

## **Journal of General Management Call for Papers**

### **Stakeholder Relationships in International Business Management: The Cross-functional perspectives**

#### **The Need for New Research**

International business management (IBM) and stakeholder relationship management (SRM), both are established research domains. In general, these two research fields have implications for each other to develop new cross-functional insights. A proactive SRM process and stakeholders' effective engagement in a value-network are typically instrumental for any functional area in business, including IBM to attain and sustain win-win outcomes. However, in the broader business management literature; the varied implications of SRM are not widely researched from the diverse perspectives of different cross-functional business knowledge streams. For example, in management sustainability research, "the lack of or ineffective stakeholder participation is a major obstacle to realisation (of sustainability) and there is little clarity as to how best to resolve this problem" (Waligo et al., 2013, p. 342). In corporate social responsibilities (CSR), analysing stakeholder engagement is yet an under-researched area (Ayuso et al., 2014). In emerging market knowledge-stream, the multinational companies' "orientation (in emerging markets) may fail to address evolving and diverse stakeholder expectations" (Zhao et. al., 2014, p. 842). The "theories of entrepreneurship (that) most typically focus on the characteristics specific to the individual (entrepreneur)" (Acs et al., 2013, p. 759), often overlook the capacities of entrepreneurs and their stakeholder relationships to recognise innovative entrepreneurial opportunities (Burns et al., 2014). Organisational transparency is a construct to nurture stakeholder trust, in order to develop favourable relationships among the stakeholders, focusing on the diverse cross-functional management perspectives; nevertheless "researchers touting the benefits of transparency in this context have relied on cursory assertions rather than rigorous theoretical development" (Schnackenberg and Tomlinson, 2016, p. 1784).

In terms of capitalising on the information technology (IT) to enable a business firm to profoundly and prolifically engage all its internal and external stakeholders in a value-network for intra- and inter-organisation collaboration, our current knowledge is limited to fully exploit the full potentials of IT from this context. For example, research on how big-data tracking system through IT-enhanced business platforms could enable the senior executives to proactively design, implement and monitor data pattern mining system to

explore diverse stakeholder behaviour and so forth is scarce (Bello-Orgaz et al., 2016). Developing novel insights from this context is particularly important for IBM, because of the virtual implications of IT-enhanced business platforms to influence stakeholder relationships in international business across the international borders. Wang et al. (2016) argue that “IT project manager must place increasing importance on managing stakeholder expectations and their relationships and social and cultural expectations relating to the change” (p. 372). Furthermore, researchers posit that we need to “address the wide (research) gap to better understand how (IT-enhanced) CRM creates effectiveness for buyer-seller business relationship” (p. 165) from the context of cross-functional integration (Bukhari and Kazi, 2016). Consequently, we need more research to enhance our understanding at the intersection of IT and SRM for incorporating enhanced on-time and on-line collaboration skills among the different stakeholders.

The discussion thus far demonstrates that we need more research at the intersection of SRM and different cross-functional areas of IBM such as international entrepreneurship, IT research and operation focusing on international business, stakeholder knowledge management in cross-border markets, international CSR, international business sustainability and so forth, in order to proactively exploit the full potentials of SRM to explore new theoretical and practical insights in IBM. Such new theoretical and practical IBM insights would be centred on diverse SRM perspectives to reinforce different cross-functional business initiatives, since, our extant limited competence in timely and effectively interpreting the varied traditional and emergent SRM perspectives and constructs detrimentally impacts on IBM to proactively explore and refine business management opportunities and neutralise business risks. Moreover, the ingenuities of international business managers’ inter-culturally proficient engagement with the cross-border stakeholders and effective knowledge transfer between them (Kaufmann et al., 2014; Sanchez and Kaufmann, 2014) to sustain international business initiatives in the cross-border target markets is usually more complicated, compared to the local markets. It indicates that developing greater contemporary understandings on the diverse stakeholder relationship dimensions and value expectations of different international stakeholders would typically be imperative for IBM to proactively integrating the differed international and intercultural relationship dimensions into the international value-network.

