
Preface

Abdul Rahim Abu Bakar

College of Business Administration,
Prince Sultan University,
P.O. Box 53073, Riyadh 11586, Saudi Arabia
Email: aabubakar@psu.edu.sa
Email: drrahimbakar@gmail.com

Biographical notes: Abdul Rahim Abu Bakar is an Assistant Professor at Prince Sultan University, Saudi Arabia. He holds a PhD in Strategic Marketing from Aston University, UK. His current research interests focus on strategic marketing, adoption and diffusion of technology, and service quality. His recent publications appear in journals such as *Information Technology for Development*, *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, and *Journal of Transnational Management*.

This special issue of the *Journal of Global Business Advancement* contains six papers developed from those originally presented at the KMITL-AGBA Global Conference 2013 which was held on 15–17 June 2013 at Swissotel, Le Concorde, Bangkok, Thailand. Some of the papers are extended versions of the working papers while in other cases, the available space has been used to more fully present selected portions of the original papers. From the 162 papers accepted for the conference, this special issue selected the following articles based on their relevance to the topic and their contribution on issues related to human resource and consumer behavioural intention. All papers were subjected to a selective refereeing process consisting of assessments by two anonymous referees.

The papers in this special issue reflect the collective interest in academia and society in determining the factors that influence consumers' purchase intention for specific products and services. This issue also discusses matters pertaining to human resources and productivity. It presents a series of peer-reviewed articles that I believe will aid in increasing the quality of the research focus across the field of research and participation from numerous academic fields. The papers are a combination of conceptual and empirical studies, and they draw on a diverse set of rich data sources and statistical modelling techniques.

The publication of the special issue of this journal could not be more timely. Behaviour intention has long been an important construct in consumer research. Given its importance both as a theoretical construct and as a useful predictor variable, questions regarding the appropriate measurement of behaviour intentions and its relation to actual intentions are critical to research in the area. This is particularly true since the large body of published research employing survey measures of intention is still small in comparison with the number of real-world implications in consumer surveys. Coherently, the work regarding the 'value-action' gap between what consumers say in surveys and actually do seems to be closing at a snail's pace. On the same note, Becker and Huselid (2006) note that the "field of strategic human resource management (SHRM) has enjoyed a

remarkable ascendancy during the past two decades, as both an academic literature and focus of management practice". A review of the literature suggests that most HRM practices can have a cumulative synergistic and performance-enhancing effect that exceeds the effect of a single practice (Subramony, 2009).

In the opening paper, Thong, Trimetsoontorn and Rojniruttikul based their study on the effects of human resource practices on firm performance in Thailand's manufacturing industry. The authors frame their analysis based on 23 theoretically based hypotheses that relate to the relationship between HRM practices and firm performance. Their research data, based on the response of 224 managers, business leaders and line managers, were analysed through path analysis and showed that HRM practices strongly influence firm performance.

Moving on to the issue of consumer behaviour intention, Suwanamas, Trimetsoontorn and Fongsuwan discussed their conceptual paper on the effect of a hotel's physical environment on customer's pleasure, satisfaction, loyalty and behaviour intentions. The authors argued that there is a lack of research considering a holistic view of customer experience in tourism while considering emotions as a central element. Based on Mehrabian and Russell's (1974) Stimulus Organism Response framework, they proposed a model to be tested across the hospitality and tourism industry.

Moghaddam, Rezaei and Amin looked on the same issue in examining job seekers' perception and behaviour intention toward online recruitment websites in Malaysia. Arguing that there is a lack of knowledge about how people search and are attracted to a certain online recruitment portal, their study analyses the data of 232 graduate students, using structural equation modelling to determine behaviour intention. The findings of the study would provide managerial insights on how to attract talented employees and to tap the significant pool of job applicants.

Paper four by Hamad and Al-Kwafi discusses the factors that influence job productivity in Saudi Arabia. A survey was collected from 200 employees occupying different positions in their respective organisations. The results showed that effective performance appraisal is a significant predictor of employee productivity, though there was not enough evidence to link job satisfaction to employee productivity. The authors argued that a plausible reason that the findings from this study contradict with findings from research in other countries could be due to the unique working environment in Saudi Arabia, where expatriates represent a large portion of the workforce.

The last two papers were contributed directly to the special issue and resonate well with the title. The paper 'Developing a model to analyse the effects of brand constructs on word of mouth and purchase intention for halal brands' was written by Pool and Najafabadi. Finally, the last paper by Amornpashara, Rompho and Phadoongsitthi ends our special issue on an interesting study of the relationship between using Instagram and purchase intention.

The papers presented in this special issue have captured a snapshot of some key issues and development regarding human resource and consumer intentions in general. I hope readers will gain greater insights and be encouraged to pursue scholarly inquiry into the following issues. Last but not least, we would like to thank all of those who contributed to this special issue including the reviewers, sponsors of the events and the editorial team at the *Journal of Global Business Advancement* who worked tirelessly towards its production. Finally, this issue would not have been worth producing without the outstanding papers from the KMITL-AGBA Global Conference 2013.

References

- Becker, B.E. and Huselid, M.A. (2006) 'Strategic human resource management: Where do we go from here?', *Journal of Management*, Vol. 32, pp.898–925.
- Mehrabian, A. and Russell, J. (1974) *An Approach to Environmental Psychology*, The MIT Publisher, England.
- Subramony, M. (2009) 'A meta-analytic investigation of the relationship between HRM bundles and firm performance', *Human Resource Management*, Vol. 48, No. 5, pp.745–768.