

---

## Editorial

---

### Ajoy K. Dey\*

Birla Institute of Management Technology,  
Plot No. 5, Knowledge Park II, Greater Noida, 201306, India  
Email: ak.dey@bimtech.ac.in  
\*Corresponding author

### Tojo Thatchenkery

Schar School of Policy and Government,  
George Mason University,  
Arlington, VA 22201, USA  
Email: thatchen@gmu.edu

**Biographical notes:** Ajoy K. Dey is a Professor of Supply Chain and Operations Management from the Birla Institute of Management Technology, Greater Noida, India. He edits the *South Asian Journal of Business & Management Cases* – a Sage publication. He is member of several editorial advisory boards and regular reviewer of many leading international management research journals. He is also a University Rank Holder and possesses a blend of corporate, consultancy and academic experiences. His specific areas of interest are logistics and supply chain, engagement studies of students, patients and employees, project management and behaviour of millennial generation. He has conducted many training sessions, seminars and workshops in India and abroad. He has served as a resource person at many faculty and management development workshops. He conducts courses of supply chain management, operations management, research methodology and decision modelling with spreadsheet.

Tojo Thatchenkery is featured as one of the leading *change thinkers* in the recently released *Palgrave Handbook of Organizational Change Thinkers*, 2017. He is a Professor and Director of the Organisation Development and Knowledge Management Program from the Schar School of Policy and Government, George Mason University, Arlington, Virginia, USA. He is a member of the NTL Institute of Applied Behavioral Science, and the Taos Institute. He is the author of over a dozen books and hundreds of articles. He has also published in practitioner journals such as *Harvard Business Review*. He has extensive consulting experience in change management, leadership development, organisation design and strategy, and knowledge management. His past and current clients include FAO of the UN, IBM, Fannie Mae, Booz Allen, PNC Bank, Alcatel Lucent, General Mills, 3M, British Petroleum, The International Monetary Fund, The World Bank, USDA, EPA, Akbank (Turkey), and the Tata Consulting Services (India).

---

As the alarm bells go on about a planet that is getting warmer, organisations of all sorts are engaged in doing their part to create what is now known as triple bottom line: people, planet, and profit. The notion that organisations can make money and take care of their people as well as the environment has gained significant acceptance during the last

decade. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is no longer a nice sounding term but a value to practise. A few Fortune 500 companies have gone to the extent of appointing chief sustainability officers. A series of natural disasters such as tsunami, floods, and most recently the polar vortex-induced extreme cold in North America have brought a renewed urgency about climate change. Finally, there is realisation that time is running out and the time to act is now.

How do organisations address this challenge of creating the triple bottom line? Fortunately, effective use of information technology, social networks and human capital can help. The first five case studies in this special issue provide convincing examples for doing so. They vary from use of the circular economy model and social networks to reduce food waste. The next two articles discuss the use of online services in business enterprises. The last four pieces cover a wide range of topics such as university spin-offs, healthcare reform, construction industry, and brand awareness.

The issue starts with the article ‘Applying the circular economy to a business model: an illustrative case study of a pioneering energy company’ by authors Ville-Veikko Piispanen, Kaisa Henttonen and Eeva Aromaa. The paper starts by pointing out that our understanding of the circular business model and value creation opportunities in practice have been limited. Their study illustrates one kind of circular business model – creating value from waste in a Finnish energy sector company that has applied the circular economy to its business model. They explore various aspects of the practice of the CE business model such as the political, economic, socio-cultural, and technological and show how they impact the circular business model.

The second article in the special issue – ‘Platform-based sustainable business models: reducing food waste in food services’ authored by Malla Mattila, Nina Mesiranta and Anna Heikkinen, examines how platform-based business models developed for food waste reduction can contribute to sustainability. Integrating literature on business sustainability, sustainable business models (SBMs), and digital platforms, they studied two digital services that can help food services companies reduce their food waste. They identified value network (user, producer, and support networks) and value proposition (with economic, environmental and social dimensions) as key elements for addressing sustainability in platform-based business and showed that SBMs have potential to contribute to sustainability through scalability and attractiveness.

In the third article titled ‘Show it with feeling: performed emotions in critical sensemaking’, Eeva Aromaa, Päivi Eriksson and Tero Montonen explore the interesting area of performed emotion in critical sense making (CSM) and agency. Using data collected from a two-year study of a franchising-based rent and real estate company, they analysed the sense-making dynamic between managers and employees in the adoption of a new online service for clients. The authors show that performed emotions are a key element in influencing the sense making of others and in exercising one’s agency.

In the next article on a related topic – ‘Dare to defy the challenges of online business’ authored by Ruchi Jain and Ruchi Khandelwal, examines aspirations of an entrepreneur and her strategic decision-making for creating an identity in the Indian context. The findings revealed that the company (The Boxer Store) successfully established its brand and business online but the scalability of business always remained a matter of concern. Their case study discusses how strategic options and resource requirements change for a business as it passes through different stages of its lifecycle.

The fifth article in series titled ‘University spin-off managers and the ‘ideal’ funding process’, Olli-Matti Nevalainen, Päivi Eriksson and Tero Montonen explore the

university spin-off financing process through the experiences of the managers who act as surrogate entrepreneurs in these companies. The authors analysed managers' experiences of the financing process using data from interviews, highlighting how managers' micro-narratives construct particular understandings of the 'ideal' financing process for university spin-off companies. Local understandings of the values, roles and contributions of different investors during different funding cycles are drawn from and reproduced in the managers' micro-narratives, but also challenged through alternative narratives. The case study provides an extended description of entrepreneurial and spin-off finance by illuminating the interplay of different investors from the entrepreneurs' perspective.

The last article in this special issue is about something uniquely Indian: its spice-rich masala making industry. In 'Delighted niche driven entrepreneurial odyssey: a case study of Maharaja Masala Udyog', authors H.M. Jha Bidyarthi, Mayur A. Dande, Pawan M. Kuchar, Satya Mohan Mishra and Ashish K. Shrivastava provide a fascinating study of Santosh Satyanarayanji Didwaniya, the entrepreneur of Maharaja Masala Udyog. The success of the entrepreneur is based on a single product through zero level distribution channels with negligible modernisation of processing, packaging and storage. Such conventional use of management methods is unusual in the current management practices littered with product diversification and advances in technology and social media. By knowing the needs of the local population and staying close to the customer, the entrepreneur has shown that sustainable success is based more on genuine content or substance than appearance.

We hope that the papers in this special issue have shed new insights for leveraging technology, social networks, and human capital for enhancing sustainability practices and innovation. We thank the Editor-in-Chief, Professor Mohammed Dorgham for giving us this opportunity to guest edit the special issue. We also appreciate the timely assistance of the editorial staff of *Inderscience* throughout the review and production process.