

EDITORIAL: Pairing old with the new: Firm performance, ESG, and big data

Dear readers!

We are pleased to present the recent issue of the journal *Corporate Governance and Organizational Behavior Review*.

Over recent decades, scholarly attention has increasingly focused on enhancing corporate performance, a theme recurrent in diverse academic literature. As researchers accumulate more in-depth knowledge about business operations, this has led to the production of specialized, insightful academic papers. This issue revisits foundational concepts while presenting novel empirical evidence from developed and emerging markets examining corporate performance from multifaceted perspectives. It re-evaluates the connection between firm performance and environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors through a novel analytical lens. It is posited that effective corporate social responsibility (CSR) necessitates active employee participation, a culture of ethics, and robust leadership (*Arup Kumar Poddar*). In an effort to bridge the knowledge gap in existing research on CSR in the Gulf Cooperation Council region, *Omnia Ahmed, Bashar Abu Khalaf, and Antoine B. Awad* illustrate how intensified CSR efforts enhance a firm's reputation and, consequently, its financial performance.

The governance component of ESG encompasses aspects such as business ethics, compliance with regulatory standards, transparency, and the implementation of governance strategies. Firm performance has a significant relationship with pre-listing earning manipulation (*Duong Thi Chi, Nguyen Thi Thanh Diep, and Nguyen Thu Hang*), legal liquidity ratio (*Omran Ahmad Al-Ibbini and Osama Samih Shaban*), and effective governance mechanisms (*Brunela Trebicka and Azeta Tartaraj*). Moreover, *Fitrian Sari, Andi Irfan, Faiza Muklis, Henni Indrayani, and Harkaneri* underscore the critical importance of audit fee transparency in enhancing financial reporting and preventing unfair competitive practices. Improved regulation and monitoring of audit quality in Nigeria's insurance sector is another governance aspect in this series of ESG-centric research (*Sadiq Oshoke Akhor, Alexander Olawumi Dabor, Kayode Ismaila Ashaju, Osagie Uwagboe Osifo, Friday Adoghe, Frederick Ogbeide, Joshua Edosa Aronmwan, Timothy Onochonjo Usman, Sunny Ewan Aigbonmian, Onutomaha Dennis Akrawah, Godwin Ohiokha, Ajueyitse Martins Otuedon, Uwadiah John Oroboh, and Osarodion Famous Wilson*). These studies complement other research published on audit, cyber risk management, and liquidity risk in emerging markets (Hafez, 2023; Hegazy et al., 2023; Ogar et al., 2023). To improve the performance of public companies, *Hanae Amrani and Ahmed Aftiss* draw on the new public management trend (Ousaa & Fasly, 2023) and provide evidence on influential factors in the implementation of management control tools. In another study, *Etikah Karyani, Ana Noveria, Taufik Faturohman, and Raden Aswin Rahadi* highlight the substantial impact of cyber risk disclosures on audit fees, particularly in the post-COVID-19 era. The delays and disruptions following COVID-19 have spurred new research questions in various sectors, including transportation, where new models have been developed to enhance the performance of shipping companies (*Prasadja Ricardianto, Endang Susilowati, Endri Endri, Sudjanadi Tjiptosudarmo, Abdullah Ade Suryobuwono, Atong Soekirman, I Made Dauh Wijana, Yahya Kuncoro, Kanwo, and Febriyanti*). Focusing on the social impacts of an organization, *Chuleerat Charoenporn* explores human welfare organizational behavior in early childhood education in Asia. Employing content analysis in a qualitative framework, authors analyze in-depth interviews with early childhood development specialists to uncover methods by which organizations can promote education and care for children. Furthermore, investigations into consumer behavior reveal how cultural values influence consumer priorities and purchasing patterns (*Lynelle Martin and Maxwell Agabu Phiri*). Extending this focus on organizational dynamics, *Nicholas Ashley and Sanjana Brijball Parumasur* explore the interplay between organizational culture and service quality in Ghana's private hospital sector. Broadening the scope to include contemporary business decision-making, *Fitore Velijaj and Pleurat Mustafa* examine the impact of a company's engagement across various social media platforms on its sales figures.

Recognizing that outcomes in performance stem from a sequence of decision-making processes, it is imperative to explore methods to refine these processes. Recent innovations in artificial intelligence and machine learning, coupled with big data, are empowering managers to make more informed decisions. As *Raef Gouiaa* and *Anna Bazarna* explain, a well-made decision uses rational models influenced by the quality of initial information, the rationale behind the decisions, and the timeliness and adaptability of the process. Speaking of adaptivity and connecting it to matching customer needs, *Mazurina Mohd Ali*, *Erlane K. Ghani*, *Kamaruzzaman Muhammad*, and *Susi Handayani* show the importance of aligning customer expectations with perceptions of service quality, particularly in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Additionally, the integration of information technology in domains like human resources is shown to correlate positively with enhanced corporate performance (*Delly Mustafa*, *Askar Askar*, *Nawir Rahman*, *Sitti Hardiyanti Arhas*, and *Risma Niswaty*). Furthermore, the adoption of hybrid leadership models, promoting inclusive decision-making across all managerial levels, has been identified as a key driver of efficiency (*Sibongile Mazibuko* and *Emmanuel Mutambara*). Building upon previously published research in related fields (Mulyadi & Anwar, 2023; Al Shbail et al., 2023; Tran Trung & Huu Nguyen, 2023), these findings reveal that technological and innovative shifts in decision-making paradigms are increasingly pivotal in shaping the future landscape of corporate decision-making processes and overall performance.

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