

Editorial: Special Issue on “Managing People and Micro-sized Enterprises in Change”

This special issue aims to help researchers and practitioners understand the management issues faced by people and micro-sized enterprises in the midst of change. Today, global changes occur faster than ever. This is the case with the management of people and business in today’s globally networked economy. It is increasingly important to take the change component at the focal point of research. The special issue includes a multidisciplinary set of research articles focused on these issues from contextually and theoretically varying perspectives that complement each other.

This special issue is focused on micro-sized enterprises (with fewer than 10 employees). These form the basis of national economies, being the most common type of enterprise by size globally. As a subgroup of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), microenterprises constitute an important subsector of the economy. For example, in the European Union, micro-sized enterprises comprise over 23.3 million in number and account for 93% of all enterprises (Muller et al., 2018).

Microenterprises form business ecosystems in which they create jobs and other types of added value. Within the European Union, micro-sized enterprises have provided the highest employment growth of all SME classes (Hope, 2019). Moreover, microenterprises have made a strong contribution to the European economy, as they have recorded the strongest added value of all SME classes (Hope, 2019).

Micro-sized enterprises are under constant change, characterised by high birth and death rates (Hope, 2019). These businesses experience resource scarcity in terms of funding, human resources, and competencies, particularly in times of sudden changes. Limited resources force them to operate under financial and expertise constraints, and they need managerial capability to take over new long-term strategic and operational changes related to megatrends, such as digitalisation, mobility and climate change.

Micro-sized enterprises are dependent on owner-managers and/or a small group of employees. Microenterprise managers lack the time to predict future changes or focus on long-term strategic planning. On one hand, microenterprises pay attention to day-to-day issues; on the other hand, these enterprises are most vulnerable to ongoing shifts in the business context and society. Therefore, this special issue aims to investigate the management of people and business from a variety of perspectives in different contexts. The five articles included here represent research that highlights sustainable renewal from the microenterprise management perspective.

The articles in this special issue are based on research conducted in five countries: Finland, Indonesia, Ghana, Malaysia and Germany. To summarise the major recurring themes among all five papers, some keywords in this special issue could be *micro-sized firms* (and all related synonyms), *systematic review*, *internationalisation*, *organisational capabilities*, *success factors* and *organisational performance*. Together, these articles provide a great variety of themes and research approaches that represent the multidisciplinary character of micro-entrepreneurship-related research.

The first article, by Reeb, Clauss, Lenk and Altmann, focuses on the human and organisational perspective. The article presents a systematic literature review and a structured overview of the success factors for intra-organisational online collaboration (IOC). The practical perspectives obtained from expert interviews are incorporated in the article. As a result, it systematises the success factors for IOC, which are classified into collaborative human, collaborative organisation and collaborative technology categories, and provides an overview of adjustment factors to establish, maintain and improve IOC in the midst of change.

The second article, by Lehtinen, Saarela and Virkkala, is also a systematic literature review that delves deep into the internationalisation of microenterprises. The review demonstrates that academic literature purely

focused on the processes and characteristics of microenterprises is still scarce. The article is an example of a microenterprise-focused study that contributes to the field of international entrepreneurship.

Proceeding further with the internationalisation theme, the third article, by Ayakwah, Damoah and Osabutey, asks whether local business peculiarities matter in internationalisation. The topic is approached through business clusters of micro-, small- and medium-scale entrepreneurs. The study's findings indicate that partnerships between multinationals and indigenous businesses, international exposure of businesses and socially embedded relationships among associations and local distributors have paved the way for dynamic networks to be established in international markets.

In the fourth article, by Muthuveloo, Fang, Ping and Kiumardi, the focus shifts to how organisational capabilities influence organisational performance in the rapidly changing manufacturing sector. The findings indicate that organisational capabilities significantly influence organisational performance, contributed by eight dimensions, comprising technology, dynamic, marketing, innovation, information technology, knowledge management, learning and management capabilities.

The fifth article, written by Indartono, is focused on people. More precisely, it discusses the role of tacit knowledge sharing and critical adaptability in the dynamic effect of training quality on organisational performance. The study shows the model in the context of the Indonesian banking industry. The study's results indicate that training quality has a significant effect on organisational performance. The article concludes that tacit knowledge sharing and critical adaptability play significant roles by mediating the effect of training quality on organisational performance.

This special issue points out the need for a paradigm shift towards a more context-specific approach to enable a more in-depth understanding of the change management processes. The present issue encourages the academic community to develop a context-specific understanding of the management of people and micro-sized enterprises in the midst of change, instead of seeking only universal, one-size-fits-all solutions. Universal frameworks and models are simply inadequate to capture the reality at the grassroots level in different contexts. This special issue offers a starting point, rather than an end goal. As its guest editors, we hope that this special issue provides a useful reference for future research.

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References

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