Efficient Optimization Model for Buffer Size Problem in Production Line with Rework Path

Hisham Alkhalefah, Mustufa Haider Abidi and Usama Umer

Advanced Manufacturing Institute, King Saud University,
Riyadh 11421, Saudi Arabia
halkhalefah@ksu.edu.sa; mabidi@ksu.edu.sa; uumer@ksu.edu.sa

Ahmed Elkaseer
Department of Production Engineering and Mechanical Design, Faculty of Engineering,
Port Said University, Port Fuad 42526, Egypt
Institute for Automation and Applied Informatics, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, 76344
Karlsruhe, Germany
ahmed.elkaseer@kit.edu

Abstract
Modern production systems in modern industries are constructed with one or more support lines, such as rework, parallel, assembly line, and so on, to satisfy their objectives. Producing a rejected part is a common issue in manufacturing processes. Rework path (RP) is one of the most common types of production paths used to repair rejected parts and return them to the main line for reprocessing. The ideal buffer size in front of each machine tool bay in both branches of the production system should be optimized to create an efficient production system, including the main production line with rework path (MPL-RP). The optimization of buffer size of the system leads to the improvement in their overall performance, management, and operations. The key criteria influencing the buffer size decision and hence the MPL-RP production rate are the characteristics of machine tools, particularly their uptimes and downtimes. An efficient optimization model (EOM) is conceived in this study to determine the buffer size between each two neighboring machine tools in MPL-RP at any given uptimes and downtimes. To determine the ideal buffer size of the MPL and its RP, EOM employs a genetic algorithm (GA) based optimization model. The suggested method can estimate the ideal buffer size in an acceptable period of time, as demonstrated in the numerical examples, for small and large production lines, included in this study. As a result, when compared to previous selection approaches, the buffer sizes can be selected in a short span of time. The suggested approach can assist manufacturing engineers in making decisions during the design of new MPL-RP systems, as well as be utilized to improve the working of existing MPL-RP systems.

Keywords
Production line, Rework path, Optimization, Buffer size, Productivity

1. Introduction
Production line, also known as a flow line, is a production system consists of a number of machines that are sequentially connected in series with buffers between each two neighboring machines (Shi and Gershwin 2009). Defective parts which must be rejected, are frequently produced during the production process in an industry. The reworking of the declined part is highly recommended to enhance the productivity of the process. This can be achieved through adopting main production line with rework path (MPL-RP), which is one of the most common types of production systems in modern plants. It is capable of repairing the defective parts through rework path in the system. The repaired parts will be returned to the main line after reprocessing through rework path. Adoption of this production
The buffer size problem has been the subject of a large number of studies. For example, comprehensive reviews were conducted to study the buffer allocation challenges and its various approaches for analysis were conducted by (Demir et al. 2014, Lee et al. 2008, and Weiss et al. 2019). Many meta-heuristic methods, including simulated annealing, genetic algorithms, tabu search, and other techniques, have been used to analyze the buffer size problem (Qudeiri et al. 2008, Altıparmak et al. 2007, Demir et al. 2011, Vergara et al. 2009, Amiri et al. 2012, Zandieh et al. 2017, Kiesmüller et al. 2018, Kose and Kilincı 2015). To find the buffer sizes in open serial production lines (SPL), Kose and Kilincı (2015) developed a hybrid approach-based simulation. In order to obtain suitable buffer sizes, a hybrid approach employing a genetic algorithm and simulated annealing was used as a search tool. The average production rate was calculated using discrete event simulation modelling in their research.

