

Preface

Najiba Benabess

School of Business,
Elizabethtown College,
Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania 17022, USA
and
School of Graduate and Professional Studies,
Elizabethtown College,
Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania 17022, USA
Email: benabessn@etown.edu

Teamwork involving multiple disciplines is increasingly emphasised in business research, services, education and policy. This special issue draws on knowledge from different disciplines, such as finance, economics, international business, marketing and management, and analyses, synthesises and harmonises links between them into a coordinated and coherent whole. The six studies that constitute this global special issue focus on innovative solutions to achieving the most impact in various industries across the world.

The first article, entitled ‘Firm resources and internationalisation performance’, by Nejat Capar, provides an answer to the following question: ‘How do a firm’s resources affect the internationalisation efforts of firms and consequently their performance?’ To do so, the author collected data from the US manufacturing firms encompassing various industries and found out that firms must possess certain resources in order to benefit from internationalisation.

The second article, entitled ‘Effect of sexual appeal in marketing communication on aggression and sexual aggression: a theoretical perspective and future research directions’, by Karnika Bains and Prem Prakash Dewani, examines advertisement effectiveness and brand effects of sexual appeal in marketing communication on aggression and sexual aggression. However, secondary effects of the appeal remain unexplored. This study explores the little-known effects of advertisement sexual appeal on society, especially adolescents, with focus on aggression and sexual aggression as a result of media portrayals. This study reviews extant marketing and psychology literature to analyse media effects from the perspective of aggression and related theories, viz. anti-social behaviour model, media priming, and script theory. The study’s findings suggest that repeated exposure to sexual themes in advertising desensitises audiences, leading to increasingly explicit appeals. Objectification and dehumanisation in advertisement portrayals may foster sexual attraction to demeaning portrayals, thus, inducing attitudes that support sexually aggressive behaviours. Further, this study focuses on the ethical implications of using sexual appeal in advertising and elaborates on future research ideas, managerial implications and recommendations for policy makers.

The third article, entitled ‘Filling the market orientation-business performance: the mediating effects of social media, business ties and political ties’, by An Thi Hong Nguyen, Phuong Nguyen and Phuong Uyen Dinh, investigates how

small-medium enterprises pursue market orientation by combining social media adaptation and developing managerial ties in terms of business ties and political ties to improve their business performance. The authors have used an empirical study to test the mediating role of social media, business ties and political ties in enhancing business performance and found out that both social media and political ties do play a critical mediating role in strengthening business performance.

The fourth article, entitled 'Returns and volatilities of cotton futures markets: impacts of participants' contract positions', by Orhan Özyaydın, Serkan Çankaya and Najiba Benabess, investigates how short and long positions of hedgers, speculators and index investors in futures markets influence the returns and volatilities of cotton futures markets. While there is a rich literature available on this topic, the findings are not consistent and vary from each market (energy, grains, minerals and other agricultural markets). The authors have conducted an empirical study to determine which participants' contract position influences the returns and volatilities of cotton futures market the most. The authors found out that both long contract positions of non-hedgers and short positions of hedgers are positively correlated with futures returns; and while long positions do not have an impact on volatility of futures returns, short positions of hedgers do.

The fifth article, entitled 'Deciphering organisational culture: case study of a diversified conglomerate in Saudi Arabia', by Salem Al-Ghamdi, Azhar Kazmi and Abdullah Al Ghamdi, deciphers the organization culture of a large, diversified conglomerate based in Saudi Arabia. A survey questionnaire sent to 180 participants elicited 97 responses. The assessment results show an overall positive culture with some dimensions showing slightly negative perceptions. This paper demonstrates the use of an assessment technique as an important tool for managers to understand where the organization culture requires improvement.

The sixth article, entitled 'Revival of Kashmiri saffron industry: an exploratory study', by Asifat Shafi and Parvez Ahmad Mir, analyses the ways through which the saffron industry can be revived in Kashmir. Currently, the Kashmiri saffron industry is facing problems such as decrease in production, adulteration, weak marketing channels, lack of entrepreneurial intention, lack of awareness among all stakeholders and inability to compete globally. This study found that the Kashmiri saffron industry can be revived and this industry can develop a competitive edge by cultivating entrepreneurial intention, introducing public-private partnership and creating awareness among all stakeholders. Moreover, the government's efforts of creating a Saffron Spices Park will help in shortening the distribution channel and will promote high-quality Kashmiri saffron by creating a brand image globally. Revival of the Kashmiri saffron industry will greatly influence the development of state's economy and entrepreneurship.

This global special issue presents diverse scholarship from different disciplines by authors from around the world with common goals, which are to resolve real world problems, to provide different perspectives on problems, and to create comprehensive research questions.