Simultaneous Scheduling of Machines and AGVs in FMS Through Ant Colony Optimization Algorithm

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Abstract: ***High amount of flexibility and quick response times have become essential features of modern manufacturing systems where customers are demanding a variety of products with reduced product life cycles. Flexible manufacturing system (FMS) is the right choice to achieve these challenging tasks. The performance of FMS is dependent on the selection of scheduling policy of the manufacturing system. In Traditional scheduling problems machines are as considered alone. But material handling equipment's are also valuable resources in FMS. The scheduling of AGVs is needed to be optimized and harmonized with machine operations. Scheduling in FMS is a well-known NP-hard problem due to considerations of material handling and machine scheduling. Many researchers addressed machine and AGVs individually. In this work an attempt is made to schedule both the machines and AGVs simultaneously. For solving these problems-a new metaheuristic Ant Colony Optimization (ACO) algorithm is proposed.***

Keywords : FMS; Operational Completion Time (makespan); Metaheuristic algorithms; AGVs; NP-hard problems.

I. INTRODUCTION

A Flexible Manufacturing System (FMS) is a highly automated manufacturing system well suited for the simultaneous production of a wide variety of part types in low to mid volume quantities at a low cost while maintaining a high quality of the finished products. FMS executed number of benefits in terms of reducing cost-increased utilization of machine-condensed work-in –process levels-etc. However-there are a number of problems faced during the life cycle of an FMS and these functions are classified into: design-planning-scheduling-and controlling. In particular-the scheduling task and control problem during the manufacturing operation are of importance owing to the dynamic nature of the FMS in respect of flexible parts-tools-assignments. In FMS scheduling-decisions that need to be made include not only sequencing of jobs on machines but also the routing of the jobs through the system. Apart from the machines-other resources in the system like Automated Guided Vehicle (AGV) and Automated Storage/Retrieval System (AS/RS) must be considered The AGVs effectiveness depends on vehicle management system.

Revised Manuscript Received on February 06, 2020.
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II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Simultaneous scheduling in FMS

In simultaneous scheduling-the real time as well as the off-line scheduling is taken into account. Bilge and Ulusoy [1] exploited the interactions between the machine and AGVs scheduling simultaneously. The material transfer between machines is done by a number of identical AGVs which are not allowed to return to the load/unload station after each delivery. Abdelmaguid et al.[2] suggested a hybrid GA for the problem of simultaneous scheduling of machines and AGVs in FMS with minimizing the makespan. The algorithm is applied to a set of 82 test problems-which was constructed by other researchers-and the comparison of the results indicates the superior performance with the developed coding. Reddy and Rao [3] studied the simultaneous scheduling problem with makespan-mean flow time and mean tardiness as an criterion. The proposed hybrid GA for FMS scheduling problems yielded better results when compared to other algorithms. Gnanavelbabu et al. [4] examined the scheduling of machines and AGVs simultaneously in FMS using differential evaluation with makespan minimization. The algorithm is tested by using test problems proposed by various researchers and the makespan obtained by the algorithm is compared with that obtained by other researchers are analyzed. Anandaraman et al. [5] presented a solution for the simultaneous scheduling problem by evolutionary approach in FMS with vehicles and robots with the objectives to minimize the makespan-mean flow time and mean tardiness. The scheduling optimization is carried out using metaheuristic algorithm. The algorithms are applied for test problems taken from the literature and the results obtained using the two algorithms are compared. Nouri et al. [6] introduced the clustered holonic multiagent model using metaheuristic for simultaneous scheduling of machines and transport robot in FMS. Computational results are presented using three sets of benchmark instances in the literature. New upper bounds are found-showing the effectiveness of the presented approach. Md Kamal et al. [7] Flexible Job Shop Scheduling Problem (FJSSP) is an extension of the classical Job Shop Scheduling Problem (JSSP).

