

India rising: how human resource management policies and practices are helping shape the New India

The Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) countries have been at the center of management attention for most of the last decade and continue to garner attention (Budhwar *et al.*, 2017), as they are among the fastest growing economies in the world with significant influence on regional affairs, and represent about 41% of the world population. With the World Bank expecting BRICS economic growth to be 5.3% for 2017, they comprise a significant portion of the economic growth at the global stage. Indeed, the recently concluded 9th BRICS summit in Xiamen, China, also highlights the willingness of the governments of these countries to work together on reforming financial institutions and improving the global economic situation.

Of these countries, India enjoys the honor of being the fastest growing economy – 7.2% for 2017 as per the International Monetary Fund (IMF) – in addition to soon having 23% of the global middle-class consumption (Deloitte, 2014). Further, among these countries, India holds the unique advantage of having a fairly young population that is fluent in English, the *de facto* language of global business. For over two decades, the Indian economy has been growing at a tremendous pace, and is poised to become the world's fourth largest economy by 2020 (Budhwar and Varma, 2010a, b). Indeed, India is expected to replace China as the world's growth engine by 2050 (Heath, 2017), or sooner. As one of the fastest growing economies in the world, India has become an attractive destination for multinational corporations (Budhwar and Varma, 2011), for a whole number of reasons, including its large pool of highly skilled technical professionals (Varma *et al.*, 2005). Further, India boasts of globally renowned engineering (Indian Institutes of Technology) and management (Indian Institutes of Management) schools that produce thousands of outstanding professionals each year.

One important development with far-reaching consequences has been the political change at the national level. After almost seven decades of continuous rule, the Congress party was dislodged at the national level and replaced by the Bharatiya Janata Party. The central government is headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who came to the center after three terms as the Chief Minister of Gujarat, a progressive Western Indian state. The Indian public has a lot of expectations from the new government, especially given that they were elected with an overwhelming mandate. In keeping with its manifesto, the government has launched numerous schemes over the last three years plus, designed to upgrade the economy and social structure, and improve the lives of average Indians. Some of the key schemes launched include (1) "Make in India" which is designed to attract multinationals from around the globe to set up manufacturing facilities in India, (2) Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao, which literally translated means, save the daughter, educate the daughter, (3) a new Bullet train program, in partnership with the government of Japan, (4) Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (Clean India Campaign), designed to clean up the cities and towns, and also the major rivers, etc. Programs such as the "Make in India" (<http://www.makeinindia.com/about>) initiative, have resulted in immediate benefits with India becoming the favorite destination for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) (Times News Network, 2015).

In addition, Mr Modi and his team have taken a non-nonsense and zero-tolerance approach toward corruption in governance, and are working toward providing a clean and corruption-free government across the nation, at all levels. In November of 2016, Mr Modi made a major announcement that took everyone by surprise – Indian currency notes of Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 denomination were taken out of circulation. This move was designed to



flush out the “black” money that was being hoarded by unscrupulous elements, and bring it back into circulation. In addition, those who were holding on to these bills were required to pay taxes on the total amount recovered. These and other steps taken by the government have begun to show results – several leading world bodies such as the World Bank and the IMF have responded positively to the steps taken by the government, and rating agencies like Moody’s has upgraded India’s rating on key global indices, including “ease of doing business.” A recent report (TOI, 2017) also noted that the organized sector in India created almost 1,100 new jobs per day during the period 2016–2017 at a rate that was 2% higher than the previous fiscal. Clearly, major and exciting changes are happening on numerous fronts in India, and the government has called upon all sections of society to contribute to creating the new India, so it can assume a leadership role among the leading global economies.

In this connection, the Indian diaspora plays an important role in the global economy, being the main participants in the Silicon Valley and has begun to take on key leadership roles in some of the world’s largest organizations as evidenced by the elevation of Sundar Pichai of Google, Satya Nadella of Microsoft and Indra Nooyi of Pepsico among countless others. The government of India is also now actively targeting the Indian diaspora to participate in the Indian growth story by holding events such as “Pravasi Bharatiya Divas” (<http://pbdindia.gov.in/>), Not only is India becoming a magnet for inward FDI but it is also becoming a major investing country in less-developed countries in Asia and Africa (Kamoché *et al.*, 2015), as well as an emerging investor in developed countries (Cooke *et al.*, 2014), with major acquisitions in the automobile and steel industries by corporations in India.