ANN and simulated annealing were used to investigate buffer sizes in asynchronous assembly system combinations (Altıparmak et al. 2002). Artificial intelligence (AI), genetic algorithms (GA), and artificial neural networks (ANN) have all been used to look for optimal solutions to the buffer allocation problem (Demir et al. 2014). To examine the buffer allocation problem (Zandieh et al. 2017). Zandieh et al. (2017) provided an combined simulation and optimization method. As meta-heuristic algorithms, GA and particle swarm optimization (PSO) were applied. The proposed model and solution techniques were adopted by Polar Saunier Duval Company in their water heater production line. Mathematical approaches were also developed for optimizing the buffer size in tandem production lines. Furthermore, Han and Park (2002) developed an analytical approach for optimizing buffer allocation, which in turn targets optimal throughput in a SPL with workstations, buffers, and quality inspection devices, but it is time intensive when the system grows complicated. Similarly, Usubamato et al. (2013) provided an analytical method for evaluating the throughput of an automated production line consisting of serial as well as parallel machines with buffer storages installed. Analytical methods, on the other hand, have been found to be incompatible for solving challenging and complex computational problems.

The dynamic programming methodology was utilized by Hasama et al. (2011) to optimize the buffer size allocation for an assembly line. Good results were obtained through this methodology. But as the problem size becomes larger, it gets quite difficult and time intensive. The design of buffer in an automated transfer line was done using a numerical method by Prombanpong et al. (2013). The approach was intended to reduce the impact of line breakdowns on line efficiency (Prombanpong et al. 2013).

For any production line, the selection of appropriate buffer sizes is very important since it has significant impact on the system's throughput. Bulgak et al. (1988) used simulated annealing (SA) to figure out the best buffer sizes for a production system that included different production and inspection lines. Bulgak (2006) additionally optimized the inter-stage buffer allocation to improve the system's total productivity. Lutz et al. (1998) established a meta-heuristic methodology for determining buffer position and sizes for a specific production line based on tabu search. Tsadiras et al. (2013) illustrated ANN's prediction capabilities in production systems, and described how well they can be utilized to produce better and faster outcomes. The GA algorithm was used by Nahas et al. (2014) to maximize the throughput via identifying buffers and machine tools in assembly and disassembly manufacturing systems at the same time. They stated that efficient machines and substantial buffers increased the system's typical output rate; nevertheless, this required a significant financial expenditure. As a result, they developed a design model for assembly/disassembly networks based on combinatorial optimization, with buffers and machines as decision variables. Furthermore, Papadopoulos and Vidalis (2001) suggested a heuristic technique to solve the problem of
buffer allocation in unreliable and/or unbalanced manufacturing lines. Yamamoto et al. 2008 used GA to design a decision support system for choosing buffer size for a flexible flow line with bypass lines for production systems with a supporting line. Qudeiri et al. (2008) used GA to improve the buffer size and workstation capacity of parallel SPL. Furthermore, Qudeiri et al. (2007) investigated the buffer size for a flexible production system with sub-lines, which they have modeled. Recently, Alkhalefah et al., (2021) utilized GA and ANN to develop a prediction system to quickly identify the optimal buffer sizes for SPL based on the uptime and downtime characteristics of the production system. Despite the fact that there have been many studies on buffer-size optimization, few studies have taken rework path into account. These researches also take a relatively long time for buffer size optimization.

This paper aims to develop an efficient optimization model (EOM) to identify the buffer size between each neighboring MPL-RP machine tools at any given uptimes and downtimes. A numerical example used in this study illustrates that the proposed method can determine the ideal buffer size in a fraction of the time it takes to do so in simulations. EOM can be used to help manufacturing engineers make decisions during the development stage of a new production system with a rework path, as well as to improve the productivity of running MPL-RP systems, which may suffer from variations in machine tool uptimes and downtimes throughout the production system.

The remaining of this work is arranged in the following manner. In part 2, we cover recent research on buffer-size optimization approaches and point out their limitations. Section 3 depicts the problem statement, whereas Section 4 describes the design of proposed approach. An illustrative scenario is presented in section 4. The key advantages and drawbacks of the proposed methodology are discussed in Section 5. Section 6 concludes the paper and suggests possible future research directions.

2. Modeling the production line with rework path

The structure of MPL-RP studied in this paper is shown in Figure 1.