Keeping in view this aspect-this article presents a comprehensive literature review of the FJSSPs solved using the GA. The survey is further extended by the inclusion of the hybrid GA (hGA). Nageswararao et al [8]

III. SIMULTANEOUS SCHEDULING PROBLEMS IN FMS

A. Problem structure

Bilge and Ulusoy (1995) proposed a numerical example for simultaneous scheduling of machines and AGVs in FMS environment which includes four layouts-ten jobsets process times and travel time data as an input

B. Objective function

Operation completion time=Oij=Tij+Pij
T_{ij}=Traveling time for j^{th} operation and i^{th} job
P_{ij} =operation processing time

C. Optimization parameters considered:

Population Size = Double the no of operations
Iterations completed = 1000

D. Vehicle scheduling methodology

Jobs are scheduled based on the operation sequence derived by the algorithms. The problem considered needs scheduling of material handling system along with that of machines. To obtain the makespan value for a given sequence of operations the following procedural steps are implemented.
Step 1: To Consider the machine number (M.No) of the given sequence for the job.
Step 2: To Select the AGV
Step 3: To identify the vehicle previous location (VPL)-previous operation machine number (POMN)-vehicle ready time (VRT) and previous operation completion time (POCT)
Step 4: To calculate vehicle empty trip time (VET) using
VET= VRT+VPL to POMN.
Step 5: Finding out the maximum from POCT and VET.
Step 6: Obtaining the total travel time of vehicle (TT) using
TT=VET+ POMN to M.No.
Step 7: To know the machine readiness time (MRT).
Step 8: To Identify the maximum of TT and MRT.
Step 9: Maximum time (from step 8) is added to process time to get the operational completion time.
Step 10: Repeated the steps from 2 to 9 for all other operations.
Step 11: To Identify the maximum operational completion time-which represents the possible completion time (makespan) of given job set.

IV. ANT COLONY OPTIMIZATION

Ant Colony Optimization (ACO) was developed by M. Dorigo (1992). The name and inspiration by the behavior of real ants. The steps involved in ACO are given below:

1. Consider the Job Set
2. Generate randomly an initial population of Ants and calculate its Operational Completion Time for all randomly generated Ants sequences
3. Determine Pheromone Matrix

$$\tau_{ij} = \rho\tau^{1}{}_{ij} + \Delta\tau_{ij}$$

Where i= 1-2-……b position of sequence represented by ants
b = No of partial schedule
j = 1-2-……b is the index partial schedule

ρ= Pheromone Evaporation Rate (0 to 1)
$\tau^{1}{}_{ij}$ = Pheromone Value in the previous iteration

$\Delta\tau_{ij}$ = Change in the pheromone value
The value of $\Delta\tau_{ij}$ is calculated

$$\Delta\tau_{ij} = \frac{1}{k_{ij}}\sum_{k=1}^{p_{size}}\frac{Q}{obj(k)}$$

Where p_{size}= Size of population of ants
$obj(k)$ = objective function
k_{ij} = Number of ants in the population
Q = Given constant (1000)

4. Update Pheromone-by changing of ants in probabilistic manner

$$P_{ij} = \frac{(\tau_{ij})^{\alpha}(\eta_{ij})^{\beta}}{\sum(\tau_{ik})^{\alpha}(\eta_{ik})^{\beta}} \quad (1)$$

Where τ_{ij}= Value taken from the pheromone matrix
η_{ij} = Reciprocal of the total time taken by ants
α-β are constants α = 0.5 to 0.9 β = 0.1 to 0.4

5. Consequently-in each iteration-the best ants are built;
6. Repeat steps 2-5above until an acceptable solution is found or you reach some maximum number of iterations.

