

2nd Annual Business Research Conference

Theme: Global Business Environment

Tuesday, December 3, 2019



UNIVERSITY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

VENTUREWELL

ASPIRE. ACCOMPLISH. TAKE ON THE WORLD.

Logistics & International Trade (LIT) Analytics



LIT AMBASSADORS

Uniqueness of LIT Concentration

- First of its kind program in the District of Columbia and Metropolitan Area
- UDC is the only school that offers a program combining Logistics and International Trade Analytics combined
- Collaboration between 2 schools – SBPA and SEAS
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) Business focused concentration
- Producing a future-oriented skilled workforce in the area of LIT
- Open to all SBPA and SEAS majors!
- Opportunity to study abroad to China during Summer
- Research and conference presentations opportunities

Required Courses

Global Logistics Stream 1 – (Mandatory)

- BGMT 396 / 313 Global Logistics and Supply Chain Management (NEW! Spring 2020)

International Trade Stream 2 – (Select any three)

- MKTG 308 International Marketing
- FINA 318 International Finance
- BGMT 311 Spreadsheet Analytics
- BGMT 308 Entrepreneurship
- MKTG 404 Marketing Research
- BGMT 407 Multinational Corporate Management
- BGMT 395 Study Abroad (NEW! Summer 2020)
- MECH 406 Engineering Economics

COME, JOIN US @ LIT ANALYTICS

LIT
LOGISTICS & INTERNATIONAL TRADE ANALYTICS

Center Office Hours
Monday-Thursday
10 am – 12:20 pm; 2 pm –5pm
Bldg. 38, Room 219

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DEAN'S WELCOME



It is a great pleasure to be associated with the 2019 2nd Annual Business Research Conference on December 3, 2019. Having our students involved in research projects with faculty members is one of the unique features of business education at the School of Business and Public Administration (SBPA) at the University of the District of Columbia.

The "Annual Research Conference" is our opportunity to celebrate the scholarly achievements of our students, and to recognize the excellent work of our faculty members in their efforts to mentor and transform the creative minds of their students through an empowering education in a student-centered experiential environment. It confirms our commitment to the School, the University's vision, the Equity Imperative, and to be recognized for providing outstanding educational programs and graduating successful local, national and global organizational leaders, while ensuring that all our students achieve their highest levels of human potential.

As the Dean of the SBPA, I welcome you to what I believe will be a very successful Research Conference. I am very proud of the work our students do as they pursue their research activities.

Sincerely,

Mohamad Sepehri, Ph.D.

Dean, School of Business and Public Administration
mohamad.sepehri@udc.edu

CONFERENCE CHAIRS' WELCOME



Alex Tan, Ph.D.
Chairperson and Associate Professor
Department of Accounting & Finance
School of Business and Public Administration
tihkoon.tan@udc.edu



Amit Arora, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of SCM
Department of Management
School of Business and Public Administration
amit.arora@udc.edu

It gives us immense pleasure to welcome you to our 2019 2nd Annual Business Research Conference. The theme of our conference is "Global Business Environment." At the School of Business and Public Administration (SBPA), students have the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of the theories and concepts they learn, and how to apply them in specific, real-life business situations. Through opportunities like this conference, SBPA students are empowered to discover the rigor and rewards of exploration through scholarship and to showcase their research beyond the classroom. We sincerely appreciate the tremendous effort and preparation of the students and their faculty advisors. Our special thanks to our Dean - Dr. Mo Sepehri - and to Management Department Chair – Dr. Jian Hua - for their support, and to the SBPA faculty and staff involved in organizing and planning this event. We would also like to thank our distinguished judges and guests for their encouragement to all our students.

NSF FUNDED LIT ANALYTICS CENTER WELCOME



As Director of the Logistics & International Trade (LIT) Analytics Center funded by the National Science Foundation, I would like to acknowledge and congratulate our undergraduate and graduate business researchers, who have contributed to the success of the Second UDC Business Conference on December 3, 2019. Congratulations and Kudos to our very own Business Firebirds … Keep up the great work!

On July 15, 2019, the School of Business and Public Administration received a prestigious National Science Foundation (NSF) grant for establishing the Logistics & International Trade (LIT) Analytics Center of Excellence, and for developing a STEM-Business- focused LIT concentration program at the University of the District of Columbia. Consequently, the LIT Analytics Center was established during August 2019, in collaboration with UDC's School of Business and Public Administration (SBPA) and its School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS), with an overall comprehensive goal of advancing science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM) and business-focused LIT education and research partnerships at UDC. The major objective of the LIT concentration program is to help increase student retention rates and reinforce student readiness for professional careers in global logistics, supply chains, international business, and global trade analytics.

One of the activities we are most proud of is the engagement of our undergraduate and MBA students in research projects with faculty members. Through this process, students have the opportunity to develop research skills that enable them to gain deeper understanding of the theories and concepts they learn as they pursue their degrees, and how these theories and concepts are applied in specific business situations.

The LIT Analytics Center is committed to sponsoring student research projects that will provide students opportunities to continue their research passions, and subsequently empower and transform them into leaders of the 21st Century workforce. We are located in Room 219, Building 38 (Monday – Thursday).

On behalf of the LIT Analytics Center, and our bright NSF LIT Ambassadors (Ms. Mayumi Fleming, Ms. Terssa Kassahun, Ms. Brea Ellis, Mr. Eric Chad Horner, and Mr. Malik Shingler), we welcome you to our 2nd Business Research Conference, and invite you to be part of LIT Analytics Center initiatives.

Sincerely,

Anshu S. Arora, Ph.D., PMP
Associate Professor of Marketing
Director, NSF-Funded Logistics & International Trade (LIT) Analytics Center
anshu.arora@udc.edu

2nd ANNUAL BUSINESS RESEARCH CONFERENCE CO-CHAIRS

Dr. Alex Tan and Dr. Amit Arora

2nd ANNUAL BUSINESS RESEARCH CONFERENCE EVENT JUDGES

Ms. Edna Kane-Williams
Keynote Speaker
Senior Vice President, AARP

Dr. Victor R. McCrary
Vice President for Research and Graduate Programs, University of the District of Columbia

Mr. Dave D'Angelo
Program Officer, E-Teams, VentureWell

Ms. Namita Mody
Operations Analyst, The Lab @ DC, Government of the District of Columbia

Dr. John R. McIntyre
Director of the Georgia Tech CIBER, Professor of Management, Scheller College of Business, Georgia Institute of Technology

Dr. Anna Helm
Faculty Director, George Washington Center for International Business Education & Research (GW-CIBER)

Dr. Jiajun Xu
Associate Professor and Director of Center for Advanced Manufacturing, University of the District of Columbia

Mr. Kenneth Lesley
Director, NAF Academy of Engineering, McKinley Technology High School

Dr. Pradeep Behera
Professor and Chair, Department of Civil Engineering, University of the District of Columbia