![Figure 1. Structure of MPL-RP.](image)

The main assumptions pertaining the MPL-RP components are same as those used by Jingshan (2004), and partially modified from and Alkhalefah et al., (2021), as follows.

I. The production system consists of a main production line and rework path. The main production line has \( n \) machine tools \( (M_1, M_2, ..., M_n) \) arranged serially \( n-1 \) buffers \( (B_1, B_2, ..., B_{n-1}) \) separating each consecutive pair of machine tools. In addition to the two machine tools shared by the main production line and rework path namely \( M_k \) and \( M_j \), the rework path has \( m \) machine tools \( (M_{n+1}, M_{n+2}, ..., M_{n+m}) \) and \( m+1 \) buffers \( (B_n, B_{n+1}, ..., B_{n+m}) \). Machine tools \( M_k \) and \( M_j \) (where \( 1 < j < k < n \)) are the starting and ending points of the rework path. The machine tools in rework path are also arranged serially, and the buffers in rework path separating each consecutive pair of machine tools including \( B_n \) and \( B_{n+m} \) separating the machine tool pairs \( (M_k, M_{n+1}) \) and \( (M_{n+m}, M_j) \) respectively. and each buffer separating each consecutive pair of machine tools.

II. Each machine tool in the production line and its rework path \( M_i, i = 1, 2, ..., n+m \), has two states: up and down.

III. The uptime and the downtime of each machine \( M_i, i = 1, 2, ..., n+m \), are random variables and given symbols \( p_i \) and \( r_i \), respectively.
IV. Each buffer in the main production line and its rework path \( B_i, i = 1, 2, \ldots, n + m \), is categorized by its capacity, \( 0 \leq N_i < \infty \).

V. Machine tool \( M_i \) is starved at time \( t \) if buffer \( B_{i-1} \) is empty at time \( t \). The first machine tool in the main production line, \( M_1 \) is never starved. Furthermore, machine \( M_j \) is starved if both \( B_j \) and \( B_{j+1} \) are empty.

VI. Machine tool \( M_i \) is blocked at time \( t \) if \( B_i \) is full at time \( t \). The last machine tool in the main production line, \( M_n \) is never blocked. Machine \( M_k \) is blocked by the main line if it produces a good part and \( B_k \) is full, while machine \( M_n \) is blocked by the rework loop if it produces a defect part and \( B_n \) is full.

VII. The part leaving machine tool \( M_k \) (shared by the main production line and rework path) is defective with probability \( \alpha \) (called rework rate), \( 0 < \alpha < 1 \), and needs to be repaired by rework path. A defective part will be sent to first buffer in rework path, \( B_n \), with a probability \( \alpha \) if buffer \( B_n \) is not full. The good part is sent to \( B_k \) with a probability \( (1 - \alpha) \), if \( B_k \) is not full.

VIII. The second machine tool shared by the main production line and rework path, \( M_j \) can take one part each cycle either from the \( B_{j-1} \) or \( B_{n+m} \). The part in \( B_{n+m} \) has priority to be sent to \( M_j \) first if it is not empty.

3. Throughput evaluation of ASPS and DisASPS

To evaluate the performance of MPL-RP, the overlapping decomposition approach proposed by (Jingshan 2004), this approach decompose the MPL-RW into four serial production lines (SPLs) as shown in Figure (2). This decomposition approach includes overlapping because machine tools \( M_j \) and \( M_k \) are shared by more than one serial production line. After modifying the shared machine tools, the performance of these serial production lines can be evaluated using the novel aggregation procedure presented by (Chiang et al. 2000).

