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**Editorial: Human capital, leadership and creativity: understanding how intellectual capital reinforces competitiveness**

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# Editorial: Human capital, leadership and creativity: understanding how intellectual capital reinforces competitiveness

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## 1 Introduction

I would like to dedicate the first sentences of the preface of issue 1 (2024) to wish our authors and readers a very happy new year, full of blessings and success.

*International Journal of Learning and Intellectual Capital* started its publication in 2004. The development of this academic journal has been a learning path full of challenges. I would like to thank our Editorial Advisory Board, reviewers and Inderscience staff for their extraordinary contribution to this journal. Additionally, I would like to highlight the trust of academics and researchers from universities and research centres around the world for their interest in *International Journal of Learning and Intellectual Capital* and the submission of high-quality papers. Thank you all for your interest and support.

Additionally, I would like to emphasise that the journal continues with its ambitious goals this New Year, attracting a huge volume of submissions from universities around the world and publishing high-quality research papers with big impact in the field of intellectual capital, knowledge management and organisational learning.

The *Report on the state of the Digital Decade 2023* states [European Commission, (2023), p.11], “[...] the digitalisation of businesses is essential to nurture strong digital European systems and increase the EU’s digital capacity and know-how. Progress in these cardinal points is essential to foster the rise of European global digital players, who will design tomorrow’s business models and shape digital technologies and applications that embed European values and contribute to the EU’s interests.”

Digital technologies and infrastructures are crucial for success and prosperity in the digital age and must nurture an open, secure, and inclusive digital environment (European Commission, 2022; Zhang et al., 2016). As the *European Declaration on Digital Rights and Principles* highlights, the European Union wants to put people at the centre of the digital transformation (Chapter 1) and promote solidarity and inclusion (Chapter 2) and sustainability (Chapter 6), among other goals [European Commission, (2022), p.1].

Simultaneously knowledge-based resources (human capital, relational capital and structural capital) are strategic to build organisational and national competitive

advantages in the post-COVID-19 economy and boost the potential of the digital transformation (Anshari and Almunawar, 2022; Anshari and Hamdan, 2022; Kordi et al., 2023; Nezam, 2023; Ordóñez de Pablos, 2004, 2006; Zhang et al., 2015; Rahman and Liu, 2023; Valenti and Horner, 2020; Zhao et al., 2014, 2020). Companies and governments must invest in the development and deployment of strategic human capital that triggers creativity and innovation (Chiu, 2023; Iddris et al., 2023).

Employees, students, and citizens need to develop the appropriate digital skills to fully participate in the digital economy and society. Governments, companies and other relevant stakeholders need to understand the new and emerging challenges in the digital age, design policies, strategies and action to achieve the expected goals and targets and benefit from the opportunities of the digital economy and society. They need to build more inclusive economies and societies in the digital age.

## **2 Contents of the issue**

The academic fields of intellectual capital, knowledge management and organisational learning are key to understand the challenges and solutions for the digital economy and society in a highly volatile environment. Research on IC, KM and OL provides knowledge and evidence on how to achieve a sustained competitive advantage in the digital and green transition.

This first issue of 2024 presents a collection of five papers that explore key issues for organisational competitiveness like human capital and performance, transformational leadership and managerial ability, creativity and innovation capability and business incubation. The papers discuss evidence and insights from Indonesia, Pakistan and Thailand.

The paper titled ‘The effect of human capital, employee performance on work process improvement and employee performance on work productivity on sustainable competitive advantage in Thai banks’ (by Chantabutr and Wanarat) proposes that

“Employee performance is critical to maintaining a commercial advantage in today’s highly innovative banking environment, as it affects efficiency and goal attainment. This study aims to test the mediator of employee performance on human capital and examine if a high rate of employee performance gives a company a sustainable competitive advantage. The data for this study was collected by distributing 342 questionnaires to employees, senior staff, and executive managers in Thai banks. The data was analysed using exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The EFA revealed two dimensions of employee performance that affected a company’s competitiveness: work productivity and work process improvement. The findings suggest that the improvement of processes plays a mediative role in this relationship. Therefore, bank managers should focus on improving their processes and reducing costs to maintain a sustainable competitive advantage. This study provides unique empirical evidence supporting the application of resource-based and human capital theories in Thai banks.”