Dr. Denise Bedford
Adjunct Faculty, Georgetown University; Retired Goodyear Professor of Knowledge Management, Kent State; Retired Senior Information Officer, World Bank

Ms. Farah Gheriss
Special Assistant to the CIO at the International Monetary Fund

CONFERENCE ORGANIZERS & JUDGES

FACULTY ADVISORS

Dr. Anshu Arora, Dr. Nazha Gali, and Dr. Donovan Collier

SBPA RESEARCH CONFERENCE SPONSORS

Dr. Mohamad Sepehri, Dean
School of Business & Public Administration,
University of the District of Columbia

Dr. Jian Hua, Professor and Chairperson
Department of Management, School of Business & Public Administration
University of the District of Columbia

CONFERENCE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Dr. Julius Anyu, Dr. Malva Reid, Dr. Sergey Ivanov, Dr. Anshu Arora, Dr. Nazha Gali, Dr. Donovan Collier, Dr. Racquel Brown-Gaston, Dr. Sylvia Benatti, Dr. Botao Chen, Dr. Suzan Abed, Ms. Monique Conquest, Ms. Kelley Thomas, Ms. September Smith, Mr. Ernest Nelson

LIT Ambassadors – Ms. Mayumi Fleming, Ms. Brea Ellis, Ms. Terssa Kassahun, Mr. Eric Chad Horner, and Mr. Malik Shingler



Ms. Edna Kane-Williams

She is the Senior Vice President (SVP) for Multicultural Leadership at AARP in Washington, DC. In this role, she leads the development and execution of AARP's multicultural strategy to increase the organization's social impact and relevance among multicultural audiences. With more than 24 years of experience working in senior management positions at both nonprofit and for profit organizations, Kane-Williams has specialized in strategic planning, targeted marketing, and program development, with a profound focus on the needs of older adults and multicultural communities. Prior to her SVP role, Kane-Williams was AARP's Vice President of Multicultural Markets and Engagement, where she was responsible for African American outreach. She previously served as the Vice President of Strategy and Communications for the AARP Foundation.

Before coming to AARP, Kane-Williams held noteworthy marketing positions, including Senior Vice President of Communications and Social Marketing at IQ Solutions, where she developed effective communication plans to improve outreach specifically to underserved African American and Hispanic communities. She also led similar marketing efforts as a Senior Vice President at Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide. Kane-Williams graduated from Yale University with a B.A., and received an M.A. from George Washington University. Additionally, she was the recipient of a Coro Foundation Fellowship, and was also a Diversity Executive Leadership Program fellow for the American Society of Association Executives. Kane-Williams has been honored as "Black Enterprise's Most Powerful Women" in the Business Recognition Ceremony for her outstanding achievements as a female executive dedicated to member services and multicultural outreach. She has also been recognized as "Marketing Executive of the Year" at the Marketing to African Americans with Excellence (MAAX) Awards in Chicago for her contributions and exceptional performance in African American marketing.



Dr. Victor R. McCrary, Jr.

Dr. McCrary, Jr., is the Vice President for Research and Graduate Programs at the University of the District of Columbia, leading the growth, development, direction, and oversight of the University's research enterprise. He has held similar research leadership positions at the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, Morgan State University, and the University of Tennessee. He is a change agent and serial innovator, responsible for developing comprehensive, sustainable research strategies, fostering transdisciplinary research, and expanding research programs with federal and state agencies and private entities, including his contributions to Morgan State University enabling it to become only 130 universities nationwide to have R2 status in the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education.

Dr. McCrary served two terms as the national president of the National Organization for the Professional Advancement of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers (NOBCChE). He is a Fellow of the American Chemical Society. He received his doctoral degree in chemistry from Howard University, a master's degree in engineering management from the University of Pennsylvania, and a bachelor's degree in chemistry from The Catholic University of America.



Mr. Dave D'Angelo

He runs the E-Teams Program at VentureWell, which provides funding and training to student entrepreneurs commercializing innovations that address global challenges. Previously, he was a serial social entrepreneur, building ventures in Laos, Nepal, India, and Utah. Dave started his career working for the International Rescue Committee, where he launched an entrepreneurship program that helps refugees access microloans and business training. Dave, who is passionate about using business as a force for good, received his Bachelor of Science from Champlain College.



Ms. Namita Mody, MPP

Ms. Mody is an Operations Analyst with The Lab @ DC, a scientific team in Mayor Muriel Bowser's administration, based in the Office of the City Administrator. DC residents deserve a government that asks questions, tests policies, and iteratively improves how it serves the community. The Lab @ DC partners with District agencies to do just that. As part of the team, she focuses on projects related to housing, homelessness, and economic opportunity. Ms. Mody joined the District government after spending three years at the nonprofit DoSomething.org, where she developed and managed national campaigns against poverty and homelessness, leading collaboration between internal teams, nonprofit partners, international affiliates, corporate sponsors, and tens of thousands of young members.

She joined the organization's tech team as a Product Manager, specializing in internal systems and analytics. In this role, she worked with the tech and data teams to launch automated dashboards, and design internal processes managing bug and feature prioritization, regular deployment, quality assurance, and content optimization. While pursuing her master's degree, she worked on issues of gun violence at the Mayor's Office in the City of Detroit, and on improving the release of open data as a research assistant at Harvard's Shorenstein Center. Ms. Mody earned a B.S. in Business Economics from New York University's Stern School of Business, and an M.A. in Public Policy from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, concentrating in social and urban policy.



Dr. John R. McIntyre

He is the founding Director of the Georgia Tech CIBER, Professor of Management in the College of Management, with a courtesy appointment in international relations, at Georgia Tech's Sam Nunn School of International Affairs. He received his graduate education at Northeastern University, completing his Ph.D. at the University of Georgia. Prior to joining Georgia Tech, in September 1981, he was Research Associate for International Management at the Dean Rusk Center, University of Georgia Law School. He has published in the journals Technology and Society, Public Administration Quarterly, International Management Review, Defense Analysis, Studies in Comparative and International Development, Journal of European Marketing, Politique Internationale, and International Trade Journal, among others. Dr. McIntyre is the recipient of the State of Georgia Governor's 2009 International Award in international business education.



Dr. Anna Helm

Dr. Helm is Assistant Teaching Professor of International Business at the George Washington University (GW), as well as the Faculty Director of GW's Center for International Business Education & Research (GW-CIBER), one of 15 CIBERs in the United States funded by the U.S. Department of Education. She teaches courses on international marketing management, green business, the cultural environment of international business, and foreign market analysis. She has developed and taught several online courses, and regularly offers courses with real client projects. Since 2010, she has taught international consulting courses in Sweden, focusing on marketing strategy in both the CleanTech and Healthcare industries.

