
Editorial

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Biographical notes: Ronald W. Spahr is a Professor and Chair of the Department of Finance, Insurance and Real Estate. He received his PhD and MBA from the University of Wisconsin–Madison, an MS in Operations Management from the University of Southern California and a BS in Mechanical Engineering from South Dakota State University. Previously, he was the National City Bank Distinguished Professor of Banking and Finance at the University of Illinois, Belk Distinguished Professor of Finance at the University of North Carolina and Professor of Finance at the University of Wyoming. He has also lectured at a number of European universities.

Fernando A.F. Ferreira is an Adjunct Professor and Vice-President of the Scientific Council at the School of Management and Technology of the Polytechnic Institute of Santarém, Portugal, and Adjunct Research Professor at the University of Memphis, TN, USA. He holds a PhD in Quantitative Methods Applied to Economics and Management (2008) from the Faculty of Economics of the University of Algarve, Portugal. In 2009, he was granted with a *Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation* fellowship for Post-Doctoral studies at the Fogelman College of Business and Economics of the University of Memphis, TN, USA. He has authored books, book chapters, peer-reviewed papers and made many conference presentations. His main research interests are banking and multiple criteria decision analysis.

Current financial economic thought embraces innovation, technology and strategic management as fundamental elements of enterprise development. However, advances in communication systems, transportation efficiency, an international legal environment and efficient markets have resulted in a globally competitive business environment where capital tends to flow to venues with the higher risk-adjusted returns. Therefore, global competition has made differences among countries and companies less relevant, creating a trend towards a homogeneous market, where enterprise development requires superior innovation and technology. Obviously, this creates an enterprise development loop, where new approaches and technology are essential for capital formation and job creation.

The papers in this Special Issue of the *Int. J. Management and Enterprise Development* represent a sample of the best papers presented during the 2010 IASK Global Management International Conference held in Oviedo, Spain, and address issues which are necessary to foster future enterprise development.

Our first paper, entitled 'Innovation and the performance of Portuguese businesses: a 'SURE' approach', by Marques, Gerry, Covelo, Braga and Braga, focuses on the principal that in a competitive business environment, firms' performance will depend on their capacity to innovate. The authors examine innovation in over 500 Portuguese firms and their results confirm, as theorists have frequently assumed, innovation positively effects firms' performance. The reverse is also true – a result that is less intuitively obvious, given the complexity of the innovation process and local, national and global competitive environments.

The second study, entitled 'Conceptual model of environmentally conscious strategic management', by Fülöp and Gáll, introduces a strategic management model that is focused on environmental consciousness. Beginning from the principal of environmental consciousness at a corporate level, the model determines external and internal factors of companies' strategic positioning. Subsequently, the model summarises strategic alternatives based on strategic behaviour and strategic orientation. The model then describes how individual strategic alternatives may be achieved in different contexts. Finally, the authors present, in greater detail, a number of elements that should be further considered for practical implementation.

The next research paper, by Grainger, is entitled 'The privatisation of China's SOE: How is it affecting the production of *guanxi*?' and describes the methods of producing *guanxi* in state-owned enterprise (SOE) evolving in response to privatisation. Research comprised of 128 interviews conducted at a SOE in Yunnan Province found the characteristics of producing *guanxi* are changing due to increasing market forces, the modernisation of management methods and through professional work-based relationships replacing family-based work cliques. The findings suggest stakeholders involved in SOE takeovers or joint ventures need to be aware of new management methods and ways of harnessing *guanxi* if they are to fully realise the profitability of their SOE acquisitions.

Paper four, entitled 'Research proposal on the relationship between corporate social responsibility and strategic human resource management', by Barrena-Martínez, López-Fernández and Romero-Fernández, develops a conceptual framework to analyse the relationship between corporate social responsibility and strategic human resource management. Assuming that both disciplines have advanced in isolation, the authors examine if a combination of these research lines can provide competitive advantages for enterprises. Specifically, they analyse how a socially responsible orientation in the human

resources practices may contribute to the achievement of advantages through performance variables, such as work environment and intellectual capital.

Our fifth paper, by Ramos, Ferreira and Monteiro Barata, is entitled 'Banking services in Portugal: a preliminary analysis to the perception and expectations of front office employees' and aims to determine the degree of satisfaction and career expectations of bank branch employees in the Portuguese region of Santarém, to inform graduated students who search for job opportunities and professional careers in the banking sector. In terms of empirical results, a questionnaire has been developed and it should be mentioned that the degree of satisfaction has been considered as high, i.e. despite the effects of several variables such as the strategic impact of information and communication technologies, bank branch employees revealed themselves to be optimistic about their future and generally satisfied with their job positions.

Paper six, entitled 'How to limit the impact of downside risk of innovative projects: a new solution from a real option', by Ecchia, considers a new strategy of limiting the internal impact of downside risk of isolated entrepreneurial initiatives to achieve a specific, highly innovative project. As an alternative to the traditional spin-off, often excessive when the project is limited and isolated, a kind of 'spin-in' can be adopted by setting aside (and isolating at both an operative and an accounting level) the internal resources strictly functional to the specific project. According to the author, this is a solution recently introduced in Italy. The part of the firm's assets set aside from the rest of the business represents to what extent the firm is willing to expose itself to risk for the project in question. It is a kind of real option to take advantage of certain types of innovation without excessive boomerang effects.

The next paper, by Anunciação, Santos and Rocha, is entitled 'The complete ethics chain of value: from social and ethical principles to the role of the official auditing and accounting revision entities' and proposes a new ethics chain of value that should be relevant to the official auditing and accounting revision entities, because it stresses the importance of ethical, deontological and social responsibility regarding the principles required in terms of official regulation and supervision authorities. As a result of this study, a set of hypothesis to reform the ethics chain of value is made, namely in terms of introduction of a supervision entity as an essential element to pursue and develop the chain frame.

Our final paper, by Zamira Acosta and Jaime Febles, is entitled 'Culture, training and technological adaptation in the small and medium enterprises: the case of the Canary Islands through the application of the Rasch model' and applies the Rasch model to the preferences of Canary managers in their responsibilities to implement technological adaptation and modernisation. Managers demonstrate conservative attitudes in their adaptive processes, accompanied by distrust of external advice and support, in contrast to ideas and opinions generated from within their organisations. This study also highlights the need for adequacy of the strategic culture.

We are grateful to the *IJMED* editor for the opportunity to report and disseminate the research presented at the *2010 IASK Global Management International Conference*, and we hope that you appreciate the variety of papers presented in this Special Issue of the *Int. J. Management and Enterprise Development*.