

Special issue: strategic leadership across multicultural contexts

Welcome to the special issue of European Business Review on the topic of *Strategic Leadership in Multicultural Contexts*. This special issue is inspired from the fact that an entire new way of doing business has emerged due to globalization. Organizations with multinational orientation have footprints all across the globe, with factories, workshops, branches and headquarters in different countries and have, invariably, multicultural teams. The key factors for organizations to succeed, therefore, are a thorough understanding of cultural values and differences and the objectives, strategies and ways of doing business. To achieve this, therefore, leaders have to transform themselves into *cross-cultural leaders* who should have the ability to cut across diverse cultures by developing trust, communicating effectively and in turn motivating employees to achieve the strategic goals and vision of the organization. Effective cross-cultural leadership in international markets would, in turn, lead to organizational success.

We invited several papers from leading researchers from around the world and finally narrowed down to five papers for this special issue. These papers have studied strategic leadership aspects in various multicultural settings.

The concept of strategic leadership and its importance in effective role of chain coordinators is studied in a developed economy like New Zealand. The paper scrutinizes the linkages between leadership styles, their interactions and the effectiveness of supply chain coordination in agri-food industry. The results indicate that in New Zealand, participative leadership is more strongly correlated with the effectiveness of supply chain coordination than directive leadership. The directive leadership is also significant, which leads towards the adoption of strategic leadership. Interaction effects further conclude that companies perform better when their chain coordinators apply strategic leadership practices. Moreover, operational (service quality and product quality) and social (trust in and satisfaction with supply chain partners) performances are the key determinants of financial performance (increased sales, profit and market share).

Strategic leadership concept is studied in Pakistan, a developing nation. The paper is based on leader–employee relationship and its impact on employees' extra-role behaviours. The extra-role behaviours studied were organizational citizen behaviour, knowledge sharing behaviour and innovative work behaviour. A sample of 367 was collected from R&D and IT sector of Pakistan in three phases. The study found that extra-role behaviours of employees are positively proportionate with their exchange with the leader, and work engagement plays a mediating role in these relationships. The study also offers venues for future research and practical implications for business managers.

Another interesting paper selected studies the effect of transformational leadership on the socialization process of cultural minorities in organizations. It is conceptual paper where the authors argue that the diversity of cultural minorities will be negatively related to socialization outcomes. They highlight the roles of transformational leadership and diversity mindsets in facilitating the socialization process of cultural minorities. According to the authors, the focus of diversity training needs to be changed to prevent unfairness and discrimination and leaders of cultural minority newcomers should be trained to lead in a more transformational manner.

The role of leadership is also studied in two of the biggest emerging economies of present times – China and India, which are also culturally diverse. The results suggest that planning



and disciplined approach is needed to convert the diverse multi- or cross-cultural teams from group mind to that of a synergic team. The study further elucidates that in large projects that are geographically stretched with culturally diverse team members, the project manager has to be adept in converting himself/herself as an effective team leader to realize the success of triple constraints for projects with quality delivery to stake holders.

And last but not the least, the role of leadership is studied at Fijian Co-operatives and contribute new understandings of the cultural influences on organizational leadership. The authors established a relationship between the changing culture and the hybrid form of leadership which is adopted to maintain connections between local leadership traditions and the need to provide new services effectively. Noting that the cultural context of leadership is complex, they find that multidimensional leaders have the capacity to adapt to social, economic, political and cultural changes in their society, and that a hybrid, context-sensitive style of leading is appropriate in a rapidly changing, or unstable social context. Strategic leaders are multidimensional as long as they have the capacity to be context-sensitive, but they are genuinely ethical when they have the capacity to maintain the moral legitimacy of their actions when adapting and responding to their local environments.

All the five papers in the special issue are a healthy mix of different aspects of leadership in multicultural context. We extend our gratitude to the Editor-in-Chief for his constant support and guidance. We also thank all the reviewers who reviewed the papers and gave critical and insightful observations to the authors for improving their papers. Last but not the least, we thank all the authors who have contributed their papers to this special issue to make it successful.

We hope that you would appreciate and enjoy the special issue as much we were delighted to develop it. Happy Reading!

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