Originally from Sweden, Dr. Helm holds an MSc in International Business and Economics with German from Lunds Universitet, Sweden, as well as an MA in Germanic Studies from the University of Maryland. She received her PhD from Georgetown University in 2002. Prior to joining GW's School of Business (GWSB) she was the Director of the Business, Culture and Languages Program at the University of Maryland, College Park. Professor Helm is pursuing research on cross-cultural differences in consumer perceptions of green products, sustainability innovation, and CleanTech marketing strategy. She is the Principal Investigator for a Teagle Foundation Grant titled "An Internationalized Liberal Arts Curriculum for Undergraduate Students," with the University of Miami, and Washington & Lee University. The goal of the grant is to deeply integrate liberal arts into the undergraduate business curriculum at the GW School of Business, and its partner institutions.



Dr. Jiajun Xu

He is an Associate Professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering, and Director of the Center for Advanced Manufacturing at the University of the District of Columbia (UDC). He received his Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Maryland-College Park. His current research interests include: in-situ characterization and multiscale modeling of energy transport inside nanostructured materials, thermal management and energy conversion using nano-enhanced phase change materials, in-situ monitoring and process optimization of direct metal laser sintering-based (DMLS) additive manufacturing, and environment-friendly wastewater treatment using nanoparticle-infused mesoporous materials. His current research is sponsored by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, National Science Foundation, Department of Defense, Department of Energy, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.



Mr. Kenneth Lesley, PE

With a degree in mechanical engineering from MIT, Mr. Lesley's first career was in the petroleum industry. After traveling around the world for 15 years, he transitioned into the software industry. Mr. Lesley became a DC Teaching Fellow, and received a master's in teaching. After five years of teaching math, he started the engineering department at McKinley Technology High School. Mr. Lesley recently left the classroom, and is now the director of the McKinley Academy of Engineering. He is a Wolfram Educational Innovation Fellow, and his focus in education is to create a more realistic environment for learning. He believes the factory model of education that we have followed for the last 125 years is no longer relevant to the needs of our society. Mr. Lesley is pursuing new questions and new solutions.



Dr. Pradeep Behera, P.E., D. WRE

Dr. Pradeep K. Behera, P.E., D.WRE, the recipient of the Dr. Marjorie Holloman Parker Distinguished Educator's Award, is Professor and Chair of Department of Civil Engineering at the School of Engineering and Applied Science (SEAS).

Dr. Pradeep Behera has been an engineering educator for last 25 years in three different countries. He received his bachelors and master's degrees from Sambalpur University, India and Ph.D.

degree from the University of Toronto, Canada. Dr. Behera started his engineering faculty career at the National Institute of Technology, India in 1990. Since then he has been serving as an engineering educator in India, Canada and United States. Prior to joining UDC he was working as Sr. Water Resources Engineer in Canada and USA. His research interests include urban stormwater management, water resources engineering, sustainable urban water systems climate change and coastal infrastructures. He has published a number of research papers in peer review journals, book chapters, and international and national conference proceedings. He is a Professional Engineer from the State of Maryland, District of Columbia and is a Diplomat from the American Academy of Water resources Engineers. He has more than 20 years of practical engineering experience in planning, design and analysis of water resources systems and has served as President of District of Columbia Society of Professional Engineers.



Dr. Denise Bedford

She is an Adjunct Professor at Georgetown University's Communication Culture and Technology program; Schulich School of Business, York University; Visiting Scholar at the University of Coventry; and a Distinguished Practitioner/Virtual Fellow with the U.S. Department of State. In 2010, Dr. Bedford retired as Senior Information Officer, at the World Bank. She also worked for Intel Corporation, NASA, University of California Systemwide Administration, and Stanford University. She currently serves as an Associate Editor of the Journal of Knowledge Management. Dr. Bedford has an M.A. in Russian and East European History; M.S. in Information Science; and Ph.D. in Information Science, with focus on Systems Analysis and Design, and Economics of Information.



Ms. Farah Gheriss

She is a Special Assistant to the CIO at the International Monetary Fund, with more than 23 years of experience in Knowledge Management, Information Architecture, IT Strategy and Governance, and Enterprise Architecture. She works continuously towards applying best practices to help operationalize the IMF's knowledge management strategy. Farah also has extensive budget management, and IT project and experience of projects involving structured and unstructured information. She holds an MLIS from Catholic University, and an MS in General Management. She is fluent in Arabic, French, and Spanish.

CONFERENCE AGENDA

12:00 pm	Lunch and Posters Set-up
12:30 pm – 12:35 pm	Welcome – Dr. Mo Sepehri, Dean, School of Business and Public Administration
12:35 pm – 12:40 pm	Welcome – Dr. Victor McCrary, Vice President for Research & Graduate Programs, University of the District of Columbia
12:40 pm – 12:55 pm	Introduction of Judges and Keynote Speaker
12:55 pm – 1:10 pm	Keynote by Ms. Edna Kane-Williams, Senior Vice President, AARP
1:10 pm – 1:20 pm	Q&A with Keynote Speaker
1:20 pm – 3:45 pm	Poster competition
3:45 pm – 4:00 pm	Closing Remarks and Awards Ceremony

1. The Combined Effects of Design-Tech Synergy + Country-of-Origin on Consumers' Willingness to Buy: A Neoteric Approach to Innovation

Mayumi Fleming
Kyle Kelley

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Anshu Arora

In this research, we conceptualize 'design-tech synergy,' and introduce the concepts of design newness and innovation, as well as technological newness and innovation. Additionally, we look at the impact of varying levels of design newness, coupled with technical newness, and consumers' willingness to purchase new products across developed and emerging economies. We attempt to study how emerging economies and developed economies respond to these design and technological innovations differently, given the distinct differences in their countries of origin (COO). The purpose of this research is to investigate whether incongruent or conflicting COO scenarios affect consumers' purchase intentions with respect to radical, versus incremental, innovations; and how these varying COO situations lead to purchase intentions for everyday consumer products and brands. Our research focuses on an innovation idea based on design-tech synergy in music and light accessories' industry across developed and emerging economies. This research is funded by the **National Science Foundation Grant # 1912070,** and was presented at the **2019 Academy of International Business Conference** in San Antonio, Texas, on October 19, 2019.

Keywords: *design-tech synergy; COO; willingness to purchase; conflicting/incongruent COO scenarios; design and technical newness; radical versus incremental innovations; emerging and developed economies*

2. Sustainable Supply Chain Management in the Textile and Clothing Industries

Aya Boukhari
Dilver Contreras
Franck T. Vincent

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Amit Arora

The textile and clothing industries are responsible for negative impacts on the environment. The negative effects can be attributed to carbon footprints, production of goods, logistics, and final distribution to customers. The industries pollute as much as 200 tons of water per ton of fabric, uses harmful chemicals, and consumes tremendous amounts of energy. Textile sustainability means that clothes are fabricated with the minimum negative impact on the environment. In order to help achieve that objective, this paper will focus on three pillars: recycling textiles, better management of the residues, and an effective sustainable supply chain management strategy. Recycling textiles means that old clothes are converted to new ones, using the technology available in the market today. Next, better management of the residues means that the toxic chemicals that are produced in the manufacturing process will be reduced to the minimum level, and the ones that are remain will be disposed of without causing any harm to the environment.

