



Editorial

Dr. Sonali Bhattacharya¹ and Dr. Dipasha Sharma²

This Special issue of Australasian Accounting Business and Finance Journal (AABFJ) comes out of the SCMHRD- TECHNOLOGY, ECONOMICS, ANALYTICS AND MANAGEMENT (S-TEAM) CONFERENCE 2021.

This is the second conference virtually organized by Symbiosis Centre for Management and Human Resource Development (SCMHRD) in collaboration with EM Normandie Business School, France. The antecedents and consequents of Environment, Social and Governance practices have been of interest in recent decades especially its relationship with United Nations sustainable development goals (UNSDG). For example: 74 SCOPUS indexed articles have been published in last two and half years on the convergence of thoughts around ESG practices, sustainable reporting and their linkages with UNSDG. Hence in S-Team 2021 Conference one of the tracks was devoted to the topic of “**Sustainable Accountability, Circular Economy and Corporate Financial Performance.**” The track engaged discussion on sustainable finance, sustainable reporting, financial inclusion and their implications on corporate financial performances. The myopic focus on financial performance negatively impacts the firms’ long term corporate sustainability (Lo et al., 2021). The dual advantage of environmental and economic performance is leading its way towards the concept of circular economy with the core theme of extended usage of products, materials or resources (Gregson et al., 2015). Circular economy leads to sustainable business management impacting strategic planning, cost management, supply chain management, quality management, environmental management, process management, logistics and reverse logistics, service management, and research and development (Barros et al., 2021). However, there is dearth of studies connecting the aspects of circular economy and financial reporting or corporate sustainable performance of firms (Gunarathne et al., 2021). This has created a room of opportunity for researchers to explore and observe empirical evidences in this niche domain. Firms need to align their strategic plans around circular economy theme as many countries like China has announced it as a part of its Economic and Sustainable Plans (13th-five-year plan, 2016–2020). Kuo and Chang (2021) found empirical evidences of higher sustainable growth rate and return on equity by firms which disclosed more aligned financial or sustainable reporting to circular economic goal.

This Special Issue is aiming to open up conversation among scholars on sustainable financial reporting & practice with respect to the dynamic geo-political, economic and technological business environment. In line with this aim, Arora and Sharma (2022) analyse the impact of

¹ sonali_bhattacharya@scmhrd.edu, Symbiosis Centre for Management & Human Resource Development, Symbiosis International (Deemed University) SIU, India

² dipasha_sharma@scmhrd.edu, Symbiosis Centre for Management & Human Resource Development, Symbiosis International (Deemed University) SIU, India

Environment, Social and Governance reporting on firms' cost of debt using panel data regression. In next article Deshmukh et al. (2022) discusses influence of black swan events such as U.S. Debt Ceiling Crisis (2011-12), Black Monday China, BREXIT and Demonetization (2015-16), and COVID-19 (2020) crisis on firms' financial, marketing and ESG performances.

Advent of technology has transformed the way we explore, describe predict and prescribe strategic decision regarding firms' financial and sustainable performances. Pol et al., (2022) predict credit rating of firms using several Deep learning approaches under uncertain business situations comprising of Financial risk, Business risk, Industrial risk, and Macroeconomic states. In the next article presented in this issue, Bhadamkar & Bhattacharya(2022) predict stock indices by sentiment analysis of twitter posts.

Based on top fifty Indian firms enlisted in National Stock Exchanges, Sensharma et al. (2022) study the factors determining greenwashing behaviour of the firms. In the next article, Bhattacharya and Sinha (2022) discuss the customer engagement and satisfaction on use of Artificial Intelligence in Banking services through a qualitative analysis approach and relative importance index technique. In the following study, Sinha et al. (2022) carried out sentiment analysis of newspaper reports to study the psychological impacts on public and market psych due to shock of Demonetization announced by Government of India in the year 2016. It was followed by a study by Shah and Bhagwat (2022) on critical assessments of Infrastructure Investment Trusts in India. In the next article, the authors Bharti and Kumari (2022) used Data Envelopment Analysis and Structural Equation Modelling to study the impact of Regional Rural Banks on agricultural finance in India. In the last article Neelam and Bhattacharya (2022) attempted to conduct a brief review of financial technological solutions on financial inclusion. The articles presented in this Special Issue provides some insights into possible future research directions and big picture issues associated with global sustainability issues.

