strategic status of operations is based around work done by Hayes and Wheelwright (1985) and focuses on manufacturing and production but there is limited literature on the strategic status of service operations and there is also little literature on the status of operations capabilities within developing countries. Therefore this paper is of value to managers in developing countries and other educators who wish to consider the design of operations and project management courses and adds to the extant body of knowledge as an empirical case.

**KEYWORDS:** Operations Management, MBA, Hayes and Wheelwright, Quality Tools, Competitive Advantage