Structural inadequacies, which, have been the bane of economic growth in India till date, are also being addressed on a war footing by the current governmental disposition. Further, schemes targeting the skilling of Indian youth and setting up of a separate ministry for skill development by the government of India are among the efforts being made to ensure a ready workforce is available for global corporations that continue to set up shop in India. The roll-out of a uniform Goods and Services Tax is also meant to streamline the process of business operation. Finally, there is an overall emphasis on the development of world class infrastructure in terms of ports, roadways and railways.

This, coupled with its political and social stability, and forward-looking economic policies make it an attractive destination for both new and established organizations from around the world. However, as is widely acknowledged (see, e.g. DeNisi *et al.*, 2008) importing and implementing human resource management (HRM) policies and practices from other countries, where these were developed, does not always work out, since while the work might be the same, the context in which the work is performed can be very different. In the context of India, Björkman and Budhwar (2007) found that local adaptation of HR practices was positively associated with organizational performances of multinational corporations (MNCs). Thus, it is critical that organizations develop and implement HRM policies and practices that take into account ground realities as well as incorporate cultural idiosyncrasies and nuances (see, e.g. DeNisi *et al.*, 2008).

Indeed, it has been suggested that taking a polycentric view to HRM might prove to be more appropriate for emerging economies like India. In particular, Krishnan (2011), has found that a psychological contract view of looking at the engagement of Indian employers and employees, provides a richer understanding of the nuances that are common in cultures such as China and India. As another example, scholars of supervisor–subordinate relationships are well aware that while the construct of *guanxi* (Xin and Pearce, 1996) is similar to that of leader–member exchange (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995), it is indeed a distinct construct that incorporates subtle nuances of Chinese culture. Similarly, the concept of “*jugaad*” (see Radjou *et al.*, 2012) is uniquely Indian in nature and can be loosely translated as “getting it done somehow.” While there may be many constructs around the world that can convey the

meaning, none can capture the socio-cultural nuances. Theories on which HRM practices are developed have classically been derived from studies done in the Western context, with the common criticism that these are not truly universal (Scroggins and Benson, 2010). The development of robust theoretical understanding which forms the underpinnings on which practice is informed, is therefore essential. Even standard HRM best practices have been found to be mediated by indigenous traditions (Pereira and Anderson, 2012). Specifically for talent management, Cooke *et al.* (2014) have suggested the adoption of a particularist approach in an international context. This is where management scholars in India, as well as global scholars studying the Indian workplace and Indian management techniques, can play a critical role – by helping develop indigenous “Indian” theory based on Indian culture, norms and practices.

To facilitate the development of management research particular to the Indian context and examining existing management theories in the Indian context, the Indian Academy of Management (INDAM) was formed in 2007, to provide a forum for scholars around the world interested in examining Indian management and management in India. INDAM was formally granted affiliate status by the Academy of Management a few years later, and has been conducting highly successful academic conferences every two years, where scholars have an opportunity to showcase the best research that is being done in India and around the globe, about topics relevant to Indian organizations and MNCs operating in India.

Papers in this issue

The papers included in this issue are drawn from those submitted for consideration for presentation to the fourth conference of the Indian Academy of Management held at the Indian Institute of Management Lucknow’s Noida campus in late 2015. The conference had a focus on contextual matters, specifically as related to India, and covered the entire gamut of management research via multiple tracks. Each paper was expected to have either an exclusive or a comparative focus on the Indian context. Approximately 500 scholars from around the world with an interest in issues of Indian management participated in this conference.

A total of over 400 papers were received and, of those, 19 were nominated by reviewers for consideration for “best paper” awards at the conference. Of these papers, those that were found to match the general editorial mandate of *Personnel Review* were initially shortlisted. At the conclusion of the conference, the authors were invited to submit their manuscripts for consideration for this special issue [1]. After a comprehensive double-blind peer review process, nine papers were selected for inclusion in this special issue [2]. Below, we present brief summaries of these papers, arranged into three sections, (1) Innovation, (2) Leadership and Empowerment and (3) Cross-national Issues.

