ISSN: 0737-3937 (Print) 1532-2300 (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/ldrt20

Editorial

Arun S. Mujumdar

To cite this article: Arun S. Mujumdar (2009) Editorial, , 27:2, 169-170, DOI: 10.1080/07373930802603318

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/07373930802603318

Published online: 09 Feb 2009.

Drying Technology, 27: 169–170, 2009

ISSN: 0737-3937 print/1532-2300 online
DOI: 10.1080/07373930802603318

Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group

Editorial

As the IDS series of symposia completes its successful run of three full decades since its inception in 1978 at McGill University in Montreal, Canada, it is a good time to provide a brief historical perspective of IDS and how the series is related to this journal for the benefit of our readership, a majority of whom have possibly been associated with drying R&D more recently. Indeed, in 1998, when IDS98 was held in Halkidiki, Greece, I fondly referred to it as the "Drying Olympiad." In fact, all IDS meetings have evolved into Drying Olympiads, with over 50 countries participating regularly. In some ways, IDS made history in that the successful launch of the series established a new multidisciplinary field worthy of serious R&D in academia and industry. Until after the success of IDS as a series, there was no tangible research effort, particularly in the Western hemisphere, devoted to drying. The sudden surge in oil price of the early 1970s provided the needed boost to awaken industry interest and IDS provided a global forum to exchange new results and share new ideas to investigate. Once IDS gained momentum, the subsequent drop in oil price did not impact IDS and drying R&D level adversely.

Hyderabad, India, is a historical location for IDS2008 in a rapidly evolving economic powerhouse. From just one research paper from India presented at IDS78, IDS2008 will have several dozen papers from Indian institutions and industry. I strongly believe that the hosting of this event with a record number of papers by a record number of participants from both academia and industry will give a long overdue boost to drying and related R&D activity in the Indian subcontinent. Professor Thorat and the Institute of Chemical Technology of the University of Mumbai (MUICT, formerly known as UCCT—my alma mater) must be complimented on the important role they have played in making this a reality. The tangible and intangible benefits to the Indian industry as a result of this major event will be immense over the long haul.

IDS started 4 years before this journal was launched by Marcel Dekker, New York, in 1982 under the able editorship of Dr. Carl W. Hall, who was then at the National Science Foundation, Washington, DC. He enlisted my assistance and named me Assistant Editor. I also started the tradition of inviting Guest Editors for theme issues; I invited myself to two issues devoted to drying of pulp and paper, then a hot area and within my research interests at the time. We managed to get two small issues out as Volume 1 in 1982–1983. It required a Herculean task to do this in those days of snail mail—no fax, no E-mail, and no word processors! It is unimaginable to manage a journal or a conference with the tools of communication at our disposal in late 1970s and 1980s! Refereeing often involved correcting by hand full texts and having them retyped by volunteers in Montreal, as there was no time to send the marked copies across oceans by snail mail a couple of times before the camera-ready version was acceptable to publish. This was indeed a truly massive task and peculiar to *Drying Technology,* as most of the R&D in drying those days was carried out in countries where English is not a native language. Currently, the situation is similar, but the proficiency in English of most of these nations now is at a much higher level.

The only vehicle for publication of archival papers then was the series of books I initiated and edited; e.g., *Drying*, *Advances in Drying*, *Drying of Solids*, and then the *Handbook of Industrial Drying*. Personally, I published over one hundred papers in these series, although no academic credit could be earned for this effort; it was service to industry and academia. This journal slowly but surely took over the role played by the *Drying* series and the last set I edited under *Drying* series was *Drying'92* (Elsevier). The rest is now history. In the 1990s, the journal grew rapidly from 4 issues a year to 12 per year starting some 6 years ago. In more recent years, the format was changed and now the journal is online.

For a highly specialized journal, the impact can be high in terms of its intangible and tangible benefit to academic and industry but there is yet no measure of such impact invented! For now, we need to do with impact factor calculations and citations analysis, although it is a more appropriate measure for academic scientific research output. In sciences, publication is the main output, whereas in engineering R&D, the value of the research effort to industry in short to medium term is more relevant. Engineering academics publish less frequently and less extensively. Engineering journals also seem to take a longer time for editorial processing/peer review and eventual publication. These facts lower their impact factor calculations, although this does not affect their real impact. Despite these limitations, this journal is now ranked 14th among over 100 mechanical engineering journals. At a respectable impact factor of 1.171 in 2007, I believe we have a good computed impact as well!

The manuscript flow continues to rise for this journal. Thus, the need for drying R&D is clearly present, although

the focus on the subject is shifting geographically. I believe that we have a sustainable level of activity on the global scene; there will be ups and downs in various regions of the world for diverse reasons, but the activity will continue for at least two more decades at the current level.

I hope this capsule summary is helpful to the newcomers, as well as to the seasoned researchers in drying and allied areas.

Arun S. Mujumdar
Singapore