This research paper will explore practical solutions that can be implemented in the textile industry to reduce negative environmental impact on the planet and society. The research paper addresses the following questions:

- How can an effective recycling program be implemented on a big scale that is economically viable?

- How can harmful chemicals be disposed of in an effective way without overusing the firm's resources?
- What initiatives can be taken to change harmful consumer habits in the clothing industry?

Finally, an effective marketing strategy will be recommended to convince customers that environmentally friendly clothes are the right choice for them, as well as the environment.

Keywords: *environment; recycle clothes; waste management; supply chain; social responsibility; consumer habits; carbon footprint*

3. Will Humans be Unemployed? Human-Robot Interaction and the Future of Employment

Emmanuella Princewill-Albert
Gouldion Smith
Nico Tharpe
Terssa Kassahun
Tyreerk Thompson

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Anshu Arora

This paper discusses how Human-Robot Interaction and the anthropomorphization of robots impact the future of employment and the work environment. We focus on how human capabilities affect certain job roles vis-à-vis robot productivity in the same or similar positions, such as, voice assistants like Siri and Alexa, and social robots like Tengai and Kirobo Mini. We also focus on issues and difficulties for both humans and robots from social, behavioral, and moral points of view. Xenocentrism can help adjust the mindset of human acceptance toward the anthropomorphization of robots. We examine how different personality types, disorders, and idiosyncrasies are affected (whether negatively or positively) by the four intelligences associated with artificial intelligence (AI): mechanical, analytical, intuitive, and empathetic. The research addresses the following questions.

- How can cognitively intelligent robots increase the competitiveness of specific jobs?
- Are emotion-based jobs at risk with the emergence of robotic anthropomorphism?
- How can anthropomorphized robots affect the overall productivity of a work environment?

Finally, we provide recommendations regarding how anthropomorphization of robots may replace people's jobs, and specifically what types of AI will replace humans in today's workplace. Furthermore, we provide policy implications for the levels of AI (whether mechanical, analytical, intuitive, or empathetic) to be implemented at the workplace, and how employees may keep up with AI.

Keywords: *artificial intelligence; robotic anthropomorphism; employment; human robot interaction; organizational learning; organizational innovation*

4. Performance Measurement of Supply Chains: Fast Fashion vs. Luxury Fashion

De'Nea Barton
Taylor Bryant
Bernard Hawkins

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Amit Arora

Supply Chain Management is a crucial part of competitive strategy that is used to enhance the productivity and profitability of a company and its partners. A key metric of supply chain management is performance measurement,

because it analyzes how well supply chains perform. Strategic, tactical, operational, control, flexibility, innovation, and trust are some of the supply chain metrics of companies that are monitored through performance measurement. The purpose of this research is to examine differences in supply chain performance measurement between the fast fashion and luxury fashion industries. This research will address the following question:

- How does the fast fashion supply chain differ from the luxury fashion supply chain regarding performance measurement?

Keywords: *Supply chain management; performance measurements; fast fashion, luxury fashion; strategy; tactics; operations; control; flexibility; innovation; trust*

5. Robots or Humans? Who Will Be the Actual Consumers?

Dior Lewis
Joseph Price
Jeremiah Allen
Frederick Avery
Yazeed Alshahrani

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Anshu Arora

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is making its presence felt in our homes, in our cars, in our social spheres, and pretty soon, AI will be there in all our markets. Robots are becoming increasingly involved in our daily lives as consumers, and are heading in the direction of becoming marketers themselves. On one hand, it's innovative, it brings us to the future; and exposes us to new technology and new ways of using technology. On the other hand, having robots as both marketers and consumers has negative implications, since robots lack high-level decision-making and complex cognitive abilities. It is important to weigh the pros and cons of AI participation in consumer markets. The research addresses the following questions:

- Do service robots have the potential to present emotional responses in the hospitality industry through human-robot interaction (HRI)?
- With the rapid advancement of AI, can AI be ethically responsible for its actions and decisions without hindering AI's influence on human expansion?
- Is it possible for robots to be superior to humans? What improvements can be made to AI for better learning and understanding human cognition and behavior?

The research bridges the gap between robots and humans, while discovering HRI from varying marketing perspectives. The research presents managerial implications for both marketers and consumers, while dealing with AI and HRI.

Keywords: *artificial intelligence; human robot interaction; perceived intelligence; perceived security; robots as consumers; consumer behavior; conscience; cognition; natural language generation*

6. Analyzing Sustainable Packaging: Enablers and Barriers in the Food Packaging Industry

Hector Duran
Shanell McNamee

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Amit Arora

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has a National Overview section listed on their website that details the trash, or municipal solid

waste (MSW), that consumers throw out. Food packaging and related items make up most of the landfill waste in cities. As per EPA, in 2015, about 137.7 million tons of MSW were landfilled. Food was the largest component, at about 22 percent. Plastics accounted for about 19 percent; paper and paperboard made up about 13 percent. With an increased demand and concern for environmentally friendly packaging, companies are facing the challenge of changing materials and processes to package food, in order to address the demands of green supply of these items to customers. This research addresses the following questions pertaining to the food packaging industry:

- Why and how should a supplier go green; what are the benefits of going green?
- What kinds of innovative methods and materials do companies need to take into consideration to produce more environmentally friendly packaging for food items?

Keywords: *packaging industry; green supply; innovation; solid waste; food industry*

7. You and I versus AI: Exploring the Advent of Artificial Intelligence through Ethics and Human Replacement

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Faculty Advisor: Dr. Anshu Arora

As human beings, we are constantly evolving. Through artificial intelligence (AI), we make up for features that we lack in our physical and social spheres, and transform our lives with technological advances. Artificial Intelligence is manifested by machines and/or robots that display certain aspects of human intelligence. The four intelligences involved in performing service tasks through AI are mechanical, analytical, intuitive, and empathetic. With the growth and advancement of AI, many societal questions are raised. Who do we hold responsible when AI causes harm (or even death) in society? How should we incorporate artificial intelligence positively in our lives? AI technology has the capacity to impact our lives both positively and negatively. However, this technology must be used and developed in an ethical manner that progress society, instead of regressing it. The research addresses the following questions.

- Who will determine what is right or wrong in AI technology? Who will take responsibility for AI when it causes harm to society?
- Are there adequate AI rules, laws, and regulations for human protection?
- Can AI and robots replace humans? Which kinds of AI (mechanical, analytical, intuitive, and empathetic) will replace humans, and what does the future hold in terms of humans and robots interacting with each other?