Innovation in India

The first set of papers in this issue address the issue of innovation in an Indian context. Schumpeterian economics (Schumpeter, 1954) suggests that innovation is critical component of efforts designed to accelerate economic growth and prosperity. Relatedly, national culture has a role both in determining the antecedents of innovation and its capture of value (Engelen *et al.*, in press). The role of the HRM function as a facilitator for innovation, both to grow and fill voids has been suggested by prior research (Bamber *et al.*, 2017). It is equally important to first appreciate the theoretical underpinnings to inform practice (Scroggins and Benson, 2010), with a particular case being that of innovation in the context of India. For instance, Engelen *et al.* (in press) found that corporate support programs for innovation had differential effects on samples from Germany and China.

The first paper in this issue by Patturaja Selvaraj and Jerome Joseph, titled “Employee Voice Implications for Innovation in a Deliberative Environment: Context of Indian Organizations” incorporates elements from the sociological concept of deliberative democracy (Habermas, 1989) with the construct of employee voice to reconcile the mixed findings of the role of voice on the organizational environment for innovation. By incorporating the deliberative elements into employee voice, it no longer remains a mechanism of addressing dissatisfaction but also constructively contributes to positive organizational outcomes. The authors incorporate the modification of actions and beliefs on the basis of emerging evidence (Richley, 2012) with security of organizational subjects offering innovative ideas to create respect for rational arguments and dissent (Teorell, 1999). Drawing upon a survey of 628 Indian managers, they find that employee voice plays an important role in enabling innovation. Voice helps in developing better relations with supervisors and fostering trust in senior management, and these processes are beneficial in contributing to innovation. In this connection, earlier studies conceptualized voice and innovation around the concept of personality. With its focus on transparency and accountability, deliberative democracy has the potential to overcome personality-centered conceptualizations of employee voice and innovation. This study contributes to the employee voice and innovation literature by developing and testing a conceptual framework through which organizational constraints on employee voice could be overcome and potentially used as an input for innovation.

In the second paper titled “Relationships between leadership, motivation, and employee-level innovation: Evidence from India,” Vishal Gupta distinguishes between integrated extrinsic motivation and nonintegrated extrinsic motivation (Deci and Ryan, 2008), contributing to the current discussion on the role of extrinsic motivation in determining innovative behavior. This study also provides evidence from an Indian context on the role of motivation as a mediator in the leadership-innovation link. Further, the author takes both subjective and objective measures of innovation to build robustness into the findings. The author integrates the behavioral theory of leadership, the componential theory of creativity and the self-determination theory, to test the relationships between leadership, work motivation (intrinsic motivation, integrated extrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation) and employee-level innovation (innovative work behavior and innovation outcomes) in a work setting. Data for this study were collected using a survey, from 493 scientists working in India’s largest civilian research and development organization. Structural equation modeling method was used to test the hypothesized relationships between the study variables. The study found evidence for positive relationships between leadership, employee autonomous motivation (intrinsic and integrated extrinsic motivation) and employee-level innovation. It shows that extrinsic motivation is positively related to innovation only when the value of rewards is integrated to one’s sense of self (integrated extrinsic motivation). Extrinsic motivation, otherwise, is not related to innovation. Further, the study provides insight into the underlying process through which leaders can impact innovation at the workplace.

As the related literature has suggested, employee attitudes and behaviors are expected to have a significant influence on organizational innovation and competitiveness (Ramamoorthy *et al.*, 2005). In the third paper on the issue of innovation (titled “Work Engagement, Job Crafting, and Innovativeness in the Indian IT Industry”), Anupama Sharma and Ranjeet Nambudiri explore the link between the motivational construct of work engagement and innovativeness of employees. The authors base their arguments on Job-demands and Resource (JDR) theoretical model and Broaden and Build theory. The context they select is that of the Indian IT industry, an important contributor to GDP growth in India. The study enriches the understanding of the link between work engagement, job crafting and innovativeness, by also exploring the moderating effects of perceived supervisory support and the personality trait of openness to experience. Field data from 377 working IT

professionals were collected using the survey method. The authors find a significant and positive relationship between work engagement and job crafting behavior and innovativeness. As illustrated in this paper, work-engaged employees display higher levels of innovativeness and job-crafting behavior. The results of this study suggest that IT organizations should focus on fostering employee work-engagement for better productivity and faster growth.