![Diagram of Overlapping Decomposition of MPL-RP into four SPLs](Diagram.png)

First, consider the serial production line, line 1, machine tool, \( M_j \) is modified to \( M_j'' \) with the uptimes and downtime parameters of \( r_j'' \) and \( p_j'' \) so as to account for the existence of other machine tools and buffers. These parameters can be calculated as follows.

\[
r_j'' = r_j \Pr\{M_j \text{ is strayed by } B_{n+m} \} \left(1 - \Pr\{M_j \text{ is blocked}\}\right),
\]

\[
p_j'' = p_j + r_j \left(1 - \Pr\{M_j \text{ is strayed by } B_{n+m} \} \left(1 - \Pr\{M_j \text{ is blocked}\}\right)\right),
\]

(1)
Next, in the serial production line, line 2, machine tools, $M_j$ and $M_k$ are modified to $M''_k$ and bo$''$ with the uptimes and downtime parameters of $r''_j$, $p''_j$ and $r''_k$, $p''_k$ respectively the parameters can be calculated as follows.

$$r''_j = r_j (1 - \text{Prob} \{ M_j \text{ is straved} \}) \cdot \text{Prob} \{ M_j \text{ is straved by } B_{p+1} \},$$

$$p''_j = p_j + r_j \text{Prob} \{ M_j \text{ is straved by } B_{p+1} \},$$

$$r''_k = r_k [1 - \alpha \text{Prob} \{ M_k \text{ is blocked by } B_n \} - (1 - \alpha) \text{Prob} \{ M_k \text{ is blocked by } B_k \}],$$

$$p''_k = p_k + r_k [\alpha \text{Prob} \{ M_k \text{ is blocked by } B_n \} + (1 - \alpha) \text{Prob} \{ M_k \text{ is blocked by } B_k \}],$$

Similarly, in the serial production line, line 3, machine tool, $M_k$ is modified to $M''_k$ with the uptimes and downtime parameters of $r''_k$, $p''_k$ and the parameters can be calculated as follows.

$$r''_k = r_k (1 - \alpha) (1 - \text{Prob} \{ M_k \text{ is straved} \}),$$

$$p''_k = p_k + r_k [1 - (1 - \alpha) (1 - \text{Prob} \{ M_k \text{ is straved} \})].$$

Finally, in the serial production line, line 4, machine tools, $M_k$ and $M_j$ are modified to $M''_k$ and $M''_j$ with the uptimes and downtime parameters of $r''_k$, $p''_k$ and $r''_j$, $p''_j$ respectively the parameters can be calculated as follows.

$$r''_j = r_j (1 - \text{Prob} \{ M_j \text{ is blocked} \}),$$

$$p''_j = p_j + r_j \text{Prob} \{ M_j \text{ is blocked} \}.$$
The first two machine tools \((M_1\) and \(M_2\)) are aggregated into a single machine, \(M'_2\), with the following uptime and downtime parameters:

\[
p^f_2 = p_2 + r_2 Q(p_1, r_1, p_2, r_2, N_1) \quad (10a)
\]

\[
r^f_2 = r_2 - r_2 Q(p_1, r_1, p_2, r_2, N_1) \quad (10b)
\]

Where \(Q(p_1, r_1, p_2, r_2, N_1)\) is the probability that the machine tool \(M_2\) is starved and can be calculated using Equation (8).

Next, continue aggregation in forward direction (forward aggregation) as presented in Alkhalefah et al., (2021), until the following criteria is satisfied

\[
\frac{r^f_i}{p^f_i} = \frac{r^b_i}{p^b_i} \quad (11)
\]

Formally, this process is represented as follows:

\[
r^f_i(s + 1) = r_i - r_i Q(p^f_{i-1}(s + 1), r^f_{i-1}(s + 1), p^b_i(s + 1), r^b_i(s + 1), N_{i-1}), i = 2, ..., n
\]

\[
p^f_i(s + 1) = p_i + r_i Q(p^f_{i-1}(s + 1), r^f_{i-1}(s + 1), p^b_i(s + 1), r^b_i(s + 1), N_{i-1}), i = 2, ..., n
\]

\[
r^b_i(s + 1) = r_i - r_i Q(p^b_{i+1}(s + 1), r^b_{i+1}(s + 1), p^f_i(s), r^f_i(s), N_i), i = 1, ..., n - 1
\]