This research emphasizes the ethical responsibility that AI and robotic technology bring forth in the world of business, and discusses the huge advancement of these technologies, and what they are capable of accomplishing in the future.

Keywords: *mechanical intelligence; intuitive intelligence; human robot interaction; artificial intelligence; analytical intelligence; empathetic intelligence*

8. Luxury Versus Diffused? Analyzing Consumers' Preferences with Country-of-Origin and Country-of-Manufacture Effects

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This research investigates the differences between a parent brand and its diffusion brand; and how parent and diffusion brands impact consumers' purchasing decisions. The research further examines if country-of-origin (COO) and country-of-manufacture (COM) play integral roles in consumer purchase and the decision-making process when buying parent, versus diffusion, brands. This study investigates the relationship between COO and COM effects on diffusion branding and pricing. Using both congruent and incongruent COO-COM effects, the research addresses the following questions.

- Will consumers prefer parent and/or diffused brands if the COO is an emerging economy and the COM is a developed economy?
- Will consumers prefer parent and/or diffused brands if the COO is a developed economy and the COM is an emerging economy?

The study provides implications for marketers and researchers to probe COO and COM effects and gauge consumers' purchase intentions regarding diffusion branding, with recommendations for emerging COO–developed COM, and developed COO–emerging COM situations.

Keywords: *country-of-origin (COO); country-of-manufacture (COM); parent versus diffused brands; diffusion branding; emerging COO – developed COM; developed COO – emerging COM; consumers' purchase intentions*

9. The Importance of Reverse Logistics in the Automotive Industry and its Effect on Sustainability

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Reverse Logistics is the movement of goods from the point of final destination to the point of origin while focusing on recovering value. The main purpose of this research is to focus on the importance of reverse logistics integration in the automotive industry supply chain. This research will explore the evolution, process changes, benefits, and barriers of reverse logistics in the automotive industry. The differences between reverse and straight-line logistics are also researched. The research paper will address the following questions:

- What are the enablers and barriers of reverse logistics in the automotive industry?
- What is the relationship between reverse logistics and environmental, social, and operational sustainability?

Keywords: *sustainability; reverse logistics; automotive industry; integrated forward/reverse logistics; urbanization; strategy; logistics*

10. Is AI Assisting Us OR Replacing Us? Exploring Artificial Intelligence and Social Robotics

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Technology has become such an integral part of our society in that we cannot avoid or live without it anymore. Everyday interactions on our phones, computers, and personal assistance devices are society's reality today. Businesses are taking advantage of technology in order to advance their growth globally. The next step in doing so is Artificial Intelligence (AI). Marketers, accountants, doctors, and other business professionals, are using AI to facilitate their daily lives. This technology gathers everyday information in order to solve problems. Ethically, many red flags emerge in our minds, caused by negative media reports about robots and their destructive powers.. Artificial intelligence has a broad meaning today, as robots are becoming conscious of the environment around them. The current research addresses the following questions:

- How does AI help customers throughout their customer journey?
- What qualifies a robot/machine as "conscious"? Can robots outsmart humans?
- Is the rate of AI job replacement in mechanical/analytical intelligence proportionate to the number of human workers replaced?
- How can the relationship between personality and anthropomorphization of robots influence the acceptance of robots?

Our research focuses on AI influence in the world of business. The research presents managerial and theoretical implications for marketers, while dealing with AI and robots.

Keywords: *artificial intelligence; conscious; mechanical intelligence, analytical intelligence; customer journey; anthropomorphization; AI job replacement*

11. Host versus Home: Building Global and Cultural Relationships through Social Media

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Social media has created a platform for international students to communicate directly and indirectly, and to attain a better understanding of their host country's culture, vis-à-vis their home country's cultural values. The social media platform provides vital support to international students by helping them recover quickly from the cultural shock they face every day. International students are informed of events and cultural exchanges through social media, and this facilitates meaningful relationships with peers and individuals from their host countries. Students are more prone to use social media to understand and adapt to host countries' cultures, and to maintain relationships with their home countries, as well. This research examines the impact of using social media on the intercultural adaptation process for international students in host versus home country situations. We used survey research methodology targeting 100 global students at the University of the District of Columbia (UDC) in Washington, D.C.

The research addresses the following questions.

- How does social media aid acculturation?
- How does social media help students understand their host countries vis-à-vis their own?
- How does social media help facilitate integration and intercultural adaptation within host versus home countries' cultures for international students?

This research attempts to investigate the role social media plays in the integration and assimilation of international students at UDC. Through our research, we provide recommendations to enhance further acclimation within different student groups.

Keywords: *social media; international, integration; host country; culture; home country; intercultural adaptation*

12. Implementing Green Supply Chain Management in the Automobile Industry: Enabling Factors and Effect on Organizational Performance

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Faculty Advisor: Dr. Amit Arora

The automobile industry is one of the biggest contributors to environmental pollution. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, motor vehicles collectively are responsible for 75% of carbon monoxide pollution in the US. This is due to carbon emission, noise pollution, and the production of other pollutants which are contributing to global warming. This negative impact forces society and governments to apply societal and institutional pressures to promote green supply chain management, and various green initiatives in the automobile manufacturing industry. There are many ways an automobile company can integrate environmental practices into their supply chain, such as reverse logistics, lean manufacturing, and materiality assessment. This paper seeks to highlight the reasons why firms in the automobile industry switch to more sustainable operations. This paper will also review the effects that the implementation of green supply chain management of the automobile industry has on automobile firms' organizational performance, and the environmental performance. The research paper will address the following questions:

- How can green supply chain management be implemented efficiently in the automobile industry?
- What impact does green supply chain management have on automobile companies' performance?

Keywords: *organization's performance, green supply chain, green development, automobile manufacturing industry, sustainable operations, institutional pressures, sustainable development, green initiatives, green design, lean manufacturing*

13. Can't We All Just Get Along? Inducing Ethically-Anthropomorphic Human Robot Interaction in the Workforce

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Today human-robot interaction (HRI) is growing inside the workforce and in our social spheres. This expanding ability of robots to make unsupervised decisions renders it imperative that mechanisms are in place to guarantee the safety of their behavior in HRI situations. The ethical HRI inducement process is moderated by personality variables, such as extroversion (versus introversion), which play an important role in integration of AI and social robotics in our society. Moreover, autonomous robots should be explicitly ethical (and follow rules and regulations) for both humans and robots. Existing frameworks for robot ethics have shown that ethical layers enable robots to prevent humans from coming to harm while following human instructions. Similarly, on the human side of HRI, robotic anthropomorphism plays a significant role in how robots can become successful human companions. The research addresses the following questions:

- Can the inducement of personality variables moderate HRI?
- What is robotic anthropomorphism, and how is it related to AI and social robotics?
- Why does extroversion matter when dealing with social robotics and AI?