A. Algorithm to Optimal Scheduling Problem:

For implementation of ACO-Job set 1 and Layout 3 are considered as an example
The ACO is explained in the following steps for the job set 1:
Step 1: Considering the job set

Job set: 1				
Layout : 3		No of Jobs: 5		No of operations: 13
Job 1	Job 2	Job 3	Job 4	Job 5
M1-M2-M4	M1-M3-M2	M3-M4-M1	M4-M2	M3-M1
1-2-3	4-5-6	7-8-9	10-11	12-13

In ACO for the operation in a job set numbers are assigned serially.
Step 2: Generating the Population size (double the number of operations) randomly by using precedence relation i.e.-operation of the same job set must be in increasing order but anywhere in the sequence. These are presented in table 1 and the steps discussed in 3.4 are implemented to identify the maximum operational completion time (makespan) for each sequence.

Table 1: Generated population size for the ACO

S.No	Sequence	Makespan
1	1-12-10-4-7-13-2-5-11-8-9-6-3	88
2	1-4-10-7-12-2-11-8 -13-5-9-6-3	92
3	12-4-10-7-1-2-13-5-11-8-3-6-9	92
4	1-10-7-12-4-2-13-11-5-8-6-3-9	96
5	1-12-4 -7-10 -13-2-5-8-11-6-3-9	96
6	4-1-10-7-12-2-13-8-11-5-9-6-3	98
7	12-7-4-10 -1-13-5-2-8-11-6-3-9	98
8	10-7-1-4-12-2-13-11-5-8-9-3-6	98
9	12-1-10-4-7-5-2-11-8-13-3-9-6	98
10	12-7-1-10-4-13-5-2-8-11-6-3-9	98
11	12-7-1-4-10-2-8-13-5-11-9-3-6	100
12	12-7-1-10-4-8-13-11-2- 5-6-9-3	102
13	7-1-10-4-12-13-2-8-5-11-9-3-6	102
14	12-1-7-10-4-13-2-11-8-5- 9-3-6	102
15	1-10-4-7-12-5-13-2-8-11-3-6-9	104
16	1-10-4-12-7-8 -11-13-5-2-3-9-6	104
17	12-7-4-1-10-8-13-5-2-11- 3-6-9	106
18	12-1-4-7-10-5-8-2-13-11- 9-3-6	106
19	12-1-10-7-4-11-5-2-8-13- 9-6-3	106
20	10-7-12-1-4-13-11-8-2-5- 6-3-9	107
21	10-12-4-7-1-13-11-8-2-5- 3- 6-9	107
22	7-4-10-1 -12-8-13-11-5-2- 3-6-9	107
23	10-12-1-7-4-8-5-11-2-13- 3-9-6	112
24	1-7-4-12-10-5-8-13-11-2- 3-6-9	114
25	1-7-12-4-10-11-13-2-5-8- 9-3-6	116
26	4-1-12-7-10-8-11-13-2-5- 9-6-3	116

From the above table it can be interpreted that in 1st sequence-number '1' represents 1st operation on the job no 1 and similarly number '12' represents the 1st operation on job no 5. Similarly-number '6' represents 3rd operation on job no 2 and so on.

Step 3: Determine Pheromone Matrix for the randomly generated sequences, these are presented in Table 2

In the ACO the pheromone matrix is determined in the following way $\tau_{ij} = \rho\tau^{1}{}_{ij} + \Delta\tau_{ij}$

For example, consider sequence 1 and Sequence 2 for finding the pheromone matrix

τ_{ij} = 0.5*88+(1/26(1000/2567) = 44.01 ~ 44 similarly calculate all the sequences pheromone matrix

Table 2: Pheromone Matrix for initial ten sequences

From To	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	0	44	48	52	52	54	54	54	54	54
2	50	0	46	50	50	52	52	52	52	52
3	50	46	0	50	50	52	52	52	52	52
4	56	52	48	0	48	50	50	50	50	50
5	56	52	48	48	0	50	50	50	50	50
6	59	55	55	51	51	0	49	49	49	49
7	59	55	55	51	51	49	0	49	49	49
8	59	55	55	51	51	49	49	0	49	49
9	59	55	55	51	51	49	49	49	0	49
10	59	55	55	51	51	49	49	49	49	0

