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Editorial

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Welcome to the first issue of the fifth volume. We would like to thank the various authors who have contributed to this special issue devoted to the memory of Professor Jorma Larimo. The special issue will be presented to the free on-line conference called the 4th Nordic International Business, Export Marketing, International Entrepreneurship and Tourism Conference 2022, which will be held on-line on ZOOM during 5th to 6th November 2022. The conference is sponsored by the International Journal of Export Marketing and Nordic Journal of Tourism, which both offer special issues for this event.

This issue includes five papers in the field of export marketing, international business, and international entrepreneurship. The five papers are summarised in the following paragraphs. The first paper aims to investigate the interrelations between effectuation, causation, service co-creation and customer satisfaction. The second paper examines how consumer quality perceptions and purchase intentions are influenced by country-of-origin level, specifically for an unfamiliar region of origin (ROO), and by parent country familiarity. We conducted an experiment among Norwegian consumers testing products from Germany (familiar) or Bulgaria (unfamiliar) versus unfamiliar sub-national regions in these two countries. The third paper aims to assess “Guanxi” based on Vietnamese enterprises and to test the model developed by Chen and her colleagues (2009). The fourth paper identifies the main sources of Covid-19 disruptions and investigates how small and medium-sized exporters in the Norwegian seafood industry respond to disruptions and uncertainty caused by the pandemic in their supply chains. Finally, the fifth paper undertakes an up-to-date comprehensive review study providing an analysis of key empirical concepts, theoretical foundations, and major methodological trends about the country-of-origin effect in services marketing.

The first paper, by Alam, Masroor, Reezvi, Dey, Nabi and Khan, is based on data collected by an interviewer-administered structured questionnaire from 100 owners of tour operators using nonprobability judgemental and snowball sampling and analysed using PLS-SEM, and it found that causation has no relation to service co-creation. The study also finds that effectuation strongly correlates with service co-creation, which has a strong positive relationship with customer satisfaction.

The second study, by Pasquine, Moen and Glavee-Geo, is based on an experiment among Norwegian consumers testing products from Germany (familiar) or Bulgaria (unfamiliar) versus unfamiliar sub-national regions in these two countries, and it found that a strategy to help overcome initial negative reactions for products from unfamiliar countries, specifically among younger consumers, may be to add the unfamiliar sub-national region to the product information. However, simply labelling a product with an unfamiliar sub-national region, when the product comes from a familiar country, is inadvisable. The research revealed that communication of an unfamiliar ROO can influence quality perceptions and purchase intentions in a foreign market entry.

The third study, by Kim, Dang, Bui, Cu and Tran, based on 494 workers in major cities, showed that Vietnamese “Guanxi” under two dimensions, namely personal-life inclusion and deference to supervisors, and revealed significant differences between these dimensions in company hierarchy, age and seniority. In particular, differentiation from Guanxi in China was found with regard to gender. These findings characterise Guanxi in Vietnam, and future research should explore its application in HR management, adaptation of export firms working with local sellers/buyers, and localisation of international firms in Vietnam through an in-depth understanding of workplace relationships.

The study by Nyu, Nilssen and Nenadic, based on five in-depth interviews with seafood exporters and a survey from 16 exporters, identified three main sources of Covid-19 disruptions, namely market shocks, production side challenges, and logistics problems. The study revealed that exporters pursued three different strategic paths in response to these disruptions: specifically, integration, disavowal, and reclamation. These strategic paths are reflective of the exporters’ capabilities, namely their flexibility, relationship building capability, and entrepreneurial orientation, which allow them to remain resilient under disruptive conditions.

Finally, the study by Santos, based on a systematic literature review study between 1986 and 2021, revealed a wide range of studies investigating the country-of-origin effect on service quality and purchase decisions. Some limitations were also identified regarding the sample, service type,

theoretical background, and origins included in the studies. This study makes a significant contribution to the international marketing literature by offering an in-depth understanding of the country-of-origin effect within the services marketing frame.

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