Finally, we provide research implications and recommendations for facilitating the entry of socially-ethical robotics into the workplace that protects both humans and robots as this HRI trend continues to grow exponentially over time.

Keywords: *artificial intelligence; human robot interaction; perceived intelligence; perceived security; robots as consumers; consumer behavior; conscience; cognition; natural language generation*

14. Factors Affecting Customer Behavior and Loyalty in Retail Fashion Industry: Case Study of E-Commerce vs In-Store Experience

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Faculty Advisor: Dr. Amit Arora

This paper discusses how consumer buying behavior is changing from mostly in-store to being online now. As technology is advancing, it is becoming easier for many well-known retail fashion brand stores to gain increasing sales from online channels. Another factor contributing to the greater percentage of online sales is discount coupons, which entice customers to spend more than they normally would at a physical store. Customers also do not have to worry about receiving bad customer service online, since they deal with browsers, instead of store employees. Other hassles, like finding the right size, cards being declined in public, or finding higher price tags on things the customer browsed online for less, are eliminated. This research focuses on customer satisfaction and loyalty online vs in-store consumerism in the retail fashion industry. There seems to be no direct relationship between satisfaction and loyalty in both channels. However, consumers report that shopping online results in an increased sense of freedom and control, as compared to in-store shopping. Website and browser satisfaction play important mediating roles in increasing traffic flow and sales in online stores. This research has practical implications for managers: investing in website features that facilitate social experiences such as product reviews and ratings sharing, and interacting with the site itself, and through the site with others (social networking, wish list, e-mail-a-friend, etc.), can positively influence site customers' satisfaction, and result in increased sales. Customers may shift towards goal-oriented online shopping if website features, including

accessibility, convenience, information availability, are user-friendly. The research addresses the following questions:

- How does behavior affect customers' reasons to prefer online, versus in-store shopping?
- Although customers are still skeptical of online shopping, will the future consist of everything being bought from online shops instead of retailers?
- How do retailers use multichannel strategies, and how do customers use different channels to search and purchase their goods and services?

Keywords: *online shopping; consumer behavior; e-commerce; customer satisfaction; customer loyalty*

15. Artificial Intelligence, Humanized Technology, and Robotic Anthropomorphism: How Do Robots and Humans Interact?

Brea Ellis
Mayumi Fleming
Rosslynne Terry

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The personality traits of introversion and extroversion significantly affect how individuals perceive the world around us. In this new era of artificial intelligence, humanized technology, such as robots, has become ubiquitous. This research seeks to investigate how artificial intelligence (AI) influences marketing and consumer behavior. AI will enhance the marketing function by collecting all unstructured consumer-curated data that has continuously grown in volume, velocity, and variety. In this paper, we seek to examine whether AI technologies can utilize consumer data to determine each customer's emotions and personality, in order to provide the right products at the right time. The research addresses the following questions:

- Do personality variables of consumers influence their perceptions of both robotic anthropomorphism and the likeability of robots?
- Will robots harness the ability to become conscious, and surpass human beings?
- Will the surge in AI systems change the way marketers advertise to potential consumers?

The research bridges the gap between marketers and consumers through robots, while discovering robotic anthropomorphism, consciousness, and robotic likeability. The research presents managerial implications for both marketers and consumers, while dealing with AI and robots.

Keywords: *extroversion, introversion; artificial intelligence (AI); humanized technology; robots; structured data; unstructured data*

16. Fashion Supply Chains in the Digital Age: Brick and Mortar vs Online

Blaize Gillard

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Amit Arora

Today, when customers think about shopping for an item of clothing, they have the option of logging on to their computers, and shopping online. With this paradigm shift in the digital age, the fashion supply chains must revamp and be flexible. Many fashion stores are moving away from brick and mortar formats to online formats. This change is making it harder for stores to meet the demands of in-store customers, because in-store inventory gets diverted to online channels.

The purpose of this research is to examine in depth this paradigm shift towards online stores, along with the effectiveness of two different channels of fashion supply chains.
The research paper will answer the following questions:

- What are the challenges of maintaining supply chains for both brick and mortar and online channels?
- How would the fashion supply chain meet the demands of the digital age?

Keywords: *supply chain management, supply and demand, digital age, brink and mortar, online*

17. To Love or Not: Xenocentrism and Cultural Relativism through Social Media

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Deranique Graydon
Shade Roberts
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Faculty Advisor: Dr. Anshu Arora

This study investigates the impact of xenocentrism on social media. Xenocentrism is the acceptance and love for another culture, and it symbolizes a preference for foreign products, styles, and assuming the superiority of someone else's culture over one's own. The concept is considered as a subjective view of cultural relativism. Cultural relativism is the idea that a person's norms and values should not be judged by another person's culture. Social media helps global virtual teams (GVTs) become xenocentric because xenocentrism is the main channel of communication to connect with people from all over the world. Additionally, global companies become successful when their employees are xenocentric, and they use social media to connect with people from around the world. This study examines the impact of xenocentrism on social media for one's own culture, as well as those of others, and the younger generation. The research addresses the following questions:

- How do xenocentrism and culture affect the views of other cultures on social media?
- What are the positive (and negative) effects of xenocentrism on today's youth?
- How do xenocentrism and cultural relativism in online social networks impact today's youth?

Finally, we provide recommendations for marketers and policy makers to induce xenocentrism through social media for today's youth, in order to make them better prepared as global citizens.

Keywords: *social media; xenocentrism; cultural relativism; culture; younger generation*

18. The Application of Electronic Supply Chain Management (e-SCM)

Chatan Rathod

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Amit Arora

The progression and evolution of information technology and the internet have revolutionized the traditional way of working. This paper provides profound perceptive of the electronic supply chain management concept, through offering insight into the essence of e-SCM and the opportunities that the information technologies are providing. Furthermore, through research of real world examples of the organizations that have enabled e-SCM, this research utilizes and examines the benefits and

advantages to these organizations in creating a sustainable competitive advantage.

Keywords: *information technology, internet, e-supply chain management, competitive advantage*

1. Inducing Ethical Climate in Entrepreneurial Organizations through Direct Sensemaking, Intentional Decision-Making and Ethical Leadership: A Process Model

Eric Chad Horner
Loucace D. Ampe-N'da

Faculty Advisors: Dr. Donovan Collier and Dr. Nazha Gali

This paper seeks to explore the relationship between an organization's entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and its culture of ethical leadership (EL). Extant literature suggests this relationship may be negative, such that entrepreneurial orientation reduces the likelihood that an organization exhibits a culture of EL. EO may lead to unethical behavior within an organization, which can tarnish its legitimacy. Our primary concern is how ethical leadership can be achieved in organizations that have strong entrepreneurial orientations. To address this issue, we develop a process model that incorporates the novel concept of direct sensemaking (DSM) and intentional decision-making (IDM) to explain the relationship between EO and EL. We believe this model takes an important step toward better understanding the complex relationship between the EO of an organization and its EL, thereby providing organizational leaders with clarity on how to cultivate an ethical environment. This research can provide insight for managers about how to induce ethical behavior and cultivate integrity, accountability, and foster an ethical culture within an organization.

