

Foreword

We would like to welcome you to this special issue of the International Journal of Economics and Management. This issue is meant to highlight the current issues pertaining to several aspects of business and management. In attempting to construct change that stimulates the competitiveness of Malaysian organizations, understanding the relevant striking issues are deemed to be important and crucial.

This special issue brings to light several under-researched concepts. Below is a brief overview of the contributed papers that are responsive to filling this knowledge gap. The first contribution from 'Pressures, Green Supply Chain Management Practices and Performance of ISO 14001 Certified Manufacturers in Malaysia' by Azmawani Abd Rahman, Jo Ann Ho and Khairul Anuar Rusli investigated the green supply chain management (GSCM) among 112 ISO14001 certified manufacturers in Malaysia. The authors looked at the influence of various pressures on the level of green practices. The results indicated that manufacturers in Malaysia experienced high external pressures such as regulatory and marketing/customers pressures.

The next paper 'The Influence of Demographic Variables on Lecturers' Protean Careers Orientation' by Mervyn Lee Chia Sern, Jo Ann Ho, Murali Sambasivan and Wong Foong Yee examined the influence of age, level of education and gender on two dimensions of the protean career orientation: values-driven attitude and self-directed behaviour. The results showed that age was a significant predictor for the values-driven attitude while educational level was a significant predictor for the self-directed attitude while gender was significant for both values-driven attitude and self-directed attitude.

As women gain more financial freedom nowadays, the third paper entitled 'Determinants and Influence of Wives' Sex Role Orientation in Urban Family Purchase Decision Making in Malaysia' by Samsinar Md Sidin, Dahlia Zawawi and Carol Boon Chui, Teo looked at the factors that determine the sex role orientation (SRO) of women and its influence on family purchase decision (FDM). Findings revealed that FDM was governed by SRO based on socioeconomic and cultural factors. Wives' SRO influenced major purchases of products and services that were bought autonomously by husbands and wives.

The advance of information technology allows more business organizations to make a global presence, thus affecting the employment patterns. The next paper of "Factors Contributing for Malaysian Employees' Willingness to Accept International Assignment" by Zuraina Dato Mansor and Nadia Adnan was conducted on a number of Malaysian respondents who were currently working with multinational company (MNCs) or for government sector or any other company

type that had a business or subsidiaries outside Malaysia. The result showed that two factors—cultural factor and organizational factors—were able to influence Malaysians' willingness to take international assignment.

In addition, the paper of 'The Influence of Emotional Labour Strategies on Customer Satisfaction and Word of Mouth Recommendations in Group Tours' by Shin Yiing Lee, Yuhanis Abdul Aziz, and Samsinar Md Sidin aimed to link the customer's perception of the emotional labour strategies performed by service employees. The potential outcomes of these strategies on the customers were also studied. Findings identified the relationship between the strategies and the customer outcome.

The sixth paper on 'The Effect of a Psychological Climate for Creativity on Job Satisfaction and Work Performance' by Wong Foong Yee, Leong Sai Pink and Mervyn Lee Chia Sern aimed to investigate the effects of a psychological climate for creativity on job satisfaction and work performance. Additionally, this study seek to establish the role of job satisfaction as a mediator on the relationship between organisational climate and work performance. The results suggested that all variable relationships were positively and significantly correlated.

Reflecting the huge potential of halal market and the fact that Muslim population is equal to approximately 23 percent of the world's population, research on Islamic friendly products and services remain important and relevant. A paper on the 'Exploring Islamic Retailer Store Attributes from Consumers Perspectives: An Empirical Investigation' by Haslinda Hashim, Siti Rahayu Hussin and Nurdiyana Nadiah Zainal focused to empirically examine the stores' attributes and how they reflected an Islamic retailer from the perspective of Muslim consumers. Factor analysis indicated various store attributes correlate to reveal four dimensions of an Islamic retailer which are Trustworthy Pricing, Confirming Store Atmosphere, Trustworthy Product and Ethical Promotion.

Focusing on the service industry, another paper entitled 'Assessing Technical and Functional Features of Office Buildings and Their Effects on Satisfaction and Loyalty' by Cheah, J. H, S.I., Lee, Lee, C. and Teoh, K.G.C. assessed the service performance of commercial office buildings in the Golden Triangle Kuala Lumpur (GTKL) and the relationship to tenant satisfaction and loyalty. The result indicated that Building Features, Services and Management performance (BFSM), agglomeration performance and Responsive Customer Orientation (RCO) significantly influenced tenant satisfaction, and subsequently resulted in loyalty.

As we know, the business environment today is more complex, dynamic, and risky. Managers and academics have to continuously rethink and redesign a supply chain that is more agile, intelligent, and adaptable. The final paper on 'Supply Chain Intelligence and its impact on Business Performance' by Nor Siah

Jaharuddin, Zainal Abidin Mohamed, and Murali Sambasivan examined the use of intelligence in supply chain activities. It attempted to fill the gap in current research by investigating the role of supply chain intelligence (SCI) as a factor influencing a firm's competitiveness that is crucial for future business performance. The responses received highlighted significant positive relationships between SCI and business performance.

Finally, we thank the contributors for their excellent work on various research issues within the field of business and management. Their commitment and ideas have made the compilation of this issue a success. It is our wish that this issue will spark new research and empirical studies, and contribute to the development of Malaysian organizations.

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