Preface

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The first paper, by Shakarami and Abdullah, has studied the net generation in terms of their language learning strategies when they are assessing the internet for resources and communication with others, particularly the native speakers. The use of metacognitive strategies is the key concern for this paper, as Schraw and Dennision (1994) believe that this strategy improves the performance of an individual by planning, arranging and supervising his/her own learning. Metacognition is a two-component model that includes knowledge and the regulation of cognition. Through the application of this model, the paper supports and net-geners believe that they are not able to learn and communicate languages by themselves but rely on their metacognition. Additionally, the learning of this group stems from their efforts on elaboration, critical thinking, and self-regulation strategies.

The second paper, by Fakhredin, Nezakati and Vaighan, focuses on studying the determinants of foreign direct investment (FDI) in the manufacturing industry of Malaysia. The study uses the modified model by Zubair (2004) and then readjusts the model based on the F-test analyses. The new model proposed by the authors consists of eight different independent variables and one dependent variable. The results of this study show that all the eight independent variables are important in determining the inflow of FDI into Malaysia. Moreover, the paper has shown another interesting finding, whereby both the exchange rate and the corruption price index will affect FDI growth negatively, with the rest of the factors bringing a positive growth for the manufacturing industry.

The third paper, by Shafiee, Bokharaeian and Alaei, examines the viability to use another computational tool to predict the behaviour of financial markets. The paper highlights the needs of using the interaction of different agents to be incorporated into the framework cellular learning automata (CLA), which was used as the basic framework that was found to be superior to other models in implementing chaotic systems. The significance of this framework is its ability to evaluate the effects of every variable besides the higher conformity between the models with the real world. The results indicate that a stimulation of a real market can be done using the calibration of those characteristics of the agents proposed, which provides opportunities for the incorporation of other agents for analysing the financial markets.

The fourth paper, by Ebrahimzadeh, Ibrahim, Jemain and Kilicman, uses credibility models to study the prediction of the performance of a bank's branches. This paper aims to determine the impact of common effects on this performance. It applies the credibility

theory, which uses past experiences to make future decisions for first-time performance prediction. The authors conclude that the model with three levels of common effects was the best model to be used in the performance of a bank's branches.

Another model has been developed by Anisseh, Yusuff, Shahraki and Agamohamadi to evaluate personnel performance. This area of research is indeed one of the most critical and important aspects in human resource management because it affects the motivation of the employees directly. This paper uses two methods to develop the model for evaluating the personnel performance, namely TOPSIS and the Borda method. The paper treats personnel performance evaluation as a group decision-making problem, and it has been a problem since in many positions it has not been objectively measured and coupled with little agreement on what constitutes a good performance (Folger et al., 1992). This leads to difficulty in objectivity pertaining to performance evaluation. Since the evaluation cannot be measured objectively, the proposed model has solved this issue by using a standardised model to give every decision-maker a method to evaluate the personnel performance in a more standardised format. The model allows both homogeneous and heterogeneous group decision-making by using relative importance of assessors' viewpoints.

Finally, the last paper by Samani and Kohan, discusses the performance in the healthcare industry, specifically for hospitals using the balanced score card (BSC) framework. The paper highlights that different hospitals tend to use different dimensions and indicators for BSC owing to their differences in strategy and vision in the context of cultural and organisational needs. Thus, the paper proposes a framework that allows comparable dimensions and indicators to be used when hospitals have the same visions and strategy in similar cultural context and organisational needs. Through the review of BSC and its implementation in the healthcare industry, two different types of gap were found, which include gaps in the BSC itself and gaps in the implementation of the BSC concept in healthcare. Thus, Griffith et al. (2002) mentioned that the main challenge in implementing BSC is in defining and implementing the suitable indicators for every dimension. As a result, the paper proposes that by redefining the hospitals' visions and strategies for the executives of hospitals, the selection of appropriate dimensions and indicators among the existing ones can be used to measure the organisation's performance and to make comparisons among peer hospitals.

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