Keywords: *entrepreneurial orientation; direct sensemaking; intentional decision-making; ethical leadership; ethical culture*

2. Consumer Power in the Social Media Environment: How Can Managers Ensure Coherent Brand Stories on Social Media Globally?

Alexis Baguelin
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Michael Kendrick

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Anshu Arora

The importance of social media for brand and customer relationship management is widely recognized. In this research, we utilize a contingency framework for assessing the marketing potential that social commerce offers to firms. We examine the intersection of digital media and consumer behavior to gain insights into consumer empowerment on social media. Consumers play key roles in the generation of brand stories, due to new dynamic networks of consumers and brands formed through social media and sharing of user experiences in online social networks. Specifically, we analyze whether the predicted power shift in favor of the consumer has actually occurred, examine its origins and nature, and discuss its potential trajectory. Using research, we are able to make conclusions about consumer power. Our research addresses the following questions.

- How can managers ensure that brand stories on a social media site will be coherent with consumers from all over the world with different interpretations of brand meaning?
- What role does social media play in brand and customer relationship management?

- How has consumer purchasing power changed over the past decade?

Thus, to succeed, companies need to pay attention to consumer-related communications on social media globally, since the success of a brand does not depend on what organizations tell the consumer; it depends on what consumers say about the brand/organization on social media.

Keywords: *social media; brand management; brand stories; consumer behavior; social commerce; social networks; consumer power*

3. From Resource-Driven to Frugal Engineering: Constraints of EsreveR Noitavonnl in the Global Market

Loucace Ampe-N'da
Barbara Ann Payne
Meron Ureggessa

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Amit Arora

Innovation of products and services that target resource-limited customers has been an incipient aspect of management in the energy, healthcare, military, and consumer sectors. Reverse innovation (RI) is a management strategy in which a product is developed and first introduced in a developing country, before being launched in developed countries. This resource-driven management strategy focusing on the uphill flow of new products has gained popularity due to its effectiveness in market penetration. Several aspects influence the success of this renaissance, including but not limited to market selection, consumer consideration, transfer of product and its adaptation in developed economies, ethical issues, glocalization, and product ethnocentrism. The products that are to be selected for mass production should be items that are favored by consumer choice. Consumer preferences, financial abilities, innovation success, and hence, product, price, and performance must also be considered. This research focuses on RI in developing economies of India and Africa, and the factors influencing its success, such as frugal innovation and legislative regulations. This paper explores the following questions:

- Is there a conceptual framework that allows the strategic implementation of RI, and how it can influence frugal innovation?
- What kind of influence consumers prefer when product, price, and performance will transform a valuable research innovation, and help identify future opportunities with developed countries?
- What are the differences and benefits of traditional innovation vs. reverse innovation, along with the ethics and sustainability that arise from such innovations?

Keywords: *Reverse innovation (RI); emerging market; frugal innovations; frugal engineering approach; glocalization; ethnocentrism; resource-driven; legislative regulations; ethics; sustainability*

4. The Evolution of Social Media in DSMM Marketing and Commerce

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Faculty Advisor: Dr. Anshu Arora

This study investigates the necessity and impact of digital, social media, and mobile (DSMM) marketing in online environments. A few

concepts, such as brand story, interpersonal closeness, integration versus dissociation, and demand-based power, can help organizations globally that are engaged in DSMM commerce. When referring to a brand story, organizations can depend on their customer feedback to evaluate their products. Interpersonal closeness refers to the degree of connections among people, whether high or low, and especially, how it affects information-sharing within consumer groups and organizations engaged in DSMM commerce. Additionally, dissociation and integration of DSMM illustrates that customers and marketers engage in virtual-physical environments on a daily basis, by virtue of which, both parties can either be high-virtual and low-physical; or low-virtual and high-physical in their activities. These dual environments can either positively or negatively impact customers and marketers. Consumer power is constantly being enhanced and shaped by social media. The algorithms embedded in social media platforms play pivotal roles in consumer behavior online. Ultimately, consumers are influenced by four key types of power, based on demand, information, network, and mobilization. Our research focuses on the following questions:

- How does interpersonal closeness affect word-of-mouth valence?
- How does dual consciousness of virtual-physical environments affect consumers and marketers?
- How does the convergence of Internet and social media impact consumers' online activities and overall power?

Our research will help marketers and policy makers understand how to apply the concepts of consumer power, interpersonal closeness, virtual-physical environments, and social media convergence in the DSMM industry.

Keywords: *brand story; interpersonal closeness; integration-dissociation; consumer power; social media convergence; dual consciousness; word-of-mouth valence*

5. Joint Ventures' Longevity and Termination: Examining their Aspects and Relation with Synergy, Institutional Barriers, and Opportunity Knowledge

Alexis Baguelin
Renata Buzolin
Sharadindu Saha

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One of the approaches that organizations adopt, in order to increase profits and improve performance, is a business arrangement called joint venture (JV), where two or more companies work in synergy to achieve a predetermined goal. The longevity of a joint venture depends on its objectives, and may exist until the goal is achieved; they also can be formed for a continuing purpose. Joint ventures can be terminated either by shutting down their facilities, or by continuing to operate under the full control of one of the original partners. Several companies face institutional barriers while trying to partner with other organizations. This research analyzes these institutional barriers, and their impact on a joint venture's longevity and operations. Specifically, this research addresses the following questions:

- How can institutional barriers impact joint ventures' longevity and operations?
- How can joint ventures increase synergy during their active period?

- Is opportunity knowledge the biggest motivation to start a joint venture?
- What are the most important factors that cause joint ventures to terminate?

We expect this research to help managers enrich their knowledge about joint ventures' longevity and termination, and analyze the impacts caused by institutional barriers, as well as comprehend how to effectively increase synergy in order to benefit from opportunity knowledge.

Keywords: *joint venture; opportunity knowledge; synergy; joint venture termination; longevity; institutional barriers*

6. Consumer Power: How Can Marketers Use Social Commerce in CMSEs?

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Faculty Advisor: Dr. Anshu Arora

Technology has become an integral part of our lives, along with enhancing life quality and causing impact on ways that people interact with each other in their physical environments, which can lead to integration and/or dissociation. When it comes to social commerce, technology is changing consumer behavior from analog to digital. Social media facilitates consumers' real-time interactions, allowing them to access a vast amount of information, thereby increasing their consumer power in virtual environments. However, network crowd power can be a potential problem in terms of brand management on social media. Many brands utilize social commerce to promote and sell their products. Nevertheless, marketers are not totally clear how to effectively use computer-mediated social environments (CMSEs) in order to create a network approach to branding. Our research addresses the following questions:

- What are the differences (and similarities) between consumer behavior in physical and virtual environments, and decision-making processes?
- How does social media affect consumer power and consumer interactions in CMSEs?
- How does social commerce help in brand management?
- How can marketers use social commerce effectively to increase sales and branding?

