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Business Process Modeling: Current Issues and Future Challenges

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Introduction: Business process modeling, a method of visually representing how organizations execute their business operations, has become a crucial area of conceptual modeling. It is an essential tool for analyzing and designing process-aware information systems, documenting and reorganizing organizational processes. Despite its importance, practitioners often encounter difficulties and perceive a lack of support from academic sources. Additionally, there is a notable lack of empirical studies guiding future research directions.

Thus, the main objective of this study is to identify and deepen the fundamental issues in business process modeling as perceived by three main stakeholder groups: practitioners, vendors, and academics. Additionally, the study aims to anticipate future challenges expected to emerge over the next five years.

Methodology: To achieve this objective, a study was conducted involving the distinct groups cited above. The aim was to identify and prioritize the most important issues and future challenges, reach consensus among participants and compare the perspectives of different groups. The research approach used for this study was the Delphi technique, a method well suited for gathering and building consensus on key issues and challenges in process modeling. These studies are particularly useful in areas lacking empirical evidence.

Results: The findings highlight several areas of concern, including standardizing modeling approaches, articulating the value proposition of business process modeling, and advancing model-driven process execution.

Despite the differences, there are similarities in perceived problems between the groups. Of the top 30 issues, the lists contain 21 unique items, with some appearing in multiple lists. Notably, "Standardization" and "Model Management" are similar in all three lists. Overall, the findings highlight the importance of addressing current challenges and anticipating future needs in both industrial practice and academic research, emphasizing the need for collaboration and alignment among stakeholders to drive innovation and advancements in business process modeling.