Step 4: Update Pheromone-by changing of ants in probabilistic manner

$$P_{ij} = \frac{(88)^{0.85}(0.0113)^{0.65}}{(2567)^{0.85}(0.0003)^{0.65}} = 0.600 \quad \sim 1$$

Based on P_{ij} values change the sequence to get the updated make span values, these are presented in table 3

Table3: Updated Population size for the ACO

S.No	Sequence	Makespan
1	1-12-10-4-7-13-2-5-11-8-9-6-3	88
2	10-4-12-7-1-11-13-5-2-8-9-6-3	88
3	7-10-4-12-1-11-8-5-13-2-6-9-3	88
4	4-1-10-12-7-2-13-11-5-8-6-9-3	88
5	7-4-10-1-12-5-2-8-11-13-3-9-6	90
6	1-4-10-7-12-2-11-8-13-5-9-6-3	92
7	12-4-10-7-1-2-13-5-11-8-3-6-9	92
8	1-10-4-7-12-2-11-8-13-5-9-6-3	92
9	12-4-10-7-1-13-2-5-8-11- 3-9-6	92
10	1-10-4-12-7-2-8-5-11-13-3-6-9	94
11	12-4-10-1-7-2-5-8-11-13-6-9-3	94
12	1-7-10-12-4-2-13-11-5-8-6-3-9	94
13	12-10-1-7-4-13-5-2-8-11-6-3-9	94
14	1-12-4-7-10-13-2-5-8-11-6-3-9	96
15	10-4-7-12-1-13-2-8-11-5-6-9-3	96
16	4-12-10-7-1-2-13-8-11-5-9-6-3	96
17	10-7-1-4-12-2-13-11-5-8-9-3-6	98
18	7-4-1-10-12-13-5-2-11-8-6-9- 3	98
19	1-10-7-4-12-5-2-8 -13-11-6-3-9	98
20	12-10-1-4-7-2-8-13-5-11-9-3-6	98
21	10-7-1-12-4-8-5-11-2-13-3-9-6	98
22	4-10-1-12-7-13-11-5-2-8-6-9- 3	100
23	4-12-10-1-7-13-11-2-5-8-9-3-6	100
24	12-10-1-7-4-8-13-11-2-5-6-9-3	100
25	10-7-12-1-4-13-11-8-2-5-6-3-9	107
26	10-12-4-7-1-13-11-8-2-5-3-6-9	107

Step 5: the improved make span values in step 4 will become input for the next iteration which starts from step 2. This process will continue till acceptable solution is found within the specified limits (in the present case 1000 iterations).

Step 7: Receptor editing:

The editing of the sequence in the population after the comparison process is known as receptor editing. In this process several worst makespan value sequences are eliminated from the population and randomly generated sequences are added in those places. After editing the sequences in the population-the new population has gone to next iteration until termination criterion is reached.

Step 8: Termination criterion:

The process of comparison is repeated till the termination criterion is satisfied.

Several termination criteria are available in the literature like-repeating the procedure for number of generations-running the algorithm for a fixed duration of time-and stopping the simulation when there is no improvement in fitness for the last "g" generations.

In this work the first criterion viz.-repeating the procedure for number of generations is taken as the termination criterion.

Step 9: The evaluated values of different parameters in arriving at the makespan after 1000 iterations for the best sequence is presented in table 4.

Table.4: Operations schedule through ACO:

Operation Number	Machine Number	Vehicle Number	Travel Time	Job Reach	Job Ready	Make Span
4	1	1	0	2	2	22
10	4	2	0	12	12	26
7	3	1	14	24	24	36
12	3	2	14	24	36	46
1	1	1	28	30	30	38
5	3	1	30	38	46	56
11	2	2	26	32	32	50
8	4	1	38	40	40	48
2	2	1	44	46	50	66
13	1	2	46	52	52	67
9	1	1	54	58	67	82
6	2	2	60	68	68	86
3	4	1	66	74	74	86

