
Editorial

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Biographical notes: G.D. Sardana is presently a Professor in Operations Management and Chairperson, Bimtech Center for Management Case Development, at Birla Institute of Management Technology, Greater Noida, India. He has corporate experience of 42 years and eight years in academics. He has to his credit over 90 papers. Three of his papers have won Best Paper awards from the Indian Institution of Industrial Engineering. His books include *Productivity Management* (Narosa, 1998) and *Measurement for Business Excellence* (Narosa, 2009).

Tojo Thatchenkery is Professor and Director of the Organisation Development and Knowledge Management Programme at the School of Public Policy, George Mason University, and Arlington, Virginia. His recent books include *Making the Invisible Visible: Understanding the Leadership Contributions of Asian Minorities in the Workplace* (2011), *Positive Design and Appreciative Construction: From Sustainable Development to Sustainable Value* (2010), *Appreciative Inquiry and Knowledge Management* (2007), and *Appreciative Intelligence: Seeing the Mighty Oak in the Acorn* (Harvard Business Review 2006 Reading List).

As competition grows, organisations look for methods and strategies to find a place in the market and claim their share. The field of strategic management is concerned with aligning the organisation with its environment and redefining new levels of performance and determining new roadmap to reach that performance. Performance measurement or in broader terms performance management is not new to business. It has been around for decades or more appropriately it has existed right from the days human society took to organised business. For this reason, one would think that a good performance management system had been figured out. However, the existing literature speaks out differently. Perhaps no other facet of business management has attracted so much attention as business performance and performance management and has been written about using scripts as strategy, resource-based framework, excellence in management, business, strategic alignment, lean management, process reengineering, and more. The

subject of business transformation has given birth to new concepts, DEA, balanced score card, appreciative inquiry, process architecture, and newly discovered importance in areas such as alliances, alignment, franchise arrangements, benchmarking, conscious capitalism, social responsibility, etc. However, these are not satisfying the objectives. Wade and Recardo (2001) emphasise alignment management and point out that this represents a performance measurement system that ties every aspect of the organisation from the boardroom to the factory floor-to the strategy. It is indeed difficult to find an answer as why the targets of performance are not achieved. Spear and Bowen (2008) in the context of decoding the excellence of Toyota Production System share that 'activities and connections and production flows in a Toyota factory are rigidly scripted, yet at the same time, Toyota's operations are enormously flexible and adaptable'. In essence, it means that activities and processes at Toyota are always being pushed to a higher level of performance, yet the company tries to be continuously innovative and improvement-centred. Venugopal (2000) is all out in favour of resource-based approach to strategic management to achieve performance. The author mentions that many of the recent concepts as used in performance management as core-competence, resource-leverage, strategic-resource planning, process reengineering can be traced to this approach. Performance measurement, as a sub-system of performance management has been enriched by new models to measure the performance. DEA has undergone metaphoric change. Vrat et al. (2009) have suggested broadening of the concept of productivity as PO-P. Linkages have been decoded between alliances and performance.

The papers included in this volume represent current management thoughts on some of the key issues facing performance management. They were selected from a large number of papers that were presented at International Conference on Management Cases, 2011, and 2012 organised by Birla Institute of Management Technology, Greater Noida (India), and the School of Public Policy, George Mason University, Arlington, Virginia (USA), and held at BIMTECH Campus on December 1–2, 2011 and November 29–30, 2012, respectively. The nine papers included in this journal volume are the updated and expanded versions of the papers presented at the conference. The focus is on performance measurement, the factors that enhance performance, emerging new trends to improve performance management, organisational transformation, competitiveness, and future growth perspectives. The papers cite examples, cases from real life situations and illustrations which have relevance in international context.

