

Dear Reader,

In this issue of JEEMS we present four quite different articles which cover wide geography, many theoretical approaches as well as methodological foundations. In terms of geographical cover, two articles focus on Slovenian organisations, one article compares West and East Germany and the last one looks at multinational enterprises in Russia. Each of the authors makes novel scholarly contributions to theory and practice of management and organisation in Central and Eastern Europe.

The first article by *Hugo Zagoršek*, *Vlado Dimovski*, and *Miha Škerlavaj* examines the relationship between leadership and organizational learning in the context of a transitional economy of Slovenia. On the basis of an empirical study among a wide range of organizations the authors investigate the influence of transformational and transactional leadership on learning in organizational units. The results show a strong, even though not direct relationship between leadership and organizational learning. The most interesting and intriguing result of the study is that the effect of contingent reward leadership and organizational learning is, contrary to the hypothesis, almost as strong as the effect of transformational leadership.

The next article, by *Nikolaus Beck* and *Peter Walgenbach* focuses on the theory-driven problem rooted in the new institutionalism: does the adoption of institutionalized structural elements effect organizational performance? Notwithstanding the theoretically based confidence among institutionalists, empirical answers to this question are scarce up to now. The authors highlight the relationship by examining the effect of ISO 9000 certification on performance of East and West German mechanical engineering firms. Empirical data stem from an impressive long-term study in which top-management of selected firms was surveyed annually between 1991 and 1998. Comparing the West and the East Germany firms on a long-term basis is especially fruitful as in the 1990s West Germany represented a well-established market economy while East Germany was transformed from a socialist regime to a market economy. The results of the study show that there is a strong relationship between the adoption of institutionalized elements and performance of the firms. The authors conclude that complying with institutionalized expectations not only increases the legitimacy of a firm but may also have substantial economic effects.

*Tomaž Čater* and *Barbara Čater* aim at examining the antecedents of a company's competitive advantage and how the competitive advantage relates to organizational performance. After developing a model the authors undertake a quantitative study among 182 Slovenian firms to test their assumptions. Findings of the study suggest that both forms of competitive advantage do pay for the firms. The authors conclude that "companies are more successful if they manage to either differentiate themselves from their competitors or reduce the

level of their overall costs below their competitors' level". Interestingly, different resources seem to have different impacts on the advantage types: human capital and structural capital positively affect only a differentiation advantage while their influence on a cost-leadership advantage is not significant. The authors suggest that having creative and competent employees as well as structures and systems enabling knowledge sharing and dissemination can prevent companies from competing on low costs but enables them to differentiate positively from competitors.

*Andrei Panibratov* addresses the processes of organizational internationalisation. He especially examines factors influencing international construction companies on the Russian market. He asks "how foreign construction enterprises entering Russian market adjust to the local environment, how they respond to the internationalization attempts of Russian firms, and what factors affect and explain their results". Several case-studies in form of in-depth personal interviews with chief executives and middle managers of multinational enterprises' subsidiaries in Russia and Russian construction enterprises serve as an empirical basis. The research findings are manifold like findings of the case-studies often are. The author particularly points to the success-related factors (as perceived by key-informants) such as the right choice of mode and time of entry to the Russian market, high quality of production and last but not least marketing activity with strong focus on communication with customers.

I hope you will enjoy reading!

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*(Member of the Editorial Committee)*