\[
p^b_i(s + 1) = p_i + r_i Q(p^b_{i+1}(s + 1), r^b_{i+1}(s + 1), p^f_i(s), r^f_i(s), N_i), i = 1, ..., n - 1
\]

with the following initial conditions

\[
p^f_1(0) = p_1, \quad r^f_1(0) = r_1, \quad \forall \; i = 2, ..., n - 1,
\]

and boundary conditions

\[
p^f_i(s) = p_i, \quad r^f_i(s) = r_i,
\]

\[
p^b_n(s) = p_n, \quad r^b_n(s) = r_n,
\]

\[\forall \; s = 0, 1, 2, ...
\]

where function \(Q(p_i, r_i, p_b, r_b, N)\) is defined in (2)

Finally, production rate for the defined SPL can be approximated as follows:

\[
\bar{P}_{R_{SPL}}(p_1, r_1, ..., p_n, r_n, N_1, ..., N_{n-1}) = \frac{r^f_1}{p^f_1 + r^f_1} = \frac{r^b_1}{p^b_1 + r^b_1} \quad (13)
\]

Based on the performance of the four serial production lines of MPL-RP, under the assumption (I to VIII), the production rate of MPL-RP can be determined as follows (Jingshan 2004);

\[
\bar{P}_{R_{MPL-RP}}(M_1, M_2, ..., M_n, N_1, ..., N_{n+m}, B_1, B_2, ..., B_{n-1}, B_n, ..., B_{n+m}) = \bar{P}_{R_{Line3}} \quad (14)
\]

where \(\bar{P}_{R_{Line3}}\) is the production rate of serial production line (Line 3), and

\[
\bar{P}_{R_{Line1}} = \bar{P}_{R_{Line3}},
\]

\[
\bar{P}_{R_{Line2}} = \bar{P}_{R_{Line1}} + \bar{P}_{R_{Line4}}
\]
4. Optimization Approach

The optimization approach aims to estimate the optimal values of the buffer size and for every machine in the production lines and estimate the productivity of the production lines. In this paper, the optimization model is developed based on one of the famous meta-heuristic optimization algorithms, which is called a genetic algorithm (GA). The GA performs complex computational operations in order to find the optimal solution to the desired problem. The GA was inspired from the concept of biological gens enhancement in the nature of the evaluation theory. The concept is defined as a method of learning from nature and search for an enhanced elements/gene which is incorporated into new genes in order to reach genome evolution (Yang 2001).

All steps of the artificial genetic algorithm were borrowed from the evaluation theory. The GA has a population that refers to a group of individuals. Every individual consists of a group of jointed genes, and every gene refers to a specific feature. In particular, in our optimization model, every individual is a solution for the buffer size estimation problem. The proposed GA algorithm is performed in five phases (initial population, fitness function, selection, crossover, mutation). Firstly, the algorithm starts to generate random solutions (individuals) for the buffer size problem, and this step is called the initial population. The second step is the fitness calculation for every individual. The fitness function determines the ability of an individual to compete with other individuals by giving a fitness score to each individual. This fitness score is calculated from the objective function by knowing its effect to maximize production line productivity. Thirdly, the algorithm selects the individuals with the highest fitness and lets them pass their genes to the next population. Fourthly, the crossover is performed on the selected individuals and performs exchanging in their genes to carry out enhanced individuals. The exchanging process is called offspring, performed between every two individuals called parents, and the generated offspring individuals called the child. Fifthly, in order to get maintain diversity with the population and avoid convergence in local optimum, the mutation is applied on the child individuals with a low random probability. That is carried out by flipped some bits value in the child individuals’ genes. Finally, the algorithm is repeated until it reaches the optimal value then it will be terminated with the optimal buffer size.

