
Editorial

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The basic philosophy underlying strategic business alliance (SBA) is that all industrial management activities should aim for the establishment of mutually beneficial strategic long-term relationships with other actors in the system, including competitors. SBA is a relationship based on a value net of involved actors - suppliers, distributors, subcontractors, 'complementors', and even competitors - who collectively add value to one another's organisations. A feature of SBA is that the parties adapt their processes and products to achieve a better match with each other, sharing information and experiences, and eliminating or minimising the sources of insecurity and uncertainty.

International Journal of Strategic Business Alliance (IJSBA) is distinctive, in that it seeks to draw together different perspectives on the roles that SBA plays within the contemporary organisation and beyond. The articles in this issue present a variety of perspectives in SBAs. They are covering a variety of sectors such as healthcare, aviation, academic community, meta-governors, etc.

In the first article in this issue Dr. Singh and Professor Sharma at Jaipuria Institute of Management in India explore the challenges faced by India in addressing the healthcare needs of its people especially at the base of pyramid, describe the emerging role of technology to weave in different stakeholders for the healthcare service providers who are trying to improve healthcare access at affordable cost, and chalk out an innovative service model for policymakers and practitioners to address the challenges of resource constraints and healthcare access to Indian people. This paper proposes an inclusive business model which would have multiple benefit points not just for patients, especially at the bottom of pyramid, but also for healthcare stakeholders including government run medical institutions, NGOs, charitable organisations, pharmaceutical firms, diagnostic facilities, etc. The paper argues that it is quite evident that gaps in the health infrastructure (both public and private), resourcing and financing impact affordability of healthcare services and reduce access for large sections of the Indian BoP population. This initiative would call in for active participation and inclusiveness of the stakeholders for designing and implementing strategic business alliance models for healthcare management. A large number of medical interventions can affordably be handled by different strategic alliances with small healthcare providers in the institutions that are easier to setup and sustain.

The following article, Assistant Professors Seyedehfatemeh Golrizgashti and Seyedmohsen Seyedaliakbar at the Department of Industrial Engineering, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran, presents a comprehensive cooperation and strategic business

alliance model between different partners including competitors from the aviation industry. The conceptual model consists of cooperation as the main exogenous construct, supply chain performance as the main chief endogenous variable, and three mediator constructs: degree of integration, success of cooperation, and corporate strategy. Structural equation modelling using partial least squares (PLS) is applied to comprehensively test the research conceptual model. The mediation impact of success of cooperations on the relationship between cooperation and performance has been considered in this model. The findings indicate the significant impacts of cooperation on supply chain performance through the three path-mediated.

The next work from the PhD Candidate Hui Li and Professor Shi-you Qu from School of Management at Harbin Institute of Technology as well as from Professor Christopher M. Scherpereel from Northern Arizona University, is a content analysis, which is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from Research Progress in Alliance Stability data to their context. The paper provides a sound review, classification, and organising scheme for the different affecting factors and operation mechanisms found in the alliance stability literature. The comparison of research methods between English and Chinese by using a Chi-squared test of the social network analysis shows that the most of the published Chinese papers analyse the alliance stability issues using mathematical modelling. In contrast, the researchers publishing in English journals used hypothesis testing more frequently. The result shows that Chinese scholars have limited access to alliance literature and the related data, so the scholars find it challenging to do the empirically based research, like case studies and hypothesis testing. Another result was that the Chinese literature tends to focus on the issue of operation mechanisms when studying alliance stability. In contrast, the English literature places greater emphasis on the factors that affect alliance stability.

The following paper by the PhD Researcher Ceren Pekdemir, Professor Pieter Glasbegen at Maastricht University, the Netherlands, and the Manager Sophie von Gagern at German Global Compact Network, analyses the promise of private meta-governors to bring more cohesion into specific issue fields. The article is based on a literature study, 21 semi-structured in-depth interviews, and online desk research. A framework is presented with potential meta-governance mechanisms of change. Although the case studies demonstrate that the mechanisms for change are used in different ways and to varying degrees, the private uptake of meta-governance mechanisms for change particularly relates to networking and capacity building. These are mostly geared towards process management strategies, activating actors and resources, and arranging and facilitating interactions amongst stakeholders. The reciprocal relationship between the arrangements and their partners also limits private meta-governance potential for framing the global discourse, particularly in its main focus on those issues that lie at the heart of protecting industry interests. Meta-governors can be strengthened in their efforts to frame the global sustainability discourse and mainstreaming of sustainability goals.

The last paper by Dr. Li Thuy Dao at the International Business Centre, Aalborg University, Denmark and Professor Nancy K. Napier, Ohio State University and an Adjunct Professor at Aalborg University, examines micro aspects of knowledge transfer and learning in international joint ventures in an emerging economy. A qualitative case-

study approach was used to investigate the joint ventures between Danish and Vietnamese companies. The study argue that unless joint venture managers and partners see knowledge transfer as learning opportunities for both sides and absorptive capacity building as a shared task, resistance to learning and knowledge sharing will remain as an obstacle to effective joint venture performance. Building upon conceptualisations of individual learning and cognitive - behavioural effects in an organisational context while drawing evidence from two cases of Danish - Vietnamese joint ventures, the authors propose a model of individual-level knowledge transfer and learning in IJVs. This model enhances better understanding of microfoundations of learning in emerging-economy joint ventures and to encourage future research that takes individual learning effects into consideration.