

## Editorial

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This issue of the Electronic Journal of Knowledge Management (EJKM) presents a selection of the best articles from two API conferences (ECKM 2014 and ICICKM 2014). The Editors have based the selection of articles on evaluations and recommendations received from colleagues who acted as conference track chairs. Special issues from conferences are important because they highlight how the process of presenting research at conferences and peer review continues to be an important process for developing and disseminating research (Guthrie *et al.*, 2015). Together, the eight articles that comprise this special issue represent research in the fields of knowledge management (KM) and intellectual capital (IC) that is internationally current and significant. The articles include empirical and conceptual articles addressing a variety of topics. With respect to empirical articles, they address core issues such as knowledge enabling roles of networks (Still *et al.*, 2015; Tkachenko *et al.*, 2015) and communities (Bedford *et al.*, 2015). Others go beyond core concepts and extend the research to impacts of KM practices (Stankevica, 2015) and IC on performance (Wee and Chua, 2015). All selected conceptual articles move the field forward by suggesting novel models of KM on which to base future research (Castaneda *et al.*, 2015; Handzic and Durmic, 2015) and guide better practice (Kohl *et al.*, 2015).

Three empirical articles that examine core KM issues all focus on networks and communities. These people-orientated enablers of knowledge rightly continue to occupy the attention of researchers worldwide and is reflective of the need to develop further research that applies KM in practice (Serenko and Dumay, 2015). First, the article by Still *et al.* (2015) reminds us of the fundamental importance of relationships in this networked world we live. Furthermore, the authors highlight a need to look at the totality of relationships (e.g. social, individual, and organizational). Accordingly, they introduce the idea of the ecosystem as a framework for measuring relational capital and present concrete examples of this framework. The ecosystem approach is important because it helps develop research that is not just about managing the organization, but looks at the wider impact on the organization (Gray, 2006; Dumay and Garanina, 2013).

Another article looking at networks across sectors by Tkachenko *et al.* (2015), investigates the evolutionary transformation of cooperation and integration of Russian enterprises. From the interviews with top managers of companies in industrial and construction companies, a clear trend emerges of KM growing and maturing from the amorphous type of network cooperation to the integrated one. The need for KM research to mature so that there are more examples of research moving from theory into practice (Serenko and Dumay, 2015).

In the context of cities, Bedford *et al.* (2015) point out the need to build relationships with academic and business communities, labor and workforce, civil society, and the technology sector, to create knowledge cities. Their article considers how a Knowledge Sciences Center might fulfill the transformational role from an industrial city to a knowledge city. This proposal outlines the views of over 200 knowledge scientists from the United States. The article is interesting because the research is in parallel with similar research investigating the IC of regions (Pöyhönen and Smedlund, 2004; Smedlund and Toivonen, 2007). More research is needed from this perspective, especially with regards to policy (Dumay *et al.*, 2015).

Given the recognition that IC or KM is used to create value and improve performance, two articles in this special issue look at the outcomes of IC and KM in business contexts. First, the importance of IC for organizational performance attracts the attention of Wee and Chua (2015) as they address the prevalence of communication of IC and its link to organizational performance in the banking sector. Their article reports on the widespread communication of IC, particularly human capital. The article highlights the relevance of communicating IC from the perspective of IC components and its correlation to organizational performance. This article is a good example of performative research that answers calls for examining IC in action rather than viewing IC from a distance (Mouritsen, 2006; Guthrie *et al.*, 2012).

Similarly, Stankevica (2015) views KM practices as antecedents of innovation strategies resulting in variations in organizational performance. Her article identifies the KM practices that contribute to the emergence of the most and least sophisticated innovation strategies, and how KM is related to performance via innovation strategies at organizational and national levels of selected European economies. Again, this is a good example of taking research beyond the boundaries of organizations to understand KM's impact on the wider society (Lin and Edvinsson, 2008).

In addition to five empirical articles, this special issue includes three conceptual articles that address descriptive (Handzic and Durmic, 2015), measurement (Castaneda *et al.*, 2015), and prescriptive (Kohl *et al.*, 2015) KM models. First, responding to recent calls for a need to merge KM with other disciplines to ensure its advancement and/or survival, Handzic and Durmic (2015)

propose a descriptive research model that connects the dynamic (KM), static (IC) and performance (PM) aspects of project-based organizations. The authors argue that the model provides a valuable theoretical basis for broader empirical research and enhances its relevance to practice (see Serenko and Dumay, 2015).

Rigour is an as important aspect of published scientific research as is its relevance (de Villiers and Dumay, 2014). In their article, Castaneda *et al.* (2015), address research rigor by designing, constructing and validating a novel instrument for measuring knowledge sharing. Their instrument is more comprehensive than other existing instruments and measures different types of knowledge, techniques, and tools for knowledge sharing. The peculiar characteristic of this instrument is that it enables the measurement of this construct in Spanish which exemplifies how we need to expand KM research beyond the Anglo American boundaries commonly found in much research of the past (Guthrie *et al.*, 2015), especially in the KM domain (Serenko and Dumay, 2015, p. 414).

Finally, the ultimate role of research is to guide practice (Guthrie *et al.*, 2012). With practice in mind, researchers Kohl *et al.* (2015) design the ProWis tool to meet the specific needs of SMEs and allows the implementation of process-oriented knowledge management. In their article, the authors illustrate step-wise process-oriented KM according to the ProWis approach. This article is another good example of how innovative KM researchers can and do develop tools designed for specific contexts, rather than try to create all encompassing KM models (Dumay and Garanina, 2013).

The Editors commend these articles to you and we are sure that these articles will be enjoyable to read and will inform and inspire future IC and KM research.

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