
Editorial

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Biographical notes: Cody Morris Paris is the Deputy Director – Academic Planning and Research at Middlesex University Dubai and an Associate Professor in the School of Law and the Business School. He is a Senior Research Fellow with the University of Johannesburg. He holds a PhD in Community Resource Development, a MSc in Tourism Studies and a BIS in International Geography and Political Science with minors in Cultural Anthropology and Tourism from Arizona State University, USA. He is a social scientist with varied research and teaching interests within the areas of: tourism, international politics, community development, sustainable development, technology, global security, and experiential learning.

Daphne Demetriou is a Senior Lecturer and PG Law and Politics Campus Programme Coordinator at Middlesex University Dubai. She holds a LLM in Public International Law from the University College London (UCL) and a PhD examining the international legal framework on Human Trafficking from Middlesex University London. Her research focuses on issues relating to human rights, labour law and public international law. She is dedicated to the UN Sustainable Development goals, and through both her teaching and research promotes all SDGs, with a focus on peace and justice, reduced inequalities and decent work.

Sreejith Balasubramanian is a Senior Lecturer in Supply Chain Management, and Chair of the Research Committee at Middlesex University, Dubai. His areas of expertise include supply chain, operations management, sustainability, higher education and knowledge management. He is also an expert data analyst with skills in statistical modelling and forecasting. He has more than 12 years of experience in teaching, research, and consultancy and project management. His work has been published in leading international journals and conferences.

We are excited to present this special issue of the *International Journal of Sustainable Society*. All papers in this special issue titled ‘Sustainable Development and International Business’ were presented at the Fourth Emerging Research Paradigms in Business and Social Science (ERPBS) international conference in Dubai, UAE, in January 2018. This conference, hosted by Middlesex University Dubai, built upon the success of the previous ERPBS Conferences in 2011, 2013 and 2015.

The conference was attended by over 170 delegates representing institutions worldwide, including the UAE, Pakistan, Taiwan, Greece, the UK, India, and France. Across the three days of the conference, over 100 oral presentations were delivered by more than 130 speakers. Across the nine conference tracks, 27 oral presentation sessions were held. Additionally, 13 posters were presented in a visual paper session, and two special sessions (workshop and panel discussion) were held.

For this special issue, we received several submissions, and, after the review and revision process, we accepted five excellent papers for publication which are aligned with the special issue theme. The special issue draws on papers from diverse areas of social, environmental and economic sustainability. The key topics include human trafficking, international agreements, ethical sourcing, climate change, women entrepreneurship, and education for sustainable development.

In the following paragraphs, we provide a short review of each of the accepted papers, and we emphasise its significant contribution.

The first paper, ‘The nexus of climate change and hotel management in Malaysia: an exploratory study’, the authors, Nik Hazimah Nik Mat, Zaharul Nizal Zabidi, Yusnita Yusof, Hayatul Safrah Salleh, Wan Norhayati Mohamed, Yusliza Mohd Yusof discusses the effect of climate change on the tourism industry on Kapas Island, Malaysia. The qualitative case study illustrates the lack of appreciation of small to medium size hotel operators to the potential consequences and nexus between climate change and pressures on the operation of their hotels, such as but not limited to revenue and demand. Through a series of interviews with hotel managers on the island, the authors highlight the need for increased awareness and perception of the individual as to their own ability to counteract what is initially viewed as a force outside of their control, or a force that is ultimately the responsibility of the state and not the individual.

The second paper, ‘Women’s entrepreneurial narrative: making sense of the partner’s role’, Sophia Belghiti-Mahut, Anne-Laurence Lafont, Angélique Rodhain, and Florence Rodhain, explores the role the partner plays in women’s motivation for entrepreneurship and how spousal support influences the female entrepreneurship process. The qualitative study touches upon the barriers preventing equal economic opportunity and how there is a difficulty for many women in obtaining the balance between presumptions of their roles in the family and business. The study underlines the three types of ‘support’ provided by the female entrepreneur’s partner: visible support, implicit/mixed support, and no support. The women who perceive significant and visible

support from their partners are grateful to their partners, without whom their entrepreneurial journey might not have commenced. However, the study also shows a certain proportion of female entrepreneurs experienced no support, which is a concern that needs to be addressed moving forward. Yet, irrespective of the support, or lack thereof, the insights provided show that the female entrepreneur is self-aware and appreciative of the linking or driving factors that have propelled them to success.

‘Measures to facilitate the scale-up of education for sustainable development in higher education’, the third paper in this issue, Rory McConnon addresses a growing area of concern among employers and university leaders and identifies means to gain faculty support for the scale-up of ESD. The study promulgates the importance of educating individuals for sustainable development and how this should be incorporated into the workplace. McConnon reports how ESD is not adequately incorporated into existing educational structures and how this also is therefore not properly assimilated subsequently into the professional sphere. As with Hazimah’s review of the blinkered approach of hotel managers to cause and effect of climate change and decreased tourism, McConnon touches upon the reluctance, or lack of engagement, in educators incorporating sustainability within existing curricula and how this needs to be addressed if an understanding of sustainability is to be transferred to future managers.

Furthering the narrative of the responsibility of self for sustainable goals, the fourth paper, ‘Blood diamonds: an analysis of the state of affairs and the effectiveness of the Kimberley Process’, Meike Schulte and Cody Morris Paris touch upon the inability of the individual consumer to make informed decisions when faced with the opaque trade of diamonds. Despite the undoubted improvements ushered in by the Kimberley process, myriad issues are shown to remain as to the sourcing of diamonds and the ethical considerations mined from it. The modern aware consumer may be limited in their ability to appreciate the residual problems in the diamond industry; however Schulte and Paris promulgate the ability of industry initiatives to effect change as the corporate entity or, indeed, the individual is more innovative, efficient and agile than governments – again highlighting the importance of self.

In the final and fifth paper, ‘Mixed migration flows into Europe: discharging state anti-trafficking obligations through the proper identification of trafficking victims’, the authors, Tenia Kyriazi and Daphne Demetriou, reiterated the importance of awareness towards societal, environmental, educational, and economic issues. Specifically, the study reverts the focus to state-actors and their responsibility to minimise the threats to social peace and socio-economic sustainability caused by migration flows resulting from conflicts. The authors argue that any effort to ensure social stability and sustainability, in the particular context of the European ‘migrant crisis’, requires States to acknowledge the different types of migrants arriving into Europe and the separate forms of support and protection afforded to them. In particular, Kyriazi and Demetriou consider the challenges the European States face in fulfilling their anti-trafficking obligations within the mixed migration flows arriving into Europe and emphasise the importance of identification, both in protecting such individuals from human rights abuses, as well as maintaining social and political equilibrium. They then delve into an in-depth analysis of the parameters of a trafficking victim in an effort to provide clearer guidelines that States can follow in executing their anti-trafficking obligations and their sustainability responsibility in the wider context.

Overall, we believe this special issue is timely for practitioners and academics to extend the debate across the three dimensions of environmental, social and economic sustainability. We extend our deepest thanks to the organisers and participants of the ERPBSS conference, the editorial team of *International Journal of Sustainable Society*, the reviewers, and last but not least the authors themselves.