In Figure 3, the algorithm steps are illustrated. The solution of objective function is defined by a group of individuals which are defined as an array of N elements and each N element refers to a machine tool in the SPL, as shown in equation 15. Every value of elements in Equation 15 refers to buffer size of every machine tool in the SPL. The I value refers to selected individuals for crossover process and the J value refers to number of selected individuals for mutation process. The S values refers to the reset of individuals, which will be fed to the next population and be selected based on elitist Theory.

\[ Individual = [N_1, N_2, N_3, N_4, ..., N_{n-1}] \] (15)

In Figure 4, the class diagram of the designed genetic algorithm framework is shown. The proposed design makes the framework able to solve many optimization problems without any restriction. Moreover, the proposed architecture can maintain the chromosome structure. The solve() method describe the implementation of the flowchart in Figure 3.
5. Numerical Results and Discussion

5.1 Small Production Line with Rework Path

In this section, the designed methodology is validated by two different cases of small production lines with rework path. The full production line consists of four sub production lines. Each sub production line consists of four different machine tools. Every machine tool has its uptimes (pi) and downtimes (ri) parameters, as shown in Table 1. The algorithm was validated based on two different cases, which are configured as follows; the first case characterized by a complete random uptime parameters (pi) and down parameters (ri) for the whole machines of the four sub lines, and the second case was set by the same uptime parameters (pi) and downtime parameters (ri) values for four sub production lines, where the characteristics of the first production lines (uptime parameters (pi) and down parameters (ri) are set randomly and repeated for the other three sub lines. The variety in the selection of validation cases is intended to show the quality of the developed approach, which can obtain accurate estimation of the optimal buffer size for the production line for two different cases and to estimate the productivity for each sub line and in every case.

Table 1: Uptimes and downtimes parameters for two different SPLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Machine</th>
<th>Pi</th>
<th>Ri</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1, 1, 1, 1, 2, 2, 2, 2, 3, 3, 3, 3, 4, 4, 4, 4</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 4, 5, 6, 7, 7, 8, 9, 10, 7, 11, 12, 4</td>
<td>0.015, 0.02, 0.05, 0.015, 0.015, 0.02, 0.05, 0.015, 0.015, 0.1, 0.2, 0.08, 0.015, 0.35, 0.3, 0.015</td>
<td>0.085, 0.08, 0.45, 0.085, 0.085, 0.08, 0.45, 0.085, 0.085, 0.4, 0.8, 0.35, 0.085, 0.7, 0.65, 0.085,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1, 1, 1, 1, 2, 2, 2, 2, 3, 3, 3, 3, 4, 4, 4</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 4, 5, 6, 7, 7, 8, 9, 10, 7, 11, 12, 4</td>
<td>0.09, 0.12, 0.062, 0.21, 0.21, 0.062, 0.12, 0.09, 0.09, 0.12, 0.062, 0.21, 0.09, 0.12, 0.062, 0.21, 0.09, 0.12, 0.062, 0.21</td>
<td>0.54, 0.62, 0.72, 0.81, 0.54, 0.62, 0.72, 0.81, 0.54, 0.62, 0.72, 0.81, 0.54, 0.62, 0.72, 0.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proposed genetic algorithm solves the optimization problem and the parameters are defined as follows; population size of 150 individuals, crossover rate of 0.8, and mutation rate of 0.05. After some iterations, the Pareto front, Figs. 5-6, show an example the optimized results of the genetic algorithm for multi-objective function, machine tool buffer size and lines throughput.
The optimal buffer sizes of the small production lines with the given parameters in Table 1 is carried out by the proposed genetic algorithm. The optimal buffer size for every machine in the 4 lines of the production line is shown in Table 2. Also, the productivity of every line is showed in Table 2. From the results, it not so difficult to see that the presented demonstrated cases shows the ability of the developed algorithm to estimate the optimal buffer size of production lines in different working scenarios with different uptimes and downtimes of the machine tools. Also, the total productivity of the production lines in-case number 2 is higher than the in-case number 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Pi</th>
<th>Ri</th>
<th>Ni</th>
<th>Productivity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.015, 0.002, 0.05, 0.015, 0.015, 0.02, 0.05, 0.015, 0.015, 0.1, 0.2, 0.08, 0.015, 0.35, 0.3, 0.015</td>
<td>0.085, 0.08, 0.45, 0.085, 0.085, 0.08, 0.45, 0.085, 0.085, 0.4, 0.8, 0.35, 0.085, 0.085, 0.08, 0.45, 0.085</td>
<td>7, 12, 16, 1, 7, 20, 14, 1, 45, 44, 32, 1</td>
<td>0.760051, 0.679634, 0.780102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.09, 0.12, 0.062, 0.21, 0.21, 0.062, 0.12, 0.09, 0.09, 0.12, 0.062, 0.21</td>
<td>0.54, 0.62, 0.72, 0.72, 0.54, 0.54, 0.62, 0.72, 0.54, 0.54, 0.62, 0.72, 0.72, 0.81</td>
<td>13, 14, 9, 1, 2, 3, 3, 1, 7, 11, 13, 1</td>
<td>0.793632, 0.712843, 0.792047</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2 Large Production Line with Rework Path

