

## **EDITORIAL: Emerging cross-disciplinary themes in corporate governance research**

*Dear readers!*

Corporate governance as a field is witnessing an intellectual evolution, where the traditional theoretical paradigms and the established research questions genuinely coexist with and are fruitfully stimulated by fresh lines of inquiry. This mutually supportive coexistence is nurturing an original and cross-fertilizing debate, which is both revisiting the mainstream approaches and revealing the diversified nature of the themes surfacing the research agenda. Also, the literature on corporate governance is increasingly consolidating the conversations with other fields, such as the finance, strategic management, and organizational behavior fields. This process is inspiring an ongoing inter-disciplinary dialogue. This issue of *Corporate Board: Role, Duties and Composition* represents a striking example of such a theoretical and thematic integration at the intersection of multiple fields.

The paper by *Mohamed Sharif Bashir, Mahmoud Mohamed Ali Mahmoud Edris, and Muslichah Muslichah* joins a traditional research stream investigating how board characteristics affect the performance of Islamic banks in Saudi Arabia. This topic is lively in both corporate governance and finance studies (Dusuki & Abdullah, 2007; Ahmad et al., 2010), due to these banks' structural and ideological specificities relative to conventional banks, driven by the dictates of the Shari'ah. Thus, the authors underscore the importance of the institutional context in corporate governance dynamics.

Among the nascent themes, the ethical dimensions of leadership and corporate governance bodies are becoming an increasingly popular line of inquiry. The importance of incorporating ethical concerns lies at the intersection of corporate governance and organization studies, as is fully embraced by the paper by *Shirley Mo Ching Yeung*. This study addresses the crucial role played by ethical leadership in improving the workplace and enacting innovation processes. The author suggests that by incorporating the ethical dimension, the leader-servant relationship may be revised in a way that, while honoring the governance obligations of leaders, embodies emotional intelligence in the management of the relationship (Caldwell et al., 2012). Hence, maintaining the "human touch" is fundamental to enacting the transformative process and crafting truly empowered, diverse teams fostering people's commitment and integrity within organizations. However, while underscoring the pivotal role of keeping the emotional connection, the visionary potential required by transformative leadership is profoundly challenged by the relentless pace of disruptive technological changes and digital developments.

The ambivalent role played by technological advancements (Raisch & Krakowski, 2021) is addressed in the paper by *Hugh Grove, Maclyn Clouse, and Tracy Xu*, who examine strategic foresight in corporate governance with a focus on generative artificial intelligence (AI), which represents an emerging long-term megatrend reshaping the business environment and the sustainability of competitive advantage. Strategic foresight refers to all those processes that may assist decision-makers in better sensing the firm's operating environment and the challenges and

opportunities that may shape its future courses of action (Iden et al., 2017). The paper establishes intriguing connections with strategic management, since strategic foresight nurtures dynamic capabilities, opens new competitive spaces, and helps identify potential avenues for innovation (Mohammadi, 2023). The authors also argue that generative AI may facilitate the development of fundamental human capital skills and shape future leadership, even though it poses ethical dilemmas in corporate governance. This consideration remains an open issue and needs further exploration to identify potential avenues for aligning such technological advancements with corporate social responsibility objectives.

Overall, the three research papers included in this journal issue are fully aligned with the themes highlighted in the review paper authored by *Themistokles Lazarides*. This paper presents the main thematic areas debated in the international online conference *New Outlooks for the Scholarly Research in Corporate Governance*, organized by Virtus Interpress and held in June 8, 2023. Specifically, their review organizes the academic conversations on corporate governance around the following four lines of inquiry: a) the cornerstones associated with the accounting, audit, and financial aspects of corporate governance; b) environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG), corporate social responsibility (CSR), and sustainability/ethical issues in corporate governance; c) the governance peculiarities related to family firms and their impact on both firm performance and sustainability orientation; d) the impact of neurocognitive sciences and information-communication technologies (ICT) on the quality of corporate governance mechanisms, focusing on the role of AI.

It, therefore, appears that several conceptual developments and thematic intersections are surfacing in the corporate governance research agenda, leading to novel research questions revitalizing the academic conversations and establishing prolific cross-disciplinary interconnections. In particular, this journal issue testifies to the coexistence of consolidated research routes and nascent themes and indicates that the debate is more and more transitioning towards understanding how governance mechanisms can effectively support the establishment of strategically agile, creative environments, able to cope with uncertainty and disruptive events.

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