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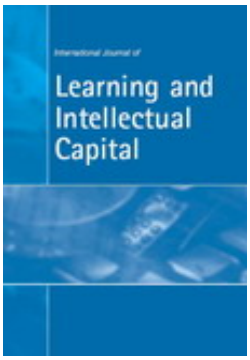

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Editorial: Intellectual capital and knowledge management as drivers of the green and digital transformations in Asia

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Editorial: Intellectual capital and knowledge management as drivers of the green and digital transformations in Asia

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1 Introduction

To accelerate the recovery in the post-pandemic age, governments and companies need to invest in cutting-edge research and innovation to tackle global challenges, boost jobs creations, generate inclusive growth and build more resilient societies. The building of strong research collaboration networks and alliances with key global players to generate breakthrough innovation will be a crucial element in this innovation strategy. Additionally, they need to tackle skills and labour gaps and invest in gender research (European Commission, 2025). New policies need to be shaped to reinforce human capital, invest in long life learning, enhance scientific collaboration and cooperation among relevant stakeholders and create strategic structural capital. The measurement and disclosure of knowledge-based resources of companies and nations will help to management these strategic resources more efficiently (Lytras and Ordóñez de Pablos, 2004; Manes Rossi et al., 2018; Ordóñez de Pablos, 2004; Romano et al., 2025; Salvadorinho et al., 2025; Van der Zahn, 2023).

2 Contents of the issue

Issue 1 of the *International Journal of Learning and Intellectual Capital* features a collection of five papers that addresses key topics for competitiveness of companies in Asia: intellectual capital, innovation, leadership and organisational performance. The studies focus on India, Iran, Pakistan and Vietnam.

This issue aims to foster dialogue on how knowledge management and intellectual capital can deliver new knowledge for innovations with potential to transform companies and societies in Asia and around the world.

Let's present the contents of the issue. The paper titled 'Does intellectual capital impact the financial performance of Indian-listed SMEs? Evidence from GMM estimation' (by Prasad and Mondal), studies the differential effects of "'intellectual capital (IC)' on the financial performance of 100 Indian SMEs listed on the BSE SME,

focusing on the pre-COVID (2013–2014 to 2019–2020) and during the COVID (2020–2021 to 2022–2023) periods, using pooled OLS, static panel regression, followed by the robust GMM estimation. The findings demonstrate varying impacts of IC under different economic phases. The results from pre-pandemic phase reveal that profitability of Indian SMEs is predominantly driven by the efficiencies of capital employed and structural capital, while each IC component constitute the core drivers of productivity. The analysis of the COVID period indicates that human, structural, and financial capital were identified as primary factors in fostering profitability, whereas human capital, financial capital and relational capital are key drivers in optimising productivity. This novel comparative analysis highlights the evolving role of IC under different economic conditions, offering practical insights for policymakers, investors and SMEs. The findings pinpoint the need for adaptive IC strategies to enhance resilience and performance during economic disruptions. These results provide a framework to harness IC in navigating economic downturns, offering lesson for SMEs globally in leveraging IC for sustainable growth".

The paper titled 'Fostering innovation in the southern Indian IT sectors: the mediating role of thriving at work and trust in leader in inclusive leadership' (by Devapriyanga and Subashini) analyses "the influence of inclusive leadership on innovative work behaviour, considering the mediating factors of trust in leader and thriving at work. The study situates the relationship between these variables within the optimal distinctiveness theory framework. The survey, conducted with convenience sampling, involved 354 participants employed in the southern region of Indian IT sectors. We scrutinised the suggested serial mediation model using PLS-SEM. The findings indicated that inclusive leadership has a positive influence on the promotion of innovative work behaviour, as well as trust in leader and thriving at work. Additionally, we discovered that trust in leader and thriving at work play a sequential role in mediating the relationship between inclusive leadership and innovative work behaviour. The limited sample size and cross-sectional study design may impair the reliability of the outcomes. Also, these results imply that organisations and managers who want to see more innovative work behaviour from their employees could do so by implementing inclusive leadership practices, encouraging employee thriving, and establishing trustworthy relationships. The research demonstrates that inclusive leadership motivates and inspires employees by employing inclusive strategies and principles, according to the optimal distinctiveness theory. This, in turn, aids in building trust in leader and fostering a thriving work environment, ultimately contributing to innovative work behaviour".

The paper titled 'Impact of intellectual capital on firm performance: a panel study of general insurance sector of Pakistan' (by Nadeem and Obaid) studies "the impact of intellectual capital on the financial performance of general insurance sector in Pakistan. This study examined the integrated influence of human, relational, and structural capitals on firm performance. Panel data of 14 general insurance companies listed in PSX is collected. Value added intelligent coefficient (VAIC) model has been adopted and analysed through static (2SLS, FE and RE) and dynamic panel regression (2 SYS GMM). Outcomes revealed the significant impact of lagged insurer's financial position on ROA and value-added structural capital showed critical effect on ROA. However, the control variables have no relation with ROA. This study also contributes to the existing literature on intellectual capital and has opened ways for policy makers and managers for the proper utilisation of value-added structural capital. Future scholars can explore

alternative IC models to incorporate new control variables to estimate more precise results".

The paper titled 'Understanding the drivers of energy network formation in interpersonal communication in the workplace: a qualitative analysis' (by Kakehbaraei, Irandoost and Adhami) explores "the factors that influence the formation of energy networks in employees' interpersonal communication. Braun and Clark's reflective theme analysis (RTA) method was used in this study. Participants included (N = 15) healthcare professionals and executives. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews and using purposive sampling. Analysis of this research revealed that energy network antecedents were identified through a process of individual influences (humour, positive thinking, trust, honesty, empathy, similarity between people, and body language) and situational influences (procedural justice, sense of shared identity, control mechanisms, performance feedback, and mutual respect). This research suggests that the energy network is an essential factor in the workplace and that manager and employees should take steps to create and maintain energy networks. In addition, the results of this study provide new insights into the social psychology of communication".

Finally, the paper titled 'The impact of intellectual capital on financial performance in Vietnamese banking sector: quantile regression approach' (Thu and Thu) analyses "the relationship of the effective use of intellectual capital on the financial performance of 29 Vietnamese commercial banks in the period 2009–2018. In this study, we use the value-added intellectual capital coefficient method to measure the efficiency of using the intellectual capital of banks. To estimate the research model, we use linear regression analysis. Furthermore, we also applied the quantile regression method to retest the research hypotheses. The regression analysis results indicate that value-added intellectual capital has a positive relationship with the financial performance of Vietnamese commercial banks. When examining the components of value-added intellectual capital, the study finds evidence that human capital efficiency and capital employed efficiency have a significant positive association with the financial performance of banks. Meanwhile, structural capital efficiency is found to have a significant negative relationship with the financial performance of banks. Compared to human capital efficiency, capital employed efficiency is the component that has a stronger correlation with the financial performance of banks. Consequently, Vietnamese commercial banks need to make the most of their material capital and financial resources if they want to achieve the highest financial performance. At the same time, Vietnamese commercial banks need to review and strictly manage the non-physical components of the bank, such as systems and processes that do not create greater efficiency for the bank and avoid reducing the bank's financial performance".

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