
Editorial

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Maria Rosaria Della Peruta is based at the University of Campania 'Luigi Vanvitelli'. She received her PhD in Business Administration from the University of Naples 'Federico II' and performs research activity at the London Business School (Department of Business Administration). She has about 50 publications with mainstream journals and publishers, and she has active collaborations and affiliations with a number of universities across the globe.

She serves as the Associate Editor of journals such as the *Journal of the Knowledge Economy* and *Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship*. Her interests deal with knowledge management, cross cultural management, family business management and innovation management.

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Nowadays, management scholars emphasise the importance of 'context' to analyse in detail the influence of knowledge and communication on the formation of individual and collective interpretive schemes underlying innovative processes. Within this development, modern enterprises could be considered as 'global' and 'digital', thus becoming progressively more open and more interconnected throughout the world, paving the way for new forms of innovation that emphasise a cross-cultural perspective. The traditional response to this need encourages entrepreneurs to create and sustain both knowledge and diversity management practices in organisational thought and action in their firms. It is assumed that most of the knowledge that is useful for solving issues or creating innovation is tacit and informal, and is disseminated through interaction, storytelling and informal processes in action-nets or communal processes. Furthermore, the development of cross-cultural practices helps entrepreneurs and firms understand how to deal with the global challenge of competition and cooperation in the context of innovation management. Nevertheless, the value of these opportunities can be easily estimated by considering that knowledge itself is not likely to be uniform within and across organisations. Such differences have not been sufficiently stressed by organisational and management scholars at an international level of analysis. Moreover, learning, knowledge and actions are not necessarily self-supporting, but strictly depend on the context; they have often just considered the idea of shared meanings and organisational coherence as a given. Yet the capacity to reach shared meanings cannot be understood as a premise but must be considered as a consequence of learning activities, which have the purpose of creating an adequate degree of coherence within the organisation.

The contexts for applying cross-cultural innovation are currently varied and highlight the importance of thoroughly analysing the idea of 'knowledge management practices' in order to examine the latter as an emergent property that needs to be constantly fixed within each organisation. In this field, it is reasonable to expect that most of the value related to cross-cultural innovation is found mainly in large public, state or family-owned corporations.

Following the above premises, this special issue took inspiration from observing this scenario's three main directions. Firstly, according to a knowledge management perspective, an analysis of the main implications of market and business competitiveness has been provided from an international point of view, emphasising knowledge

management practices both within and across cultures. Secondly, following the paradigm of cross-cultural innovation, the role of the cultural context and the development of innovation has been investigated in national and international scenarios, by mapping applications for knowledge sharing, case studies, comparative analyses, cross-studies, network analyses, etc., in terms of the promotion of knowledge flow and improvements in a firm's competitiveness as well. Thirdly, this special issue is aimed at analysing the knowledge networks and the ties for stimulating innovation management and cultural intelligence with regard to the centrality of culture in international interactions, and the importance of network relations both for knowledge and for culture sharing and transfer as well. Furthermore, based on the papers gathered for this special issue, this volume aims at contributing to how knowledge management practices foster cross-cultural innovation within organisations and the implications that this mechanism can have by both having an impact on the firms' competitiveness and providing, transversally, insights to the antecedents of the adoption of cross-cultural perspectives in the business systems domain.

Several research questions stem from the articles selected. The submitted papers consisted of theoretical and applied research in topics addressing the benefits and criticalities of business management worldwide. Moreover, this special edition presents original research findings aimed at supplying, on a practical level, new knowledge for both researchers and managers interested in the use of the cross-cultural practices for managing innovation under the guidance of knowledge.

The selected papers show research collaborations between scholars from different nations as well as contributions from Italy, Spain, Malaysia and the UK, and discuss empirical findings across multiple levels of analysis from a wide range of organisational archetypes. The research methodologies used for gathering empirical data vary from quantitative surveys to exploratory case studies based on qualitative data. Several rounds of blind peer review resulted in the final form of this volume for publication. We aimed at selecting papers that report on the application of innovative methods to real world problems. We searched for research studies containing both some form of innovation as well as a documented application. We looked for contributions that focus widely on the application of innovative methods to practical problems of the modern enterprise. Nevertheless, all of the selected articles demonstrated predictable applications coming from cross-cultural management aimed at discovering the phenomenon of innovation within business organisations. Readers of this special issue should be technically savvy, scientifically demanding and drawn to practically relevant phenomena.

This issue opens with a qualitative paper by Alberto Heredia, Ricardo Colomo-Palacios and Pedro Soto-Acosta, titled 'Tool-supported continuous business process innovation: a case study in globally distributed software teams'. Primarily, software has a huge impact in modern society, so it is imperative to be continuously innovative regarding how software products are created in order to ensure their high quality. During the execution of the various activities to produce software, individuals acquire tacit knowledge that can be useful to improve business processes. Even though people are geographically dispersed, social software supports the creation of knowledge clusters and provides additional channels to share knowledge for business process improvement. This paper describes a successful case study in which useful tacit knowledge is captured from a knowledge cluster with the aim of innovating services provided by a consultancy organisation. To this end, a knowledge-management-based framework helps to capture useful tacit knowledge from individuals in different locations by using two social

software tools during the production of software. These tools merge new tacit knowledge with existing organisational knowledge. The findings reveal that the use of this framework empowers the continuous innovation of business processes, thus allowing consulting organisations to provide high-quality solutions. The different types of social software complement one another as participants use each tool for a different purpose. Moreover, the framework allows newcomers to receive support from other colleagues and also mitigates the knowledge loss caused by the high turnover of personnel in such organisations.

