

International Developments in Management Research

**Edited by
Gregory T. Papanikos**

**Athens Institute for Education and Research
2011**

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International Developments in Management Research: An Introduction

Gregory T. Papanikos, ATINER, Greece

The chapters of this book were presented at the various business and economic conferences organized by the Athens Institute for Education and Research (ATINER), over the last years. The essays are organized into three parts. The first part includes papers on strategic issues, the second part includes essays on human resources and the last part includes three special issues of management. In this introductory note of the book, each part is briefly presented.

Strategic Issues

This part includes eleven papers on the subject of strategic management issues. The first chapter, written by Luiz Flavio Autran M. Gomes, Jorge L. Cataldo and Ailson De Moraes, provides a synthesis of the various methods and techniques used to support strategic decisions, emphasizing the role of knowledge management. The latter is viewed as a resource and as a process. They close their contribution by suggesting the need to develop new indicators and measurement techniques to study the issue of knowledge management.

The following chapter (Chapter 3 of the book) deals with another strategic issue: privatization. Koldo Zabalza and Jesús Matey argue that privatisation requires reform which includes new management practices. They examine the internal changes in strategic management that take place in public Spanish firms after privatization. Ten theoretical propositions are developed and tested using four case studies. These propositions have been organized into three areas: strategies, objectives and organisational structure. Their results show that most propositions are confirmed. Strategies, objectives and organisational structure are relevant to the process of change in a privatised firm's strategic management. However, as the authors recognize, their conclusions might be sensitive to economic cycle and the competitive forces before and after the privatization. The issue of economic cycle (crisis) is examined in the next chapter.

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Riccardo Astori and Luisa Bosetti analyse and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the national governance systems in the face of an economic crisis. As the authors claim, an economic crisis reveals the insufficiency of corporate governance systems, internal control and external supervision, as well as the lack of transparency in the communication to the stakeholders. They investigate the relationship between global economic crisis and corporate governance. In particular, they examine the difference between various governance systems and forms of company control, stressing their strong and weak points. They consider the strong implication of the crisis for listed firms, a group of 30 companies. This group consists of the 10 highest capitalised listed companies in the USA, Italy and Germany. They conclude by highlighting the need for global coordinated intervention in order to help the companies improve their corporate governance and overcome the economic crisis.

The subject of the world economy is further discussed in the following two chapters of the book. Maria Cinta Gisbert López, Júlio Costa Mendes, Pedro Fernandes Anunciação, Fernanda Jesus Andrade, Cristina Reis Fernandes and João Carlos Rocha Santos (Chapter 5) and Maria Cinta Gisbert López, João Carlos Rocha Santos and David Snow (Chapter 6) examine the challenges and the strategies of sustainability in the process of internationalization. Not all agree on the applicability of the concept of corporate sustainability to enterprise. Based on previous studies, the authors of the first chapter update the concepts of organizational sustainability. They propose an adjusted model which integrates five dimensions: Direction (Vision and Strategy), Posture (Ethics and Social Responsibility), Organization (Organizational Urbanization), Behavior (Quality and Clients) and Evaluation (Vigilance and Performance). The second chapter looks at the concept of corporate sustainability and its applicability to business. At the level of a firm, the definition of corporate sustainability is based on three basic pillars: economic viability, development of its activity without placing the environment at risk, and an effective contribution to social development. This model is then used in a large company in the Portuguese building and civil construction sector. The company's contribution to the Portuguese economy in the face of economic crisis is examined along with its internationalisation and diversification strategies.

Chapter 7 provides an empirical study of another strategic issue, that of value statements of 250 firms listed in the Istanbul Chamber of Industry's "Turkey's Top 500 Industrial Enterprises" list. Esin Ertemsir Berkin, Yonca Gürol, Yasemin Bal and Pinar Büyükbalci present a short review of individual and organizational values, the importance of designing value statements in organizations, and major research made in the literature regarding organizational values. They found that only 67 out of 250 companies had value statements in their websites. Besides value statements, mission and vision statements of these firms have also been examined. A general conclusion of their study is the relationship between values and society's culture.

The following study looks at a sector's strategy to outsource its logistics. The purpose is to understand the logistics of the French ready-to-wear sector.

As the author Laetitia Dari claims, the understanding of the logistics strategies in the ready-to-wear sector is an original approach. Logistics activities are largely outsourced in any sector; it is different in the clothing sector. The research is based on data collection from semi-structured interviews. 24 interviews were carried out with the principal stakeholders of the sector: national federations, regional professional syndicates, member enterprises, associations and professional institutes, etc. The results from the interviews show two main trends in the ready-to-wear industry: a cooperative model of relationship with logistics providers and the unwillingness of firms to participate in joint logistics projects with other firms.

