Editorial: Some insights on learning, career paths and intellectual capital

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1 Introduction

The global disruption caused by the COVID-19 outbreak has created new challenges for citizens, economies and societies worldwide. From the impact on the wellbeing of citizens and tensions in national health systems to the disruption of global supply chains, loss of jobs, shift in working habits and more.

As the European Commission (2021a) states "the COVID-19 pandemic has harshly exposed the impact of today's incomplete, incompatible or disconnected global infrastructure". During the coronavirus crisis, it is very important to protect workers and jobs. In the case of EU, "the European instrument for temporary support to mitigate unemployment risks in an emergency (SURE) available for member states that need to mobilise significant financial means to fight the negative economic and social consequences of the coronavirus outbreak on their territory" (European Commission, 2021b).

The use of new and emerging technologies to address these challenges caused by the major health and economic shock will be crucial to mitigate the negative consequences of the pandemic and accelerate the social and economic recovery (Almunawar et al., 2022a, 2022b; Anshari et al., 2019; Chauhan et al., 2022; Dal Mas et al., 2020; Maroufkhani et al., 2020; Ordóñez de Pablos, 2004a, 2004b; Singh et al., 2021; Wang and Wang, 2020; Zhang et al., 2016). Another key pillar for this recovery is the strategic human capital of companies and nations, which will be essential to design and implement digital solutions to the new and emerging challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Universities need to tailor their degree studies to suits the new needs of companies in the post-pandemic scenario, with special attention to the development of critical digital skills and competences as well as transversal ones. It is important that higher education institutions (HEIs) think how the future could unfold in the current complex and dynamic environment and offer studies that provide student with the key skills and competences to succeed in the labour market. This human capital and other knowledge-based resources (like relational capital and structural capital) of companies and nations will impact the economic recovery, boost productivity and foster the creation new business opportunities (Lytras and Ordóñez de Pablos, 2008; Massaro et al., 2020; Paoloni et al., 2022; Zahedi and Naghdi Khanachah, 2021).

In this issue of the journal, we will explore some examples of how intellectual capital, human capital and organisational learning can have an impact on competitiveness of companies and economies, helping us to have a clearer understanding of these strategic issues.

2 Contents of the issue

The fourth issue of 2022 presents a collection of five papers discuss the key topics for the competitiveness of human resources and intellectual capital like professional learning communities, career paths, intellectual capital disclosure and intellectual capital and competitiveness. The papers provide evidence on Ghana, Indonesia and Iran.

The first paper, titled 'Essential practices of school principals in developing professional learning communities in schools: a systematic literature review 2010–2019' (by Tai and Omar), aims to

> "identify the essential practices applied by school principals in developing effective professional learning communities (PLCs) from 2010 to 2019. By employing the PRISMA guidelines, a total of 25 studies were identified based on the Scopus digital database. Five main practices of school principals had been identified in developing effective PLCs: principals' support, trust development, collaboration, organizational culture and the cultivation of teacher agency. The review summarized that the human side of the principal leadership is critical in leading effective PLCs; establishing a more humanized workplace in schools would motivate and energize teachers to engage in PLCs. In essence, school leadership is not solely a set of managerial tasks, but rather, a series of human interactions. The formula for leadership success is to create a climate that inspires teachers in schools to enhance the development and sustainability of PLCs and drive school change effectively".

The second paper, titled 'Intellectual capital, profitability and market value of financial and non-financial services firms listed in Ghana' (by Agomor, Onumah and Duho) explores

> "the impact of intellectual capital (IC) on profitability and market value using a dataset of 20 listed firms in Ghana covering the period 2008 to 2017. The Value Added Intellectual Coefficient (VAIC™) measures IC performance (with human capital efficiency, structural capital efficiency and capital employed efficiency as components) while return on asset and return on equity measure profitability and Tobin's Q measures market value. The findings show that among financial services firms, VAIC™ and its components enhance profitability but does not significantly affect market value. However, among non-financial services firms, VAIC™ enhances only return on asset and only capital employed efficiency enhances market value. The study also explores the effect of control variables such as size, age, foreign ownership and government ownership. This study is unique in exploring the difference between the IC and performance nexus among financial and non-financial services firms in an emerging market context".

The third paper, titled 'Intellectual capital disclosure: study on university website' (by Ulum, Putri, Syam, Malik and Suprapti), has two main aims:

> "firstly to identify the practice of college intellectual capital (IC) disclosure through their web site with a content analysis method called 'six ways numerical coding system'. The second objective is to examine the effect of age,

> size and accreditation status on the extent of IC disclosure. Warp PLS 6.0 was used to analyze the data from vocational colleges in Indonesia. The results indicate that IC disclosure through university websites is still below 50% on average. Disclosure in image format is more widely used than other formats. PLS test results show that the size and accreditation status variables have an impact on the extent of IC disclosure, while the age variable has no effect".

The fourth paper, titled 'Career path challenges in the consultancy sector' (by Pereira, Guanilho, da Costa, Dias and Gonçalves) states that

> "careers have been evolving over the years, because of changes in the labor market and individual perspectives and objectives. Nowadays, looking for different working experiences within diverse companies are quite common, and individuals are more concerned about their career progression. In this context, organizations were pushed to learn and adapt their employee value proposition and place a higher focus on individual career needs. In the consultancy sector, career management can be much more complex and difficult to manage for organizations, since consultant's roles and responsibilities can quickly change. Therefore, this investigation aimed to understand how consultants see the relation between career management, seniority, and performance. The study's results were based on 92 responses from consultants and former consultants to an online survey and shown that while seniority still has a positive correlation with hierarchical levels, most consultants want to pursue a performance-based career management system, especially the experienced and older ones".

The last paper of the issue, titled 'The impact of intellectual capital on corporate economic performance in Iran in the face of sanctions' (by Nasri, Ashrafi and Nooghabi) studies

> "the relationship between intellectual capital and economic performance in Iran in the face of sanction. The period of the study will fascinate other scholars about this paper because there were unprecedented sanctions against Iran market and many manufacturing industries were in financial distress. The paper sample consists of 543 observation and 109 firms listed on the Tehran Stock Exchange during a five-year period. We used OLS and panel regressions to test the research models. We find that intellectual capital and each of its elements have a positive and significant effect on economic performance in Iran in the face of sanction. This means that the higher level of intellectual capital in a company in Iran lead to the better economic performance in the face of sanction".

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