Leadership and empowerment in India

India has been unique in directly moving to a service-based economy without the intermediary step of becoming a manufacturing economy first (Deloitte, 2014). Within the service economy attrition and retention are major challenges faced by Indian organizations, and offering unique value propositions, such as challenging roles and professional growth are remedies suggested by Gupta and Bhaskar (2016). In fact, Malik *et al.* (2017) have found that organizations use empowerment focused HRM practices for the exploration of new ideas to encourage innovation.

Job crafting behavior is manifested in one form as idiosyncratic deals (i-deals) (Rousseau, 2001). These individually negotiated job conditions are specific to an employee and relevant for their specific circumstances. It is expected that by customizing the employment contract for individual employees, greater commitment can be achieved. This study is especially pertinent in the Indian context as data on i-deals is mostly anecdotal in this context. Rousseau (2001) points out that in countries such as India, which have few labor statutes, the space for negotiability of contracts is relatively higher.

The fourth paper in this special issue is by Anastasia Katou, Pawan Budhwar and Mohinder Chand Dhiman, and is titled “The moderating effects of transformational leadership and self-worth in the idiosyncratic deals: Employee reactions relationship: A study of Indian hospitality industry.” This paper explores the relationship between timing of negotiation and i-deals, through the moderating effects of core self-evaluations, and between i-deals and employee reactions, through the moderating effects of transformational leadership behavior (TLB). These authors conducted their study in the Indian hospitality industry, as it is another important contributor to the Indian economy, accounting for about 9% of the total employment in India (Harini and Indira, 2014). Utilizing self-enhancement theory, the paper examines whether individual differences moderate the relationship between the timing of negotiation and i-deals. Further, utilizing social exchange theory, the authors examine whether TLB moderates the relationship between i-deals and employee reactions. The hypotheses of the study are tested by applying structural equation modeling on data collected from 275 employees working in 39 companies. They find that individuals with high self-worth were more liable to negotiate i-deals even after hiring, whereas for individuals with lower self-worth the relationship between i-deals was stronger with negotiations done before hiring. In addition, the authors find that i-deals are more strongly linked to employee reactions in those organizations that have a greater amount of TLB.

Though transformational leadership (TFL) is one of the most researched theories in leadership literature (Miner, 2003), it continues to be criticized (Van Knippenberg and Sitkin, 2013), on numerous grounds. In the fifth paper of this issue, titled “Unpacking transformational leadership: Dimensional analysis with psychological empowerment,” Mohammed Haris Minai, Hemang Jauhari, Manish Kumar and Shailendra Singh address the lack of conceptual distinction in the dimensions of TFL, by unpacking the various constructs. To take cognizance of the criticisms regarding the operationalization, the authors use a different conceptualization than Bass (1985). They choose psychological empowerment as the dependent variable due to extant research pointing to empowerment being the mechanism by which transformational leaders achieve their beneficial outcomes. A time-

lagged survey-based study was conducted in a large Indian IT services organization, with the help of HR staff members. The findings are based on 335 common respondents for both surveys. The authors find that the dimensions of TFL are not equally salient in influencing psychological empowerment. Inspirational communication stands out as being the one dimension that affects all dimensions of psychological empowerment. The paper provides additional support for unpacking the overarching construct of TFL.

Another aspect of empowerment is structural empowerment (Wallace *et al.*, 2011). Thus, to get a holistic understanding of the role of empowerment on individual outcomes, it is necessary to understand how structural empowerment affects outcomes. This is the theme of the next paper in this issue, coauthored by Genuine Narzary and Sasmita Palo, and titled “Structural empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior: The mediating-moderating effect of job satisfaction.” In their study of health care workers in the northeastern part of India, the authors found evidence for the relationship between structural empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) being contingent upon job satisfaction. The study is also important as it includes primary health care workers, rather than just nurses in professionally run hospitals. Given that the majority of nurses in India function in the primary health care sector (Mohan *et al.*, 2003), this study makes an important contribution. These midwives and nurses participate in maternal health, child health and family planning services, apart from other duties (Malik, 2009). The study was designed to investigate the mediating-moderating effect of job satisfaction between structural empowerment and OCB. Responses were gathered from 178 auxiliary nurse and midwives working in primary health care centers in Chirang and Kokrajhar districts of Assam. The mediating-moderating effect of job satisfaction was assessed using structural equation modeling techniques. Results show that job satisfaction has a significant mediated-moderation effect (0.23) between structural empowerment and OCB. The proposed research model is able to explain 22.2% of variation in OCB. Therefore, promoting structural empowerment may help the medical officers (supervisors) to increase auxiliary nurse and midwives level of job satisfaction and promote OCB.

