EDITORIAL

Dear readers!

This third issue of the journal provides many interesting contributions to the exploration the issues related to banking and finance. The value of this issue lies not only in the variety of topics it deals with but also in the extent of the examined areas. It is highly culturally, economically and geographically diverse.

Thao Ngoc Nguyen, Chris Stewart and Roman Matousek examine risk management of the Vietnamese banking system, carrying out a comparative analysis on a sample of commercial banks. The results show a variegate panorama in which banks present a high level of diversification in terms of risk area identification, risk intensification methods prioritized, risk monitoring methods, efficiency improvement suggestions, awareness of other banks' risk management systems and credit risk analysis. *El-Halaby Sherif, Khaled Hussainey, Marie Mohamed and Mohsen Hussien* study disclosure levels in an extended sample of Islamic banks (117 banks across 23 countries). The level of disclosure was investigated by examining the three pillar of Islamic accountability – i.e. Sharia, social and financial. Descriptive analysis shows relatively high level for financial and Sharia disclosure and relatively low for social disclosure. *Charlie Charoenwong, David K. Ding and Nuttawat Visaltanachoti* examine how the Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET)'s underlying market architecture affects the intraday patterns of derivative securities. The results show that market structure has a significant effect on the intraday pattern of spreads, depth, market order ratio, volatility, and volume. *Hlako Choma and Tshegofatso Kgarabjang* critically analyze the decision in Public Servants Association obo Olufunmilayi Itunu Ubogu v Head of Department of Health, Gauteng and Others in view of the application and interpretation of the principle audi alteram partem rule on salary deduction and benefits of public servants. *Hussam Hanifa, Mohammed Hamdan and Mohamed Haffar* deal with the issue of dividend policy in banks. Their study compares 621 Group of Seven (G-7) banks and 68 Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) banks. The authors test the impact of five main factors - namely, banks' size, profitability, growth, leverage, and last year's dividend - on dividend payout ratios. The dividend payout ratio for the GCC countries results to be higher than G-7 countries in every year of the examined period. Finally, *Ahmed Eltweri, Mohamed Altarawnah, Krayyem Al-Hajaya and Wa'el Al-Karaki* aim to explore the common regulatory approaches for audit and accounting profession and identify the suitable approach to the Libyan audit profession. Mixed methods both quantitative and qualitative approaches were employed, in which a questionnaire was completed by 196 respondents.

Emerging markets issues, risks in banks exciting in these countries were extensively examined by Costa et al. (2014). With specific reference to Vietnamese context, Nguyen et al. (2015) found that banks with high non-interest income present lower risk than those with mainly interest income. Also the structure of Stock Exchange of Thailand was recently studied by Khanthavit and Chaowalerd (2016) with the aim to investigate the day-of-the-week (DoW) effect. Various aspects of an emerging market issues were previously studied by Hafez, et al. (2015) and El-Bannany (2008).

Islamic finance has seen a remarkable growth trend in recent years. The excellent performances of the *sukuk* and the growing spread of Islamic banks all over the world prove it. Since the first boom during the 1970s attributable to the phenomena of Pan-Islamism and the first oil price hike in history, in the 21st century Islamic finance is going through a new phase of vast expansion. The development of Islamic banking seems to be linked with income per capita, share of Muslims in the population and economic integration with Middle Eastern countries (Imam and Kpodar, 2013). However, Islamic finance is expanding not only in the Muslim world, but also in other countries where Muslims are in a minority. Many authors conclude that the Islamic banking sector is different from - and in some cases acts as a complement to - the conventional banking (Beck et al., 2010; Zeitun, 2012; Mollah and Zaman, 2015). Recent studies supported the good resilience of Islamic banks to the international financial crisis (Hasan et al., 2011; Siraj and Pillai, 2012; Johnes et al., 2014; Saiti et. al, 2015). The topic of disclosure in Islamic banks is also widely debated (Abul Hassan and Harahap, 2010; Ibrahim et al., 2011; Amran, 2017, Neifar, 2017; Rosman et al., 2017). The issues of sustainability integrated reporting and religion was recently explored by Gelmini (2017).

The currently important issue of disclosure was previosly studied by Bowerman & Sharma (2016); Jizi (2016); Kleinow & Horsch (2014); Kostyuk, et al. (2013); Laghi, et al. (2012); Maingot & Zeghal (2008); Ponssard (2005).

Lastly, the comparison between G7 and GCC banks was developed. Previously, a view on the GCC Banking Sector was provided by Khamis et al. (2010), while an empirical analysis aimed to investigate the effect of the crisis on Gulf Cooperation banks - Islamic banks included -, was developed by Alqahtani et al. (2016). The theme of the determinants of dividend policy in banking sector in GCC countries was treated by Al-Kuwari (2009) and Kumar & Waheed (2015).

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