

1.0 INTRODUCTION

A large proportion of the non-oil manufacturing sector industries here in Trinidad, consists primarily of assembly processes and to a lesser degree, fabrication processes. An illustration of the above is the manufacture of household appliances: the required materials are purchased from abroad, converted into specific components, and finally assembled into the finished products offered to consumers.

Local products are invariably produced at prices far in excess of their equivalents offered at international markets; this is essentially due to high cost associated with manufacture: high cost of wages and overheads. Very little can be done at present to reverse the trend of high wage demands by workers, but the cost of overheads that result from inefficiency, waste, and a general lack of sound planning can and must be minimised to acceptable levels: this is necessary before local products are able to compete in the international markets, if not, at least in the Caricom markets.

It is assumed that the demand for consumer products in short and long term range can be deduced by the use of Demand Forecasting Techniques. The next step in the production process, Operations Planning, is to convert this forecast into a complete production programme in which all resources (men, machines, and materials) are co-ordinated for the maximum benefit of the company.

Resource Planning as it pertains to this paper (A Study in Resource Planning) will be approached by discussing the factors that affect the planning of efficient allocation of resources (men, machines, and materials). These resources are required for the production of consumer

products, and for efficient production they must be at the right place, at the right time, and in needed quantities. Furthermore, waste such as idle time and overly large inventories must be minimised to acceptable levels.

All of the above should be accomplished with existing and obtainable resources, with consideration given to factors that particularly affect local industries such as a scarcity of quality manpower especially in the technical and managerial disciplines, the suitability and maintainability of machines purchased from developed countries for production; and the excessive lead times associated with the acquisition of inventories of material and machine spare parts.