

## **Preface**

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The six studies constituting this special issue focus on various aspects of business performance and strategies in the context of the digital age. The papers examine the impact of e-commerce capability and CEO attributes on export performance, the relationship between relational social capital, tacit knowledge sharing, and individual job performance in the Vietnamese aviation industry, the drivers of employee entrepreneurial intention in the oil and gas sector in Qatar, the determinants of Thai consumers' online purchase intentions for organic foods, effective long-term relationship management strategies to enhance value co-creation among business partners, and the role of online-generated contents in fostering travel destination image formation during the COVID-19 pandemic recovery in Vietnam. These papers collectively explore the ways in which businesses can leverage digital technologies, capitalise on relationships and knowledge sharing, understand consumer behaviour in the online marketplace, and adapt their strategies to effectively navigate challenging circumstances such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The theme highlights the importance of embracing digital capabilities, building strong relationships, and implementing effective strategies to drive business performance and success in today's rapidly evolving digital landscape.

The first article, entitled 'E-commerce capability and CEO attributes: impacts on export performance', by Ilham Ait Bouazza, Yunji Hwang and Seung Hun Han, all from the Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology, South Korea, examines the relationship between a firm's e-commerce capabilities, CEO characteristics, and export performance. This study finds that e-commerce capabilities positively affect domestic sales performance but negatively affect export performance. Negative effects are stronger for firms with female CEOs, but overconfident and older CEOs can mitigate those negative effects. This study also finds that e-commerce capabilities positively affect firm value. By combining the resource-based view of the firm and the upper echelon theory, the study highlights the importance of CEO characteristics in leveraging e-commerce capabilities for successful export ventures. This study recommends that firms consider CEO-level and firm-level characteristics when designing digitally enabled export strategies. This study emphasises the importance of considering the interactions between upper echelon theory aspects, CEO characteristics, and e-commerce capability in determining exporting performance and firm value, and provides practical implications that include the use of text-mining to acquire business data and informing policymakers about relevant export policies to boost exporting activities in the digital age. The study's limitations include the focus on S&P 500 US firms and American CEOs, limiting

generalisability, and the small number of female-led firms in the sample, which makes it difficult to draw conclusions about gender's role in e-commerce-enabled exports. The study also examines endogenous factors at the firm level, and future research will investigate industry-level and exogenous factors affecting cross-border e-commerce.

The second article, entitled 'The relationship of relational social capital, tacit knowledge sharing and individual job performance in the Vietnamese aviation industry', by Minh-Tri Ha and Bao-Son Doan, both affiliated with the International University, Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, and Nguyen-Quynh-Nhu Ngo from Ton Duc Thang University, Vietnam, focuses on the role of social capital in tacit knowledge sharing (TKS) and individual job performance in the aviation industry in Vietnam. The research uses social exchange theory (SET) to develop a theoretical model and applies structural equation modelling (SEM) to analyse the data collected through a questionnaire from 389 flight attendants. The findings indicate that relational social capital, including reciprocity, trust, and commitment, positively impacts TKS, which in turn positively influences individual job performance. The study provides theoretical implications by enriching the empirical evidence on the role of relational social capital, highlighting the importance of TKS in enhancing job performance, and identifying the relationship between the components of relational social capital. The practical implications suggest that managers in the aviation industry should encourage knowledge sharing among employees, allocate resources to build trust and enhance cooperation, and create a favourable working atmosphere for collaboration. However, the study acknowledges its limitations, including the costs of knowledge sharing and the cultural differences in the generalisability of the findings. Future research could explore the impact of cost factors on tacit knowledge sharing and compare the relational social capital influence on individual work performance in different industries and cultures.