References

- Arora, A., & Sharma, D. (2022). Do Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Performance Scores Reduce the Cost of Debt? Evidence from Indian firms. *Australasian Accounting Business and Finance Journal*, 16(5). <http://dx.doi.org/10.14453/aabfj.v16i5.02>
- Barros, M. V., Salvador, R., do Prado, G. F., de Francisco, A. C., & Piekarski, C. M. (2021). Circular economy as a driver to sustainable businesses. *Cleaner Environmental Systems*, 2, 100006
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cesys.2020.100006>
- Bhadamkar, A., and Bhattacharya, S. (2022). Tesla Inc. Stock Prediction using Sentiment Analysis. *Australasian Accounting Business and Finance Journal*, 16(5).
<http://dx.doi.org/10.14453/aabfj.v16i5.05>
- Bharti, N., and Kumari, S. (2022). Is Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) contributing to Agriculture Finance: A Critical analysis of the Performance of RRBs in India using DEA and Structure Equation Modeling. *Australasian Accounting Business and Finance Journal*, 16(5).
<http://dx.doi.org/10.14453/aabfj.v16i5.10>
- Bhattacharya, C., and Sinha, M. (2022). Role of Artificial Intelligence in Banking for Leveraging Customer Experience. *Australasian Accounting Business and Finance Journal*, 16(5).
<http://dx.doi.org/10.14453/aabfj.v16i5.07>

- Deshmukh, P., Sharma, D., and Sharma, P. (2022). Do Socially Responsible Indices outperform the market during Black Swan event: Evidence from Indian markets during Global Financial and COVID-19 crisis. *Australasian Accounting Business and Finance Journal*, 16(5). <http://dx.doi.org/10.14453/aabfj.v16i5.03>
- Gregson, N., Crang, M., Fuller, S., & Holmes, H. (2015). Interrogating the circular economy: the moral economy of resource recovery in the EU. *Economy and society*, 44(2), 218-243. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03085147.2015.1013353>
- Gunarathne, N., Wijayasundara, M., Senaratne, S., Kanchana, P. K., & Cooray, T. (2021). Uncovering corporate disclosure for a circular economy: An analysis of sustainability and integrated reporting by Sri Lankan companies. *Sustainable Production and Consumption*, 27, 787-801. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.spc.2021.02.003>
- Kuo, L., & Chang, B. G. (2021). The affecting factors of circular economy information and its impact on corporate economic sustainability-Evidence from China. *Sustainable production and consumption*, 27, 986-997. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.spc.2021.02.014>
- Lo, A. Y., Liu, S., Chow, A. S., Pei, Q., Cheung, L. T., & Fok, L. (2021). Business vulnerability assessment: a firm-level analysis of micro-and small businesses in China. *Natural Hazards*, 108(1), 867-890. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11069-021-04710-z>
- Neelam, and Bhattacharya, S. (2022). Financial technology solutions for financial inclusion: A review and future agenda. *Australasian Accounting Business and Finance Journal*, 16(5). <http://dx.doi.org/10.14453/aabfj.v16i5.11>
- Pol, S., Hudnukar, M., and Ambekar, S. (2022). Predicting the Credit Ratings using Deep Learning Models – An Analysis of IT Industry. *Australasian Accounting Business and Finance Journal*, 16(5). <http://dx.doi.org/10.14453/aabfj.v16i5.04>
- Sensharma, S., Sinha, M., and Sharma, D. (2022). Do Indian Firms Engage in Greenwashing? Evidences from Indian Firms. *Australasian Accounting Business and Finance Journal*, 16(5). <http://dx.doi.org/10.14453/aabfj.v16i5.06>
- Shah, M., and Bhagwat, K. (2022). Critical Assessment of Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvITs) in India and Suggesting measures to increase their Efficiency in comparison with International Instruments. *Australasian Accounting Business and Finance Journal*, 16(5). <http://dx.doi.org/10.14453/aabfj.v16i5.08>
- Sinha, M., Sharma, D. and Sheorey, P. A. (2022). How Markets and Public Sentiments Reacted during Demonetization? Study of a Significant Event in Indian Economy. *Australasian Accounting Business and Finance Journal*, 16(5). <http://dx.doi.org/10.14453/aabfj.v16i6.09>