Table 4 shows operation scheduling of through ant colony optimization algorithm for job set 1 layout 3 is shown. From the table it is observed that operation 4 on machine 1 is completed by 22 min hence 1st operation will start after completion of 4th operation on machine 1. In case of job set 1 and layout 3 operation 10 on machine 4 is completed by 26 min hence 11th operation on machine 2 will start after completion of 10th operation on machine 4. Similarly-no operation on the particular machine will start until the operation on the machine is completed. From the vehicle heuristic algorithm for first two operations AGVs are selected randomly in case of third operation AGV '1' is selected basing on the availability of AGV with minimum travel time this constraint will be taking care in the algorithm-for job set 7 and layout 3 the operational completion time (makespan) is 86

V. RESULT AND DISCUSSSION

Computations for completion time for different combinations of job sets and layouts for ant colony optimization algorithm-Priority rules (FCFS-SPT-LPT-Nageswararao et al. 2017)-Heuristic (NEH-Prakash babu et al-2018-FUZZY-P. B. Kanakavalli et al-2018) with t/p > 0.25 are done and tabulated in 5. A code is used to designate the example problems which are given in the first column. The digits that follow 1.1 indicate the job set and the layout. In t/p ratio<0.25 table another digit is appended to the code. Here-having a 0 or 1 as the last digit implies that the process times are doubled or tripled-respectively-where in both cases travel times are halved.

Table 5. Comparison of make span values (for t/p>0.25)

Job. No	t/p	FCFS	SPT	LPT	NEH	FUZZY	ACO
1.1	0.59	173	193	177	165	208	96
2.1	0.61	158	158	177	169	170	114
3.1	0.59	202	224	198	195	211	120
4.1	0.91	263	267	264	260	268	124
5.1	0.85	148	164	148	147	174	89
6.1	0.78	231	240	227	225	233	139
7.1	0.78	195	210	201	173	196	134
8.1	0.58	261	261	266	261	261	185
9.1	0.61	270	277	268	259	273	124
10.1	0.55	308	308	310	305	315	174
1.2	0.47	143	173	165	147	188	82
2.2	0.49	124	124	130	116	127	89
3.2	0.47	162	188	160	154	178	96
4.2	0.73	217	223	224	215	232	92
5.2	0.68	118	144	131	117	156	73
6.2	0.54	180	169	165	158	175	115
7.2	0.62	149	160	149	136	139	97
8.2	0.46	181	181	198	181	181	159
9.2	0.49	250	249	244	205	249	106
10.2	0.44	290	288	287	274	274	153
1.3	0.52	145	175	167	145	190	86
2.3	0.54	130	130	136	122	133	100
3.3	0.51	160	190	162	158	176	102
4.3	0.8	233	237	230	226	234	99
5.3	0.74	120	146	133	117	156	76
6.3	0.54	182	171	167	160	177	121
7.3	0.68	155	166	151	138	141	105
8.3	0.5	183	183	200	183	183	169
9.3	0.53	252	251	246	207	251	111
10.3	0.49	293	294	293	280	280	158
1.4	0.74	189	207	189	189	228	108
2.4	0.77	174	174	174	169	190	124
3.4	0.74	220	250	212	213	225	133
4.4	1.14	301	301	298	298	294	134
5.4	1.06	171	189	171	171	193	98
6.4	0.78	249	252	237	234	243	148
7.4	0.97	217	242	151	192	232	155
8.4	0.72	285	285	200	285	285	195
9.4	0.76	292	311	290	285	295	126
10.4	0.69	350	350	345	345	353	183

In the optimal sequence of machines and AGVs are determined by using FCFS-SPT-LPT-NEH-FUZZY and ACO for T/P >0.25 are shown in Table 5. From Table 5 it can be observed that-out of 40 problems-40 problems give better results using ACO when compared with all other five algorithms (100%). Computations for completion time for different combinations of job sets and layouts for ant colony optimization algorithm-Priority rules (FCFS -SPT -LPT - Nageswararao et al. 2017)-Heuristic (NEH-Prakash babu et al-2018-FUZZY-P. B. Kanakavalli et al-2018) with t/p > 0.25 are done and tabulated in 6.