The paper titled ‘The impact of transformational leadership on employee’s performance: the mediating role of job satisfaction and employees’ commitment’ (by Khan, Khan, Du and Khan) affirms that

“The telecom industry in Pakistan is in high demand and competition, and leaders need to have the ability to flexibly adjust organisational goals in

response to a rapidly changing environment and motivate employees to achieve organisational goals. This empirical study aims to analyse the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance with the mediating effect of job satisfaction and employee commitment. This study used random sampling, a sample of 220 is selected from the telecom industry of Pakistan. Data were analysed through a partial least squares analysis technique using SmartPLS software. The study's results found that transformational leadership significantly affects job satisfaction, employee commitment, and performance. Thus we can conclude That TL is an effective leadership style in the workplace which can enhance employees' performance. This study significantly contributes to the transformational leadership theory and can be generalised to Pakistan's telecom sector. This study also contributes to the research method, as the current study used the SEM approach through SMART-PLS."

The paper titled 'Does managerial ability play a role in increasing the value relevance of intellectual capital?' (by Ruwanti and Harymawan):

"Explores the value relevance of intellectual capital (IC) and role of managerial ability increasing the value relevance of intellectual capital. This study uses 640 observations from 128 manufacturing companies listed on the Indonesia Stock Exchange in the period of 2016 to 2020. The sub-categories of intellectual capital used are human capital, relational capital, process capital and innovation capital. Value relevance refers to Ohlson's model (1995). The findings of this study suggest that only process capital has value relevance. It also finds that managerial ability only plays a role in strengthening the relationship between human capital and firm value. On the other hand, it plays a less role in other IC sub-categories."

The paper titled 'The impact of Penta-Helix collaborative business incubation process on the creative business strategic orientation and innovation capability' (by Anjaningrum, Yogatama, Sidi, Hermawati and Suci) observes that

"Many studies explored the firm's innovation capabilities in this post-pandemic era. However, it is rare to find the relationship dynamics between the business incubation process, the orientation of business strategy, and the creative economy-based SMEs' innovation capability. This research aims to reveal the impact of Penta-Helix's collaborative business incubation process on the strategic orientation focus of creative business and innovation capabilities. Quantitative data was collected from 420 creative entrepreneurs in East Java, Indonesia. Applying SEM-PLS finally obtained support for the research hypothesis. The study results revealed that the optimal collaborative business incubation process impacts the focus of business strategy orientation. This research contributed theoretical implications to developing the strategic management theory resource-based view of the firm, in which external parties must drive company resources that are the primary key in achieving innovation. Further research should explore whether collaborative business incubation can moderate the strategic business orientation on innovation capabilities."

Finally, the last paper of the issue, titled 'Intellectual capital and competitive advantage: a structured literature review' (by Soriya and Kadian) analyses

"The intellectual capital (IC) literature in context of competitive advantage (CA) and outlines the future of relevant research agendas in this field. Research articles from the Scopus and Web of Science (WOS) databases, ranging from 2000 to 2022 are categorised and analysed through bibliometric and content/thematic analysis in a structured literature review (SLR). The findings indicate an increased attention among scholars and academicians due to

tremendous importance and recognition of IC as source of CA. The results of co-citation and bibliographic-coupling analyses suggest that further attention should be devoted to IC practices. The study is constructive in evaluating the scientific production on this subject and identifying major contributions. Furthermore, the information provided is useful for researchers and practitioners studying on IC as competency of CA and can underline the directions of future research.”

## Acknowledgements

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