We expect this research to help us understand consumer behavior and consumer power in physical and virtual worlds, as well as comprehend how to effectively engage in social commerce for improving brand management and sales by successfully connecting consumers.

Keywords: *CMSEs; consumer power; brand management; social media; consumer behavior; consumer decision-making process; physical versus virtual environments*

7. Institutional Challenges for Firms Adapting CSR in Emerging Economies

Pauline Blanche
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Faculty Advisor: Dr. Amit Arora

There is increased interest in the study of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and the context in which it is practiced in emerging economies, vis-à-vis advanced economies. Emerging economies, also referred to as developing economies, are countries that are shifting away from their dependence on agricultural sectors to more productive sectors, such as services and finance. There are numerous opportunities for firms, especially multinationals, to invest in emerging economies; however, these countries are impacted by various challenges, including inequality, rampant poverty, violence, conflicts, corruption, and shifting social fabrics. This research delves into the important area of the unique opportunities and challenges firms face in emerging economies. Firms in developed countries are primarily obsessed with maximizing value for shareholders through operational efficiency, performance, and the pursuit of innovation. In contrast, firms operating in developing countries, have to navigate complex internal and external business environments that must be factored in pursuit of profit maximization. CSR is shaped by forces both within the formal and informal sectors. This research addresses the following questions:

- Why is it important to have the concept of CSR in emerging countries?
- What are the institutional challenges that firms have to face in emerging economies?
- How can mainstream CSR agenda be more south-centered?

Keywords: *emerging economies; institutional challenges; MNC; CSR; south-centered; NSE; NGO; institutional determinants; governance environment; BRIC*

8. Consumer Power and its Impact on Creative Marketing Strategies for Digitalized Interactive Platforms in DSMM Marketing

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The use of digital, social media, and mobile (DSMM) marketing has grown in prominence parallel to the growth of technological innovations, e.g., social media platforms and smart devices. With this growth, the adoption of social media platforms in marketing sectors over the last 15 years has led to the improvement of communication between firms' marketers and their target markets. This has also led to a paradigm shift in power from marketers to consumers. Smart connected products and services, like Apple's iPhone, and Uber, have transformed offerings into a broader combination of artifacts, persons, processes, and interfaces. These digitalized interactive platforms (DIPs) provide unprecedented customer value through continued interactions between and among consumers and businesses. As DIPs have grown, so have the digitalized interactions between consumers and their associated social networks. Consumers have been empowered, and play a vital role in the marketing of product offerings by sharing their feedback. As a result, firms now implement creative marketing strategies to maintain a positive visual presence on social media in order to remain competitive. This can be accomplished by being consistent in uploading new, engaging visuals for consumers to share, and offering discounts as incentives for using a

firm's products. This research explores the following questions.

- What is the relationship between consumer behavior and the corresponding DSMM marketing in terms of consumer power?
- How will the evolution of DSMM impact creative business marketing strategies and consumer behavior, with the continual emergence of technological innovations?
- What creative tools, strategies, and appeals, are firms employing, and what has been the impact of DIPs on consumer engagement on their respective social networks?

The adoption of new DSMM marketing strategies for leveraging consumer power targeted towards technological innovations in DIPs is imperative to the post-digital era.

Keywords: *digitalized interactive platforms; DSMM; post-digital era; consumer power; branded social content; consumer engagement; social presence; value co-creation*

9. The Role of Social Commerce in Emerging Markets: Challenges and Opportunities

Curley Ohio
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Faculty Advisor: Dr. Amit Arora

The development and rapid rise of social commerce has fundamentally changed both online consumer purchase behavior, as well as the way businesses promote products and services to their customers. The insights gained from social media platforms allow global businesses to better understand their customers, and develop highly targeted strategies that make the user experience extremely personalized. This creates an experience so great that customers cannot help but share their satisfaction/delight with the world, becoming a free advertisement for the brand. This type of influencer-driven social commerce has become a key factor that makes word-of-mouth media marketing a critical part of any successful e-commerce advertising strategy. Social driven e-commerce in emerging markets has been growing due to the rapid proliferation of smartphones, and the resulting growth in social network service users. The promise of massive improvements in internet infrastructure is expected to offer exponentially lucrative opportunities to the players in these markets, but also pose some risks unique to the market. This research focuses on the challenges and opportunities emerging markets face, while implementing social commerce at scale. The questions that this research addresses are:

- What are the unique challenges faced in emerging markets that are not faced in developed markets?
- What role does social commerce play in financial decision-making for emerging market consumers?
- What are the key outcomes of the global social commerce markets?

Keywords: *social commerce; social media; word-of-mouth; e-commerce; emerging markets; developed markets; influencer-driven social commerce; online consumer purchase behavior*

10. Smarter Robots, OR Smarter Humans? Exploring a New Generation of Robots: Chatbots,

Digital Avatars, and Now AI Human-like, Social Agents

Loucace Ampe-Nda
Ashley Brown
Barbara Ann Payne

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Anshu Arora

People's lives are slowly changing, due to the development of artificial intelligence (AI). Humans possess the ability to think and perceive. Technology is ubiquitous in our social spheres, but has numerous limitations. Technology enables robots to have voices, interact with clients, and execute a series of commands through artificial intelligence (AI) and human-robot interaction (HRI). The notion that robots can overcome humans implies that they can become ”conscious.” To surpass humans, robots and robotic systems will have to demonstrate abilities beyond human possession and control. For example, robots will have to demonstrate a high level of cognition, comparable to that of humans. Such robotic machines will rise to the level of consciousness in their interaction with humans. The key issue that emerges is the ethical dilemma of artificial intelligence (ED-AI) and its research progress. Artificial intelligence, with different types of smart applications such as traffic, medical, financial, business, and security tools, comes with some limitations and deficiencies. Therefore, it is crucial to consider liability when robots and robotic systems fail to perform, and human lives become endangered. Our research focuses on AI, HRI consciousness in robots, ethical dilemmas, and HRI ethics. The research addresses the following questions:

- Does a framework exist that would allow conscious machines to meet and surpass human intelligence and capabilities?
- In addition to consciousness, what kinds of AI interactions feel more natural, and lead us in our journey of quest and progression from chatbots to avatars to humanoid robots with voice, gaze, and other anthropomorphic qualities?
- How can the law, along with a set of HRI ethics, protect humans, and impute liability for the limitations and failures of artificial intelligence?

Keywords: *artificial intelligence; human-robot interaction; information processing; cognitive computing; robots and robotic systems; ethical dilemma of artificial intelligence (ED-AI); technology governance*

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