Cross-national issues

The final set of papers in this issue take a comparative approach to understanding management in the Indian context. India is known to be high on gender inequality (Chhokar *et al.*, 2007), and gender issues are often linked with job-related demands, at least as perceived in the organization. In the Indian context, research on gender and job-demands interplay has been relatively muted, perhaps due to the slow uptake of women’s participation in the workforce (Krishnaraj, 2003). The relatively weak participation of women in the workforce make it increasingly difficult for India to fully exploit its demographic dividend. To this end, the government has launched schemes targeted at encouraging the education of the girl child (via the “Beti bachao, beti padhao” (Save the girl child, educate the girl child) program) and providing preferential access to them for the skilling schemes discussed earlier.

In the first article in this set, titled “Gender, Workplace Support, and Perceived Job Demands in the US and Indian Context”, Dina Banerjee and Vijayta Doshi explore the perception of job demands in a developed country (US) and India. Women perceived higher job demands in both contexts, reflecting some similarity between these contexts especially as regards gender perception of demands. The study provides an alternative way of looking at gender, job demands and workplace support. The paper presents the under-researched dynamics of gender, workplace support and perceived job demands in two different contexts, US and India. It draws from two studies conducted in different contexts (US and India) via different methodological approaches (quantitative and qualitative, respectively). It was found that in both the US and India, women perceived considerably greater job demands than men.

In terms of workplace support, both the studies found that workplace culture and supervisors' supportive influenced the perception of job demands, but the same was not true for coworkers' support which mainly helped in coping rather than actually reducing the perception of job demands. The article contributes to research and practice by concluding that job demands as a construct is not clearly segregated from gender demands or expectations, especially in the way women "perceive" it. Women remain "conscious" of their gender in the workplace. Women construct job demands as "job-family" demands and workplace support as "job-family" support. The present study provides an alternative way of thinking about gender, job demands and workplace support. Its value underlies in the way it raises the voices of women workers. The study is particularly salient as it differentiates the perception of job demands between genders. In particular, its suggestion that females remain conscious of their gender in the workplace and conceptualize job demands as job-family demands merits further study.

The second paper in this set is titled "Work-family culture and organizational commitment: A multidimensional cross-national study", and coauthored by Tanuja Agarwala, Amaia Arizkuren-Elita, Elsa Del Castillo and Marta Muniz-Ferrer. The paper analyzes the relationship of work-family culture and organizational commitment in three different countries (India, Peru and Spain). The extent of perceived supportiveness of work-family culture is examined with respect to three dimensions, namely, managerial support, negative consequences and organizational time demands. The primary objective was to understand whether these three culture dimensions relate in different ways with different types of commitment: affective, continuance and normative. Data were collected from executives and managers from the manufacturing and service sector organizations in the three countries. Results suggest that perceived work-family culture was most favorable in Peru followed by Spain whereas for India it was least favorable. Managerial support dimension of work-family culture significantly predicted affective commitment for the three countries and normative commitment for Spain but not for India and Peru. Perceptions of absence or few negative career consequences resulting from utilization of family-friendly human resource practices was a significant predictor of affective commitment for India only. With respect to Peru and Spain, perception of few negative career consequences resulted in significantly lower normative commitment. Lower organizational time demands were a significant predictor of affective commitment only for Peru and not for India and Spain. Results are discussed with respect to country differences on individualism-collectivism and social exchange theory. Overall, these authors find that the perceived work-family culture was different in the three cultures they studied.

