

Guest editorial: Metaverse and organizations: perspectives from emerging economies

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Metaverse is the convergence of physical and digital universes, where users can seamlessly traverse between them for working, education and training, health, exploring interests and socializing with others (Buhalis *et al.*, 2023). As the metaverse represents an interconnected digital realm, it has the potential to reshape how consumers engage with brands, conduct transactions, and navigate their digital experiences (Paul *et al.*, 2024). Considering the potential of the metaverse to extend the physical world using augmented and virtual reality technologies, allowing users to seamlessly interact within real and simulated environments using avatars and holograms, the organizations are starting to invest heavily in this area (Dwivedi *et al.*, 2023). The studies on metaverse are in the primitive stage and largely based on a generalized basis, mostly comprising secondary research. Numerous studies in mainstream literature predominantly focus on the metaverse's impact within developed economies, leaving a significant void in understanding its ramifications in emerging economies (Buhalis *et al.*, 2023; Dwivedi *et al.*, 2023).

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The six papers in the special issue “Metaverse and organizations: Perspectives from emerging economies” discuss the study findings on how various mechanisms of the metaverse significantly influence organizations within the context of emerging economies. The goal of this special issue on metaverse and organizations is to bring together academics and industry professionals from a variety of disciplines to address the benefits and difficulties of the metaverse in organizations, considering the opportunities and challenges of the emerging economies. The special issue aimed to explore various aspects of the metaverse on organizations from an emerging economies perspective, both the bright and dark sides of it. The special issue also aimed to explore the linkages between stakeholders' views with metaverse expectations and outcomes. Thus, the overall objective of the special issue was to uncover the specific challenges and opportunities that arise, guiding organizations toward optimal integration and harnessing the metaverse's potential for sustainable growth in emerging economies.

The concept of the metaverse describes extensive interconnected digital environments and a revolutionary way to redesign workplace environments while changing employee work methods. The first article in the special issue titled “Transforming workplaces with metaverse technologies: employee perspectives from emerging economies” by Showkat *et al.* (2026) explores how perceptions of the metaverse's usefulness and ease of use influence job satisfaction. This study seeks to offer insights for organizations contemplating integrating metaverse technologies among 385 corporate employees in India. The analysis reveals a significant positive correlation between the metaverse's perceived benefits and job satisfaction. The results highlight the critical roles of technological ease of use and utility in enhancing employee satisfaction levels within the corporate sector.

Recent technological advancements have greatly improved education and training through digital innovations. The article titled “Knowledge management in metaverse: does knowledge storage matter as a factor affecting adoption and acceptance?” by Abdulmuhsin *et al.* (2026) discusses the metaverse adoption factors, examining correlations among key constructs such as performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, facilitating



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conditions, perceived value, hedonic motivation, stability and knowledge storage among 278 medical college educators and employed structural equation modelling-partial least squares to analyze the data. The findings reveal significant positive impacts of key constructs on the behavioral intention to adopt knowledge management-driven metaverse technology. Stability is identified as a key factor positively influencing knowledge storage. In addition, knowledge storage shows positive correlations with behavioral intention. This study highlights the transformative potential of metaverse technology in reshaping knowledge management processes.

The finance sector is also starting to adopt the metaverse as it transitions to Industrial Revolution 5.0 to get their workforce ready for the digital era. The work titled “Investigating bankers’ readiness for metaverse technology adoption in emerging economies amid Industrial Revolution 5.0: a UTAUT model analysis” by [Bhatt et al. \(2026\)](#) analyses bankers’ preparedness to adopt the metaverse in emerging economies under the Industrial Revolution (IR) 5.0 via the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT) model examination. This study has collected 334 responses from the employees of the top five Indian banks. The findings revealed that performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence and facilitating conditions are significantly related to the bank employees’ intention to use technology. The moderating role of self-efficacy highlighted a significant role in strengthening the employees’ intention to adopt new technology.

The manufacturing processes are becoming more complex, quality standards are increasing, and sustainable practices are being pushed on the industry, so companies are under pressure to develop and adapt new technologies as required. The article entitled “Breaking the virtual wall: analyzing barriers to metaverse adoption in manufacturing industries” by [Agrawal and Wankhede \(2026\)](#) discusses the barriers of metaverse adoption and prioritize them in a manner that allows industrial leaders to strategize for smooth adoption. The study applied two-stage methods, first the identification and validation of barriers through an empirical study applied to Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) of the survey, which yielded 104 completed responses of contacts working in the metaverse field. Thereafter, the best-worst method (BWM) was used to measure and rank the barriers. The study results show that the two most critical barriers are “Lack of data security and privacy” and “Lack of integration compatibility with existing systems.” Such findings inform industry leaders of specific recommendations for structural changes, training programs, necessary technological investments and collaborative efforts to overcome these barriers.

The metaverse integration raises issues such as blurred boundaries between work and personal life, altered social dynamics, and the need for new skill sets have emerged as critical concerns among the employees. The article entitled “Metaverse dynamics: decoding behavioral shifts and work satisfaction in organizational life” by [Kodikal et al. \(2026\)](#) investigates the impact of behavioral aspects of a metaverse on work and life satisfaction within an organization among 468 employees from various organizations located in the Gulf and South Asian countries. The result indicates that successful user adaptation, opportunities for self-expansion and identity and expression in the metaverse positively contribute to employees’ attitudes. Similarly, challenges, considerations and perceived risk are factors for employees to adapt metaverse. The results show that attitude toward the metaverse mediates work and life satisfaction. This reveals major challenges and risks associated with the implication of the metaverse in organizations.

In the organizational landscape, the sustainable environment can be achieved through leadership. The work titled “How leadership fosters sustainable organizational agility through metaverse adoption” by [Saini et al. \(2026\)](#) focuses on the necessity for advanced transformational leadership and integration of technology in accomplishing sustainable goals

through proactive, innovative approaches to thrive in a complex and environment-conscious world. The study design included 448 IT leaders (CEOs, Directors and Managers) in India, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Indonesia. The results suggest that green transformational leadership (GTL) positively influence green organizational agility (GOA). There is a positive relationship between GTL and GOA through green human resource management practices (green training and development, green compensation and rewards). Leaders' information technology capabilities help moderate organizational innovativeness and, through metaverse adoption, further influence organizational agility.

Conclusion

The emergence of the metaverse has opened new possibilities for how organizations design work, collaborate, innovate, and interact with stakeholders. For organizations in emerging economies, the metaverse presents both transformative opportunities and unique challenges shaped by infrastructural limitations, digital divides, regulatory uncertainties, and socio-cultural dynamics. The articles in this special issue collectively highlight that while the metaverse is still in an evolving stage, it holds considerable potential to reshape organizational processes, employee engagement, knowledge management, leadership, manufacturing and finance sectors. The contributions in this special issue extend existing organizational and management literature by situating metaverse adoption within the realities of emerging economies. They demonstrate that technological adoption in such contexts is not merely a matter of access to digital platforms but also depends on organizational readiness, leadership vision, institutional support, employee competencies, and supportive policy ecosystems. In conclusion, this special issue contributes to the growing discourse on digital transformation by foregrounding perspectives from emerging economies. By bringing together diverse theoretical and empirical insights, it aims to stimulate further interdisciplinary research and informed managerial practice on how the metaverse can be harnessed to build more innovative, inclusive, and resilient organizations in the digital era.

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