Mohammad Namazi and Amin Nazemi, in Chapter 9, provide empirical evidence to establish a strategy map in a hotel in Iran. Their results show that a number of key hypotheses are consistent with the work of other studies in the same research area. The contribution margin (as a proxy measure for financial aspect), the occupancy rate (as a proxy measure for customer perspective), repair and maintenance and the number of rooms (as the proxy measure for internal procedure) and training costs and number of employees (as the proxy measure for learning and growth) are significant measures that could be encompassed into a hotel's strategy map.

The following chapter, authored by Pekka Tervonen, Joonas Alapiha and Harri Haapasalo, examine another strategic issue of using the benchmarking method in Finland to compare companies' management systems in terms of their management system in the areas of environment, safety & security, and quality. Their findings show that companies exploit different maturity models depending on the sector of the economy. A popular model is the EFQM model. The Toddlergrade maturity model developed by the case study company provides a simple solution because it is easy to use and can be evaluated very fast.

The next chapter deals also with quality, even though at the theoretic-descriptive level. Roland Jochem and Dennis Geers summarize the literature and the models on customer satisfaction, improved levels of customer loyalty, and a consistent consumer buying behaviour. This literature shows that all these depend on superior product quality, which operates as a principal value and performance driver. The authors conclude that quality management generates internal and external value by improving performance. Thus, a quality-orientated investment pays off in positive and sustainable revenues.

The final paper of this part of the book is an empirical study on total quality management in Turkey. The author, Oygur Yamak, analyzes how Turkish companies plan and implement total quality management systems. Based upon survey data, the author is able to answer a number of important questions concerning the practice of total quality management by Turkish firms.

In one or another way, strategy and strategic implementation issues are very much related to the quality of human capital of an enterprise. Human resources play an importantly increasing role, primarily as we move from low-skilled economic sectors to more advanced production processes which are knowledge based. The carriers of knowledge are humans and the management

of this important productive resource is the subject of the next part of this book.

Human Resources Issues

This part of the book includes nine papers on issues related to human resource management issues. The first chapter of this part, Chapter 13 of the book, talks about workforce diversity programs. Sabah J. Alwan argues that intellectual diversity and inclusiveness are important factors in strategic planning linked to diversity retention. The strategic issue is that qualified workers are needed for success. Acquiring and retaining qualified human resources can lead to a sustainable competitive advantage. Diversity requires an understanding of and sensitivity to religion, race/ethnicity, age, disabilities, marital status, gender, and sexual orientation. Promoting and designing a diverse workforce retention program demands the true commitment of the top organizational leadership to the program. Positive support by upper management will retain employees.

The following chapter can be considered as a case study of a very specific human capital, that of psychological capital, a new concept that the authors, Terrence C. Sebor and Sannan Tantiukoskula, apply to the area of entrepreneurship. The authors claim that psychological capital is a state rather than a trait; therefore it can be learned and developed. They examine four dimensions of psychological capital – self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency – and suggest that “the intention to become an entrepreneur is positively associated with the level of an individual’s entrepreneurial psychological capital”. They test this hypothesis using a sample of college students. They provide evidence from both a correlation and a regression analysis that this hypothesis is not rejected. Based on this evidence, the authors discuss a number of issues that affect business education in the area of entrepreneurship.

Continuing with the issue of entrepreneurship, the next chapter discusses entrepreneurial choices of children who grow up in family businesses. Cindy Iannarelli, Leann Mischel and Joe Aniello present and discuss a model of entrepreneurial behaviour impacts on children of family businesses. Based on a selected review of the literature the authors are able to base the construction of their model, taking into consideration the findings of this research: influences such as the family, involvement in family business, role models, and all sorts of training experiences. The model proposes that children exposed to family business need to obtain five skill groups while they encounter five stages as they grow and develop, and that there are five steps parents and role models can provide to encourage learning and give children the opportunity to acquire entrepreneurial thinking. The authors proceed with a discussion of the limitations and the scope of future research on this topic.

The next chapter takes us to a different type of workforce which supplies its services from home. Mona Mustafa reviews the literature on the boundaries

between work and home when the work is carried out at home. The emphasis is on physical separation. 20 interviews were conducted and respondents were asked to describe how they coped between their work and home. The findings suggest that physical boundaries include a number of strategies, apart from separating a location for work. It involves spatial, temporal, psychological and social separation between work and non work.