In the final paper of this set and this issue, titled "Lure of country of origin: An exploratory study of ex-host country nationals in India", Arup Varma and Rosalie Tung report on an exploratory study of the reasons for return of ex-Host Country Nationals (EHCNs) to India. Using the phenomena of "brain circulation" advanced by [Saxenian \(2005\)](#), these authors explore the reasons why highly qualified professionals might consider moving back to their country of origin (COO) from their country of residency (COR). The authors investigate the overall impression these EHCNs have of their COO, their believed reasons for them to be transferred to India, if the transfer was company-sponsored, the impediments faced by them, and finally their level of satisfaction with aspects of their assignment. The major factors found to impact the decision to move back home, were (1) quality of life, (2) better career opportunities, (3) remuneration and (4) family reasons. Indeed, the issue of "brain drain" from developing countries to developed nations, particularly those in the industrialized West, has been a concern for emerging markets such as China, Malaysia and India, and there are now serious attempts to attract EHCNs back to their COO. The authors used a sample of 98 executives from Southern India, to address questions related to the factors that determine

whether an EHCN returns to his/her COO when the opportunity arises, or decides to stay on his/her COR.

Given the Indian government's push to attract EHCNs to come back to India, and the numerous initiatives of the new Indian government, such as "Make in India," the findings of this study offer several pointers to the government to successfully convince Indian EHCNs to move back to India. Of course, in order to capitalize on this inward talent flow, both the government and industry will need to pay close attention to, and address, the factors that guide the EHCNs' decision to return home, and the factors that would keep them in India, once they have returned.

Conclusions and future work

Academic research is often criticized for being out of touch with what goes on in the so-called "real world." Ironically, industry is often equally to blame, as they do not give academic research the importance that it deserves. The fact remains that many scholarly works (e.g. Deming's work on Statistical Process Control and Total Quality Management) have led to significant improvements in industrial processes. Clearly, what is needed is a healthy coming together of both sides. In the case of India, as the economy continues to grow and prosper, more research is required, so that India's main advantage, its human resources, is skilled, trained and utilized appropriately.

Several key areas are ripe for comprehensive scholarly investigations. First, more research is needed in the informal sector of the Indian economy, which employs about 80% of the workforce (Saini and Budhwar, 2013), as well as the agriculture sector, which employs about 60% of the overall workforce (Saini and Budhwar, 2013). These sectors have traditionally been ignored by researchers interested in issues of Indian management. Given the important role played by these sectors, and the fact that they employ the bulk of the Indian workforce, we need to learn a lot more about the way things work, so that the human resources employed in these sectors can be managed better and made more efficient and productive.

Next, as is well-known, national culture significantly influences employee perceptions of their work experiences (Mercer, 2007). Thus, it is necessary for researchers in HRM to keep the cultural context in perspective while designing their research and building upon research done in other contexts. Specifically, a rapidly developing economy like India needs research at a similar pace to ensure that the productivity of Indians employed in the workforce is maximized. Furthermore, given the continuing talent crunch, research is also needed on how management talent resident outside India, whether of Indian origin or not, can be attracted to contribute to India's growth story.

The articles in this issue look at issues that can be broadly grouped into three major themes. We have categorized these using three broad themes – "innovation", "leadership and empowerment" and "cross-national issues".

Pertaining to innovation, Selvaraj and Joseph (in this issue) move the discussion on employee voice from a personality-centric view to a process-centric view. They assert that by replacing the spirit of confrontation with one of dialogical pragmatism, managers can encourage the innovation-related outcomes of employee voice. This is partly due to the fact that relationships are more amenable to modification than personality traits. Indeed, Gupta (in this issue) finds that, at least in India, integrated extrinsic motivation can serve as a facilitator for innovative work behaviors. This finding can also be used to explain some of the inconclusive evidence found between extrinsic motivation and innovation. Future research can build upon this both in developing and developed countries. Finally, Sharma and Nambudiri (in this issue) find that the relationship between engagement and innovativeness holds for an Indian context as well.