The first paper of the volume by Tojo Thatchenkery sets the tone. Thatchenkery points out that the nature of organisational discourses play a critical role in creating change in either direction. A negative discourse might lead to the realisation of various deficiencies in the organisation but may not help in fixing them. A positive discourse might be generative and future-oriented, giving key members a variety of action menu to choose from. In this paper, the author describes how positive discourses are created through conversations of initiative, understanding, performance, and closure. This paper demonstrates that organisational transformation can happen when key stakeholders engage in Appreciative Intelligence®-based conversations that are focused on what is possible instead of what has gone wrong. Appreciative inquiry, an organisation development intervention that builds on a strengths-based approach helps an organisation renew its core values and engage in transformative conversations. The paper identifies several such conversations for change that emerge out of reframing and explicates their relevance to similar organisations.

Dinesh Kumar Likhi and Sushil in the next paper discuss the place of alliances in international business to enhance the business performance. Likhi and Sushil comment that capturing cross-business synergies is at the heart of corporate strategy, but synergies are notoriously challenging to capture. The subject is becoming important, as organisations are increasingly adopting the paths of strategic alliances and networks, to achieve corporate goals. The alliance partners' arena represents one such dimension of strategic alliances. The partners could be from the same country or they could be from different countries. An increasing number of companies are turning to international alliances. The paper examines the factors that contribute to the building of alliance capabilities which in turn may enable success in managing alliances. The inductive case development approach evident in the paper helps explore variables which are important for success of strategic alliance. The case taken for research belongs to a subsidiary of India's largest oil company. Using adapted model of qualitative research (SAP-LAP), the case enquiry reveals the external context and leadership-support and commitment that are key determinant for alliance performance through building alliance capability.

The next paper by Hiro Mitsuyama et al. discuss performance improvement of business competitiveness for Japanese [subcontract parts manufacture (SPM), parts manufacturers subcontract lending figure] through the rise of corporate brand image and the improvement of employees' motivation. In order to get rid of the image of 'dirty', 'dangerous' and 'strict', the company that was the focus of this case study made its main office building look like a resort hotel and built a high tech plant. In accordance with this, this case shows how improvements in working conditions and working environment stimulate employee satisfaction and create loyalty and passion toward the company. Many SPM companies that own high level skills use the concept of visualisation (mieruka) succeed in gaining a greater presence in the market through the attraction of media. By doing so, employees see their sense of loyalty and the will to participate in kaizen activities increase. Through this modern-day Hawthorn-like experiment, Hiro Mitsuyama et al. discuss the importance of company-specific brand and demonstrate how this affects employee motivation as well as quality improvement.

Smriti Pande and G.N. Patel in the next paper detail the application of a highly useful instrument called data envelopment analysis to evaluate the cost efficiency of pharmaceutical stores in India. The authors explain that cost and technology are the two vital drivers of a business and therefore play an essential role in running an efficient business. Companies are always keen to learn how proficiently their resources are being utilised. A substantial amount of attention received by the retail efficiency and performance research is comprehensible but the paucity of research in the area of evaluation of cost efficiency is a matter of concern. Cost efficiency evaluation is important because attaining technical efficiency does not mean that the concerned decision making unit (DMU) under analysis is cost efficient too. There is a possibility that technical efficiency is being achieved through wrong mix of inputs. For gaining an edge over competitors in retailing, the companies need to be sentient of the right mix of inputs. Consumers also derive benefits from efficient resource usage and allocation as they may be offered more professional service and lower prices by the retailers.

H.M. Jha Bidyarthi et al. next discuss green and clean marketing in the context of India's Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector. This study is an outcome of a snap survey of secondary sources of data that reported abundant non-green strategies in the Indian FMCG sector by MNCs, NCs and local companies. The study purports to

create awareness by compiling some significant cases and their consequences and to provide stimuli for thoughtful consideration of the same for future strategies. The authors stress that business organisations have to recognise the competitive advantages and business opportunities to be gained from green marketing as environmental sustainability is a matter which cannot be ignored. Consumers also have to be largely aware of the usefulness of adapting to the green products. The authors point out that Green marketing incorporates a broad range of activities, including product modification, changes to the production process, packaging changes, as well as modifying advertising. The study investigates the consumer attractiveness towards eco-friendly products in FMCG sector and their impact of purchasing decision. Secondly, it evaluates consumer attitudes and perception regarding eco-friendly FMCG products.