The proposed method is validated by another two different cases of large production lines. The productions consist of four sub production line, each line with 11 machine tools. Table 3 show the uptimes and down times parameter of every machines. The case studies were set as follows;

Case 1: set all machine in random uptimes (pi)and downtime (ri) parameters.
Case 2: set all machine in the same uptimes (pi)and downtime (ri) parameters.

The variety in selection of validation cases is intended to demonstrate the feasibility of the developed method in order to estimate the optimal buffer size and throughput of the production lines. These case studies show the capability of the designed method to find the optimal buffer size in large production lines with different working characteristics.
Table 3: Uptimes and downtimes parameters for two different SPLs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Machine</th>
<th>Pi</th>
<th>Ri</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6</td>
<td>0.06, 0.07, 0.03, 0.02, 0.08, 0.06, 0.04, 0.1, 0.2, 0.08, 0.2</td>
<td>0.75, 0.74, 0.88, 0.86, 0.81, 0.8, 0.85, 0.4, 0.8, 0.35, 0.83, 0.83, 0.2, 0.82, 0.468, 0.84, 0.98, 0.87, 0.97, 0.73, 0.89, 0.83, 0.83, 0.78, 0.39, 0.88, 0.75, 0.98, 0.487, 0.347, 0.997, 0.313, 0.81, 0.83, 0.98, 0.413, 0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6</td>
<td>0.2, 0.22, 0.25, 0.1, 0.15, 0.17</td>
<td>0.83, 0.86, 0.85, 0.94, 0.93, 0.95, 0.86, 0.84, 0.9, 0.95, 0.83, 0.83, 0.86, 0.85, 0.94, 0.93, 0.95, 0.86, 0.84, 0.9, 0.95, 0.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similar to the small production lines case studies in Section 5.1, the optimization algorithm is utilized to estimate the optimal buffer size of the machine tools in the large production line considering the given uptimes and downtimes parameters. The GA parameters is set similar to the problem of the small production line case studies in Section 5.1, please see above. Figures 7-8 show the Pareto front for algorithm of multi-objective function, machine tool buffer size and machine productivity rate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ex.</th>
<th>Pi</th>
<th>Ri</th>
<th>Ni</th>
<th>Prod.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.06, 0.07, 0.03, 0.02, 0.08, 0.06, 0.04, 0.1, 0.2, 0.08, 0.2</td>
<td>0.75, 0.74, 0.88, 0.86, 0.81, 0.8, 0.85, 0.4, 0.8, 0.35, 0.83</td>
<td>3, 1, 10, 6, 4, 7, 13, 19, 12, 12, 18, 7, 17, 30, 10, 9, 25</td>
<td>0.7181, 0.7687, 0.7028, 0.578</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.2, 0.05, 0.35, 0.052, 0.179, 0.08, 0.83, 0.2, 0.82, 0.468, 0.84, 0.98</td>
<td>0.87, 0.97, 0.73, 0.89, 0.83</td>
<td>26, 34, 29, 19, 21, 1, 4, 11, 4, 6, 7</td>
<td>0.7028, 0.7687, 0.7028, 0.5781</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Conclusion