The third article, entitled 'Drivers of employee entrepreneurial intention: a study of the oil and gas sector in Qatar', by Salem Al-Halbadi and Boumediene Ramdani from Qatar University, Qatar, and Wafi Al-Karaghoul from Brunel University London, UK, examines the drivers of entrepreneurial intentions among employees in established firms, using data from 509 employees in the oil and gas industry in Qatar. The findings show that affective attitude and personal agency are key factors influencing employee entrepreneurial intention, which are influenced by perceived norms and expectancy. This study combines the integrated behavioural model and expectancy theory to create a framework for understanding employee entrepreneurial intention in a high-income economy. Notably, affective attitude and personal agency dimensions such as perceived behavioural control, self-efficacy, and effort significantly contribute to driving entrepreneurial intention. The study also tests the relationship between specific dimensions of perceived norms (subjective and descriptive) and attitude and personal agency. Positive associations are found between expectancy and attitude, self-efficacy, and effort. The implications of these findings highlight the importance of awareness campaigns and training programs to shape norms and promote the benefits of starting new ventures, particularly for policymakers in Qatar. However, the study acknowledges limitations, such as the exclusion of other potential drivers like cognitive, personality, and environmental factors. Future research should consider these factors and explore their interactions. Furthermore, it is recommended to expand the investigation beyond the oil and gas industry in Qatar and conduct longitudinal and qualitative studies for a more comprehensive understanding of employee entrepreneurship.

The fourth article entitled ‘Factors affecting Thai consumers’ online purchase intention toward organic foods for health benefits and convenience’, by Sudaporn Sawmong and Navidreza Ahadi, both from King Monkut’s Institute of Technology Ladkrabang, Thailand, focuses on understanding the factors influencing Thai consumers’ online purchase intentions for organic food using the data from 400 online consumers in Thailand through a survey. The research model employed the theory of reasoned action and used descriptive statistics and structural equation modelling for analysis. The findings reveal that perceived usefulness, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and e-service quality significantly affects Thai consumers’ online purchase intentions for organic food. The study emphasises the role of mobile food ordering applications as effective tools for educating consumers and connecting businesses, offering features such as comprehensive food information, nutrition statistics, and direct communication options. Attitude is identified as a crucial factor influenced by perceived usefulness, trust, and the pandemic. Restaurant managers are advised to prioritise online sales and seek support from online food ordering service providers. The study highlights the importance of online innovation strategies, pricing, web quality, and other factors in enhancing online purchase intentions for organic food. However, the study has limitations, and future research should explore additional characteristics of organic food and the impact of different mobile touchpoints on food purchasing decisions.

The fifth article, entitled ‘Effective long-term relationship management strategies to enhance value co-creation among business partners’, by Kanyarat Sukhawatthanakun from Kasetsart University, Thailand, examines the factors involved in effective long-term relationship management to enhance value co-creation among business partners, with a focus on four variable factor elements and the finding that resource sharing is the primary factor; it recommends that businesses should consider shared collaborative strategies, assign clear roles and responsibilities, integrate customer relationship databases into broader systems, conduct frequent customer satisfaction surveys, and foster high levels of collaboration while ensuring data confidentiality and operating in line with corporate governance principles, and concludes that the empirical results can contribute to developing guidelines for long-term relationship management in Thailand businesses, although the study is limited by its focus on entrepreneurs in Thailand and future research may be needed to confirm effective relationship management strategies through sub-factors and explore the impact of disruptive technology, the post-COVID-19 pandemic, international trade war, or actual war on relationships between business partners.

The sixth article, entitled ‘Online-generated contents fostering travel destination image formation: evidence in Vietnam during COVID-19 pandemic recovery’, by Minh-Tri Ha and Thi Huong-Thanh Nguyen from Vietnam National University, Vietnam, and Minh-Tuan Tran and Son-Truong Nguyen from Easter International University, Vietnam, examines the impact of online-generated contents for tourism on consumers’ image formation and their intentions to revisit a destination during post-COVID-19 period. Three antecedents of online contents, namely understandability, valence, and novelty, are investigated in the context of travellers in Vietnam. The study collected data from an online survey of 447 respondents and analysed the results using PLS-SEM. The study finds that understandability and valence of pandemic-related content have a positive relationship with both cognitive and affective evaluation, while novelty has a positive relationship only with affective evaluation. The study also finds that cognitive

image has no significant association with affective image evaluations of mental destination in this context. Personality is found to have a moderating role in the association between cognition and affection towards the destination. The study's findings contribute to the understanding of the impacts of the pandemic on mental image formation and the potential for future research in the tourism industry. The paper's limitations include a focus on a specific region and limited scope of destination image formation. Future research is needed to explore other psychological or physical factors affecting affective evaluation or behavioural intention.