Continuing with the analysis with a variety of human resource management issues, the following chapter provides an empirical investigation of job satisfaction and retention in a retail setting. In particular, Peter Hosie, Payyazhi Jayashree, Abdellatif Tchantchane and Lee Ban Seng examine how job characteristics such as high levels of Skill Variety, Task Identity, Task Feedback and Autonomy, training opportunities and age of workers, influence the level of job satisfaction of staff working in a Singaporean retail petroleum industry. The authors provide a comprehensive review of the relative literature which leads to a number of testable hypotheses of the factors which contribute to job satisfaction. Autonomy was found to be the most significant predictor accounting for 21.7% of the variability in job satisfaction. Also, providing training opportunities to employees, was important.

Chapter 18 examines retirement planning issues. Marita Naudé and Therese Jefferson analyze the perceptions and expectations of 60 employees in Western Australia about their retirement. This analysis is used to study a number of questions that relate to (a) current actions towards retirement, (b) factors considered important, (c) use of resources and information, and (d) key issues in planning successful retirements. They discuss the key issues and the important factors that might affect retirement decisions.

Justice in the workplace is another factor that contributes to job satisfaction. This is examined in Chapter 19. Serdar Çöp, Ali Yayli and M. Murat Kizanlikli study the relationship between the perception of organizational justice and organizational commitment of personnel employed in accommodation facilities in Turkey. The Pearson Correlation analysis was used, and a significant relationship was found between organizational justice and organizational commitment. The paper further examines whether organizational justice and organizational commitment and their sub dimensions vary according to age, position in the hotel-facility, the department worked in and the duration of working in the company.

The issue of perception is studied from another perspective, that of decision processes within the context of an information system. Dorota Leszczyńska and Laurence Saglietto look at the perception the managers actually have of their information system. This has a strong impact on the way they are going to manage it and on the way the projects in this field will be carried out. The authors claim that the managers' individual perception is important but a "collective" perception contributes to the success of information systems management. Collective perception is the perception of team members. This depends on the relations and interactions they have with their managers. The authors present a reference model and carry out a case study to demonstrate this relationship and interaction. A case study of a French company on

manager perception and team perception, in the event of a major change, is performed. The results are used to assess the evolution of the concept, from a managerial to a collective perception of information systems. They find that collective perception is an important factor in decision models of information system project management.

The issue of information systems is further looked at in the last chapter of this part of the book. Boon-anan Phinaitrup and Gary N. McLean study the content, context, and impact of information technology application in human resource activities in Thailand, in both the private and the public sector. The authors use three methods in their investigation: literature review, interviews, and questionnaires. Literature review shows that human resources information systems (HRIS) are effective and efficient if the following factors are present: system development, content and context to support HRIS, role of HRIS, and efficiency and effectiveness of HRIS. Their results indicate that successful implementation of HRIS must be supported from top managers and human resource managers, be accepted by HR employees, and be maintained. Also, they found similarities and differences between the private and public sectors.

Special Management Issues

The last part of the book includes three papers that can be considered as special management topics. The first paper, Chapter 22 of the book, discusses an issue concerning management students. Don Lifton, Aimee Dars Ellis and Rachel Hart present results on an exploratory study on business student retention at Ithaca College of New York. The College defines its persistence-to-sophomore year variable as those students who return to full time status anywhere on campus to begin their third semester. Persistence data are presented and discussed but the authors suggest further investigation of the issue.

The following study discusses managerial and academic implications of the effects of both the program content and scheduling time on viewer choice on televised programs. As the authors claim, most studies investigate viewer choice from the perspective of what they watch and when. Their study takes a different approach by examining the most important factors determining viewer choice. Identifying which factors influence viewer choices will allow the advertisers and broadcasters to manage their schedules accordingly. This study aims at identifying these factors. The authors use data from Turkish students to determine the importance of program content, program day, program time, and program origin. They found that program time was the most important. The program content and program origin were relatively less important. The program day was the least important factor in the model.

The last chapter of the book examines customer's experience. The author, Mehran Sepehri, provides an analysis of what experience involves, and applies this to case studies. Based on these analyses, the author states that an experience type company, such as Disney Land Theme Park or Four Seasons

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Hotels and Resort, is differentiated from a service company by the extent to which a customer is engaged in a stage setting to gain a memorable participation. The higher the differentiation, the higher the premium the company can charge its customers.

Epilogue

The diversity of the studies presented in this book which includes subjects, authors and the countries studied, justify the title of the book as being international. Each paper can be considered as representing a different step in the development of research in management issues. Thus, the common element of all papers is their diversity in dealing with international developments in management research. As in one paper in this book, is referred to diversity might give a competitive advantage to a modern business organization. If we are allowed to generalize, then this book's competitive advantage is its diversity in topics covered and the different countries that are used as generating the necessary data to test various management hypotheses.