Table 6. Comparison of make span values (for t/p>0.25)

Job.No	t/p	FCFS	SPT	LPT	NEH	FUZZY	ACO
1.10	0.15	207	248	252	207	278	126
2.10	0.15	217	217	225	185	208	148
3.10	0.15	257	327	282	255	300	162
4.10	0.15	303	328	317	277	352	123
5.10	0.21	152	190	187	154	225	102
6.10	0.16	304	281	297	272	294	200
7.10	0.19	231	240	264	213	235	137
8.10	0.14	338	338	347	332	338	292
9.10	0.15	390	367	359	324	382	182
10.10	0.14	452	429	444	398	393	264
1.20	0.12	194	238	246	197	268	123
2.20	0.12	194	194	206	167	187	143
3.20	0.12	241	311	270	241	285	159
4.20	0.12	285	312	298	248	340	116
5.20	0.17	142	180	184	143	217	100
6.20	0.12	292	260	284	251	277	201
7.20	0.15	212	218	249	188	210	136
8.20	0.11	306	319	334	306	306	287
9.20	0.12	380	355	347	309	372	179
10.20	0.11	445	423	439	388	384	259
1.30	0.13	195	239	247	196	169	122
2.30	0.13	197	197	209	170	190	146
3.30	0.13	240	312	271	240	284	160
4.30	0.13	292	317	301	255	339	117
5.30	0.18	141	181	183	143	216	99
6.30	0.24	296	261	285	252	278	200
7.30	0.17	215	221	250	191	213	137
8.30	0.13	307	320	335	307	307	288
9.30	0.13	381	356	348	310	373	180
10.30	0.12	448	426	442	391	387	260
1.40	0.18	213	255	254	213	288	124
2.41	0.13	307	307	319	267	293	217
3.40	0.18	261	330	282	258	305	165
3.41	0.12	370	476	411	310	435	242
4.41	0.19	434	471	451	393	504	177
5.41	0.18	218	269	270	222	321	148
6.40	0.19	310	288	299	275	303	213
7.40	0.24	239	251	270	221	246	141
7.41	0.16	329	344	385	224	332	208
8.40	0.18	343	343	349	339	343	293
9.40	0.19	396	379	370	325	388	182
10.40	0.17	466	445	455	415	408	270

In the optimal sequence of machines and AGVs are determined by using FCFS-SPT-LPT-NEH-FUZZY and ACO for T/P<0.25 are shown in Table 6. From Table 6 it can be observed that out of 42 problems-42 problems give better results using SA when compared with all other five algorithms (100%).

VI. CONCLUSION

Flexible Manufacturing system is considered as better option to face the challenges of global competition. But for successful implementation efficient scheduling is essential. Scheduling of an FMS is a very difficult problem because of other consideration like material handling. In this work an attempt has been made to solve the problem of scheduling both the machines and AGVs simultaneously by metaheuristic algorithm the following conclusions are drawn from this work. Performances of Metaheuristic Algorithms are evaluated by considering 82 benchmark problems consisting of different job sets and layout configurations. From the comparison of these results ant colony algorithms yielded improved results in 82 problems.

SCOPE OF FUTURE WORK

In this research work Ant Colony metaheuristic Algorithms to solve simultaneous scheduling problems in FMS. There is scope for further research work in the following aspects: In FMS jobs are entered with different priorities and the problem can be made dynamic in nature. When required sequence needs to reschedule. The simultaneous scheduling problem can be extended further by including AS/RS system. Real time issues like traffic jamming-without buffer space-machine breakdown can also be considered.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors greatly acknowledge the financial support from DST-SERB-Govt.of India (Sanction No: SB/EMEQ-501/2014) for carrying out this R & D activity.

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