From this context, this special issue aims to reinforce our current insights on the diversified cross-functional impacts of SRM on different cross-functional business initiatives related to overall IBM policies and strategies in international markets. Such cross-functional knowledge streams and cross-functional business areas would include but not limited to CRM, business sustainability, entrepreneurship, business and environmental issues, strategic management, HRM, IT operation and so forth. The purpose here to pursue this aim of the special issue is to understand the implications of SRM and/or other business knowledge-streams on IBM to profoundly motivate and engage the cross-cultural stakeholders in international markets, in order to underpin IBM initiatives. For example, how SRM could influence entrepreneurial international business or how the cross-functional insights from SRM and CSR or SRM and strategic management or SRM and environmental theories and practices or SRM and IT management and so forth could contribute to the progress of IBM.

### **The thematic areas**

Following the discussion on the need for new research and the subsequent aim of this special issue, a broader research question of the relevant studies of this special issue should focus at the cross-functional intersection of SRM and any other functional area (e.g. sustainability, entrepreneurship, marketing, HRM, IT etc.) in IBM to develop novel insights on how we could leverage the stakeholder relationships and interactions for improved IBM efficacy. As a result, studies from diverse perspectives of IBM that bridge the existing gaps in SRM and any functional area of international business to propel theoretical conceptions and practical propositions in prolific stakeholder engagement, through both, the implications of cross-functional business management theories on IBM practices, as well as practice-based theorisation are relevant to the key focus of this special issue. Prospective thematic areas include, but not limited to:

- influence of SRM on entrepreneurial IBM;
- SRM analysis at the intersection of IBM and CSR;
- SRM analysis at the intersection of IBM and mergers and acquisitions;
- SRM analysis at the intersection of IBM and quality assurance in international markets;
- SRM analysis at the intersection of IBM and strategic management in international markets;
- SRM analysis at the intersection of IBM, e-commerce and other IT operations in international business;
- environmental issues, IBM and SRM analysis;
- SRM analysis in IBM for competitive advantage and organisational sustainability in cross-border markets;
- SRM analysis at the intersection of IBM and social business;
- SRM analysis at the intersection of IBM and supply chain management;

- SRM analysis for innovation management in IBM;
- SRM analysis related to corruption, lack of transparency and the misleading of stakeholders in business, and its impact on IBM;
- SRM analysis among diverse government and non-government stakeholders in cross-border markets, and its impact on IBM;
- SRM analysis related to young consumers, and its impact on IBM;
- SRM analysis for cross-cultural management, and its impact on IBM;
- SRM analysis, stakeholder knowledge management and IBM;
- SRM analysis for non-profit IBM;
- SRM analysis, service management and its impact on IBM;
- SRM analysis, socio-economic value co-creation and IBM;
- SRM analysis, retail management, shopping behaviour and IBM;
- SRM analysis, arts, heritage and fashion marketing in international markets;
- stakeholder theory, SRM analysis and other cross-functional perspective(s) in IBM.

Together with the papers from the wider research community across the world, few carefully selected papers from the 11<sup>th</sup> EuroMed Academy of Business Annual Conference 2018, Valletta, Malta (September 12 – 14) will also be evaluated for the inclusion in this special issue.

### **Special issue workshop**

A manuscript development workshop will be organised for this special issue in mid-September, 2018 during the EuroMed Academy of Business Annual Conference. A purpose of this special issue workshop is to inviting the authors of the under review papers to participate in the workshop to exchange their views on their own papers, as well as on the papers of their colleagues for further manuscript development. Another purpose of this special issue workshop is to attract more quality manuscript from the wider audience of the EuroMed Annual Conference. Neither participating in this special issue workshop is a pre-requisite for acceptance of a paper for this special issue, nor, participating in the workshop warrants the publication of a paper in this special issue.

### **The timeline**

Manuscript submission deadline: October 31, 2018 (however, earlier submission is highly encouraged);

First comments (initial acceptance/rejection) on manuscripts: February 28, 2019;

Revision due: April 15, 2019;

Special issue will be published in 2019.

## Guidelines for authors

The Journal of General Management publishes manuscripts, based on a double-blind peer review process. Interested contributors should format their manuscripts based on the guidelines, available at <https://uk.sagepub.com/en-gb/eur/journal-of-general-management/journal202705#submission-guidelines> . Manuscripts need to be submitted online here: <https://peerreview.sagepub.com/jogm> . Please select this special issue from the online drop-down menu, while you submit your manuscript online. Any inquiries, related to this special issue can be forwarded to the guest editors.

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