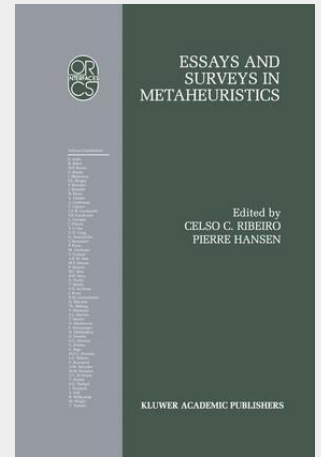Hansen / Ribeiro

Essays and Surveys in Metaheuristics

Finding exact solutions to many combinatorial optimization problems in busi ness, engineering, and science still poses a real challenge, despite the impact of recent advances in mathematical programming and computer technology. New fields of applications, such as computational biology, electronic commerce, and supply chain management, bring new challenges and needs for algorithms and optimization techniques. Metaheuristics are master procedures that guide and modify the operations of subordinate heuristics, to produce improved approx imate solutions to hard optimization problems with respect to more simple algorithms. They also provide fast and robust tools, producing high-quality solutions in reasonable computation times. The field of metaheuristics has been fast evolving in recent years. Tech niques such as simulated annealing, tabu search, genetic algorithms, scatter search, greedy randomized adaptive search, variable neighborhood search, ant systems, and their hybrids are currently among the most efficient and robust optimization strategies to find high-quality solutions to many real-life optimiza tion problems. A very large nmnber of successful applications of metaheuristics are reported in the literature and spread throughout many books, journals, and conference proceedings. A series of international conferences entirely devoted to the theory, applications, and computational developments in metaheuristics has been attracting an increasing number of participants, from universities and the industry.

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