Next, Katou *et al.* (in this issue) suggest that offering i-deals to employees, particularly those focused on flexibility, can enhance employee engagement and commitment to the

organization. However, managers should keep the emotional stability of the employees and organizational climate in mind while encouraging developmental behavior and conveying support. In specific relation to TFL, it might be more pertinent to look at the individual dimensions of TFL rather than the overarching construct (Minai *et al.*, in this issue). Apart from resolving some of the disparate research findings in respect to TFL, this could also help clarify the specific nature of TFL in cultural contexts different from the Western one. For instance, Hartog *et al.* (1997) adapt certain items to cover TFL with lesser items in the Dutch context. A better approach might be to explore the individual dimensions. Leader development programs could also focus on specific behaviors after proper diagnosis depending upon the needs of the organization. Though Minai *et al.* (in this issue) look at psychological empowerment as a mechanism by which leaders influence positive outcomes by employees, Narzary and Palo (in this issue) demonstrate that structural empowerment is equally important and also within the control of leaders. Leaders should thus attempt to use all mechanisms at their disposal to achieve the engagement, commitment and dedication of employees to the organization. This would then lead to beneficial outcomes for the organization. Clearly, this field is ripe for academic exploration and the preceding discussion offers several propositions that can be used by scholars to conduct their studies.

From the last set of papers in this issue – that are cross-national in nature (Banerjee and Doshi; Agarwala *et al.*; and Varma and Tung) – several important inferences can be drawn. A particularly salient observation is that gender appears to have an important role to play even across disparate cultures. Women are burdened by the consciousness of their gender and perceive greater job demands than men even in cultures that vary significantly in their gender egalitarianism. Measures that increase female participation in the workforce could help in reducing the consciousness that the current female managers feel, and which specific measures help in alleviating this awareness would be an important area for future research. The relationships of commitment and the role of its dimensions are found to be differing for different cultural contexts (Agarwala *et al.*, in this issue). Though managerial support was predictive of affective commitment in Spain, Peru and India, this was not the case for continuance commitment and normative commitment. In particular, the findings from India were quite dissimilar to those from Spain and Peru. This could be explained by examining and explaining the role of the rapid economic and cultural transition underway in India, which further highlights the importance, and indeed necessity, of taking an emic approach to understanding people-related processes within the Indian context. Additionally, cultural differences, especially along the dimension of power-distance (Hofstede, 2011) seem to play an important role, and should be kept in mind in future research. In addition, dimensions of commitment might have different valences in different cultural contexts. For example, continuance commitment might be viewed negatively in individualistic cultures but might have a positive valence in collectivistic cultures.

Next, to address the shortage of skilled manpower to ensure the continued smooth growth trajectory of India, it is important for India to attract Indian professional working abroad. Varma and Tung (in this issue) have identified the major reasons and challenges that such individuals face while making this decision. In this connection, key decision-makers, both governmental and organizational, would do well to remain cognizant of these factors and address these to be able to access a global talent pool.

Further, studies in developing countries, especially India have usually been based in cross-sectional or cross-sectional time-lagged data. The need of the hour is for other research designs such as longitudinal studies, analysis of diary entries and experiments in general or field experiments in particular, to be used in conducting scholarly investigations in India. These research designs would help overcome common method biases and provide understanding of the development of constructs over time. One issue is the instability of

the Indian context; rapid attrition could lead to a large fall in data reports for subsequent periods in a longitudinal design, diversity of languages and dialects used in India might make analyses of diary entries difficult, and the lack of robust industry-academia interface might make field experiments difficult to undertake.

Another suggestion for future research in developing countries such as India would be the exploration of multipath designs. Studies by Banerjee and Doshi, Katou *et al.* and Minai *et al.* (all in this issue) report the need for exploring individual dimensions based on their findings. Indeed, large-scale data collection by governmental agencies can help in this regard, and the open data initiative (<http://data.gov.in>) taken by the government of India is a positive step in this direction.

Finally, researchers should also take up the generation and validation of scales for an Indian context. Traditionally, scholars in India have been using scales developed for Western contexts, which may not be applicable in India. As found in the article by Agarwala *et al.* (in this issue) certain constructs such as continuance commitment might have different implications in different cultural contexts. Interestingly, Selvaraj and Joseph (in this issue) have developed a scale but suggest its broader validation, while Gupta (in this issue) has also used a scale developed in India. Clearly, generalizability from India to other cultures should be considered carefully.

Overall, we are convinced that this special issue presents nine very interesting papers, which give the reader a glimpse into the type of research being conducted by scholars from India and abroad on issues important to Indian management.

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Notes

1. Two of the papers included in this list were authored by one or more of the editors – for these papers, the review process was handled independently by the other editors.
2. Some content in the subsequent paragraphs is drawn directly from the abstracts prepared specifically for this purpose by the authors.

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