The second article, 'KMS self-efficacy, KMS quality, expected reward and subjective norm: investigating knowledge sharing attitude of Malaysia's Halal industry', is written by an international team of researchers – Christine Nya-Ling Tan, T. Ramayah and Simona Popa. Despite the proliferation of knowledge management research, there is still no clear answer to the question of the effect of knowledge management system (KMS) self-efficacy, KMS quality, expected reward and subjective norm on knowledge sharing (KS) attitudes among employees predominantly in the context of the Halal industry. This paper should shed some light by analysing the data collected from the Halal industry located in Malaysia Halal Parks, in the states of Selangor, Kuala Lumpur and Melaka. By employing partial least squares path modelling, the results of the empirical study extend the understanding of the antecedents – KMS self-efficacy, KMS quality and subjective norm – by confirming their significant effect on employees' KS attitudes with the subjective norm as the utmost major predictor. The implications for both research and practice are also provided in this paper.

The third article in this special issue, 'A cross-cultural perspective of voluntary disclosure: Italian listed firms in the stakeholder global context', is written by an Italian research group – Daniela Coluccia, Eugenio D'Amico, Stefano Fontana and Silvia Solimene – based in the academic environment of Rome's 'Sapienza' and 'Tor Vergata' universities. In this paper, they empirically study the presence, evolution and determinants of voluntary disclosure with reference to the Italian Stock Exchange context in a multi-stakeholder approach. In particular, the authors identified eight stakeholders: customers, suppliers, competitors, institutions, community, environment, human capital and corporate governance, and financial lenders. For each one, they verified its disclosure in 2006, 2009 and 2012. Concerning the presence and evolution of disclosure, results showed that there had been indeed an increase in disclosure, especially during the period 2009–2012, but it is still far from the level required by international organisations (Guidelines of the Global Reporting Initiative; Guidelines for ESG approved by the European Federation of Financial Analysts Societies; Guidelines developed as part of the CSR-SC project, prepared by the Italian Ministry of Labour and Social Policy). With reference to the determinants, the authors applied a mixed logit model for generalised binomial random variables that showed that the only variable that positively affects the disclosure of each stakeholder is the firm size.

The fourth article in this issue, 'Open innovation in multinational companies' subsidiaries: the role of internal and external knowledge', is authored by an Italian group affiliate to the University of Turin: Alberto Ferraris, Gabriele Santoro and Stefano Bresciani. By considering the mainstream literature on innovation management, the paper recognised that most organisations can and must innovate using both internal and external knowledge sources. In fact, multinational companies (MNCs) are developing knowledge management activities that understand the sourcing and integration of dispersed knowledge. In this process, subsidiaries are achieving centrality because they

are in a unique position that allows them to rely on many different sources of knowledge from different cultural contexts. They may exploit knowledge from both the external host context and the internal network (HQs and subsidiaries) to innovate. In this context, this paper aims to highlight the importance of openness on the subsidiary level, combining both external and internal knowledge (within the MNC but outside the subsidiary). To do so, the authors tested the single and joint effects of external and internal openness on subsidiaries' innovation performance. Using Amadeus databases, 163 subsidiaries were selected, and data were collected through a standardised questionnaire. Then, three hypotheses were tested through an OLS regression model. The results indicate that external and internal knowledge openness positively affects subsidiaries' innovation performance. Moreover, the inclusion of the interaction term shows that a high level of both leads to a multiplicative and positive effect. The findings are discussed in the light of the extant literature, and some implications for future research and MNC and subsidiary managers are highlighted.

Last but not least, the final paper, 'Entrepreneurial settings within global family firms: research perspectives from cross-cultural knowledge management studies', was co-authored by an international research team based in both the UK and Italy – Veronica Scuotto, Manlio Del Giudice, Nigel Holden and Alberto Mattiacci. According to the paradigm of the 'family business', an organisational culture is composed of beliefs that are shared by the members of a group and endure over time, even when the management team changes. These beliefs nurture new entrepreneurs, mainly in family firms in which the sense of traditions and values fuels the business growth. This is then passed on to future generations through a cross-generational culture approach. Therefore, in line with this, the present research investigates the evolution of cross-generational culture and its effects on the entrepreneurial mind-set. Following Hofstede's model, the research analyses in depth a case study of a large family firm based in southern Italy. A threefold contribution is made to the literature: first, the relevance of the evolution of family firms' culture over the generations; secondly, the enhancement of the entrepreneurial mind-set, converting the family business culture into virtual reality; finally, an improvement to Hofstede's model, by offering an action research and a different point of view of culture based on differences not merely of national cultures, but instead, of generational culture.

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