This paper has presented the implementation of an accurate and generic optimization algorithm to estimate the optimal values of the buffer size and productivity of production lines with a rework path. The results show that the algorithm carried out the prediction/optimization values at any given uptimes and downtimes values and can perform the desired task with large and small production lines without restriction to a specific number of machines. The algorithm was tested in two case studies of parameter settings with small and large production lines. The results of the small production line show that case study 1 (same values of uptime and downtime parameters) gave a higher productivity than those obtained in case 2 (random selection of uptime and downtime parameters). However, in the large production line, the algorithm identified buffer sizes in case of random selection of uptime and downtime that gave higher productivity than those for the case where same values of uptime and downtime for the sub lines are considered. The results demonstrate that the proposed approach is capable to estimate the buffer size of SPL with a rework path. It is worth emphasizing that the proposed algorithm can be integrated with other software libraries because it is quite fast approach and can help the user make the rapid decisions with regard to the buffer size for the design of production lines. For future work, the authors aim to deploy this algorithm on an embedded system board and integrated it as an internet of things node within an Industry 4.0 framework.

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References


Biographies

Hisham Alkhalefah received the master's and Ph.D. degrees from the Industrial Engineering Department, King Saud University. He is currently serving as a Supervisor of the Advanced Manufacturing Institute, College of Engineering, King Saud University. His research interests include advanced manufacturing technologies especially additive manufacturing, digital manufacturing, manufacturing systems, non-conventional machining to name a few. He has published several research articles in international journals and conferences of repute.
Mustafa Haider Abidi received the master’s degree in industrial engineering from King Saud University. He has graduated from Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, India. He is currently a Researcher with the Advanced Manufacturing Institute, College of Engineering, King Saud University. He has received a Gold Medal from the Faculty of Engineering and Technology, Jamia Millia Islamia. The application of virtual reality techniques for sustainable product development is the major focus of his research. His other research interests include but not limited to, human–computer interaction (HCI), artificial intelligence (AI), reverse engineering, micro-manufacturing, and additive manufacturing. He obtained Black Belt for Lean Six Sigma, trained in Project Management. He is a Certified Supply Chain Manager. He has published several research articles in international journals and conferences of repute.

Usama Umer received the B.E. and M.S. degrees in mechanical engineering from the NED University of Engineering and Technology, Karachi, Pakistan, in 1998 and 2002, respectively, and the Ph.D. degree in manufacturing and automation from the Beijing Institute of Technology, Beijing, China, in 2007. He worked as a Quality Assurance Officer at Philips/Whirlpool, from October 1998 to April 2002. He started teaching career in November 2002 as an Instructor with the National University of Science in Technology (NUST), Pakistan. After Ph.D. he rejoined NUST as Assistant Professor, in July 2007. Later he joined FARCMT at King Saud University, in September 2012. He is currently working as Associate Professor with the Advanced Manufacturing Institute, King Saud University Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. His research interests include high-speed machining, modeling and simulation of manufacturing operations, laser beam machining, and optimization methods in manufacturing.

Ahmed Elkaseer is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Automation and Applied Informatics (IAI), Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT), Germany. He obtained his PhD degree in 2011 from Cardiff School of Engineering, Cardiff University, UK. He has more than 15 years’ experience of research in advanced manufacturing technologies. He has been working on different EC and EPSRC funded research projects. Ahmed’ work entails performing experimental and laboratory work, modelling, simulation and optimization-based studies of mechanical, EDM and laser processing of advanced materials on conventional and micro scales, with a recent emphasis on additive manufacturing and Industry 4.0 applications. Ahmed’s studies have led to several publications in the area of conventional and advanced micro-and nano-manufacturing technologies and to Dr Elkaseer being invited to serves as editorial board member and reviewer for a number of journals, and to act as a scientific committee chair and program committee member for a number of international conferences.