Sudip Kumdu and Ashutosh Kar in the concluding paper of this volume present the distribution model as followed by Reliance Fresh (Reliance Retail Ltd.) The authors point out that mostly unorganised retailers follow 'traditional retail model' (TRM) whereas the organised sector has implemented two different business models, namely, 'hub and spoke model' (HSM) and 'value chain model' (VCM). 'Reliance fresh' (Reliance Retail Ltd.) strategically has deployed VCM. The 'TRM' is a multifaceted path for the logistical flow of vegetables. Players involved are agents (commission agents), auctioneers, wholesalers, traditional retailer of all type of formats, family run 'mom and pop' stores, roadside shops, pavement shops, and cart vendors apart from farmers and customers. Agents, auctioneers, and wholesalers are traders in vegetable marketing. Farmers are the cultivators of produce and source of vegetable supply. They are small by land holding and yield volume of crop and are highly fragmented across geographical areas. The authors suggest that this model has an advantage that it is based on its core growth strategy of backward integration and progressing towards building an entire value chain starting from the farmers to the end consumers.

In the final analysis, it is basically the skills of the manpower determine the growth of an organisation. A motivated workforce delivers the results. The area of training and development in the human resource management domain relates to and comprises of such organisational activity which intends at refining the performance of individuals and groups in organisations. Learning enables individuals and organisations to fulfil their personal and mutual ambitions. Manosi Chaudhuri and Geetika Dham in the next paper explore the processes followed by the learning and development (L&D) Team of Tata Communications Ltd. (TCL) as well as some leading organisations and to benchmark processes implemented at TCL with the processes used at the other organisations studied. The authors stress that there are two key focus areas of the case: measuring training programme effectiveness and automation of processes. This study aims to examine all the challenges that the L&D Team at TCL is facing and to come up with practical suggestions and recommendations to improve the effectiveness of the processes being used.

Geographic information systems (GIS) as a computer programme used to store, manipulate, analyse and display data in a geographic context that enables researchers to examine public health data is increasingly finding its way in reviving the importance of 'place' into epidemiology and health services research. The use of GIS technology in public health is largely used for the study of the magnitude and distribution of health problems. To a lesser extent, GIS applications have been used in the health services research, specifically in analysing spatial patterns of health services. Uma Kelekar and Xiang Liu next provide an overview of some of the uses of GIS in public health

management – diagnosing and investigating health problems, analysing environmental hazards, analysing locations and access to health services, planning the use of health services and resources, managing public health emergencies, and disease surveillance. The study brings out a number of applications of GIS in epidemiology and health care research in the developing world, followed by an analysis of the diarrheal disease in the Philippines.

In the last study of this issue, R. Mikel Lemons and Tojo Thatchenkery describe how appreciative intelligence-based approaches and appreciative inquiry principles could address resistance to change in an educational institution. The results showed that personal communication meetings and knowledge sharing were critical during leadership transition. To reframe resistance to change as a constructive quality, the authors identified four core values or Life Giving Forces (LGF's) of the organisation. An elaborate appreciative inquiry-based organisational analysis was conducted building on the core values which led to the generating of several 'future-present scenarios' for implementation. The power of the unconditional positive questions in communication meetings to create a positive organisational climate has been demonstrated in this case study. Post-tests indicated that the effort was successful in helping others 'see the mighty oak in the acorn'. The key learning from this study shows that higher education leaders should proactively create a readiness for change in the faculty, staff, and administration prior to making radical changes by leveraging the positive energy that exist in the institution.

We believe that the papers in this special issue bring to surface contemporary thought on various facets of performance management in the international setting.

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