

## EDITORIAL

One of the most well-known theories on market functioning according to the firm's perspective is that of transaction costs analysis (TCA), proposed in its early versions by Coase (1937)<sup>1</sup> and then by Williamson (1975, 1985)<sup>2</sup> who formulated the most relevant statements about this theory. The TCA approach supported the academic literature in explaining the criteria of organizational forms and strategic choices, among which are diversification, vertical integration, internationalization, and various forms of cooperation and interaction among firms. Two key assumptions of human behavior support this theory: bounded rationality and opportunism.

Bounded rationality assumes that decision makers have limited cognitive capabilities and a not fully rational behavior. This is due to limited information processing and communication ability (Simon, 1957)<sup>3</sup>. These constraints emerge in conditions of uncertainty, for which the context of an economic interaction cannot be specified *ex ante* and performance cannot be verified *ex post* (Rindfleisch and Heide, 1997)<sup>4</sup>.

Opportunism is defined as "self-interest seeking with guile. This includes but is scarcely limited to more blatant forms, such as lying, stealing, and cheating. ... More generally, opportunism refers to the incomplete or distorted disclosure of information, especially to calculated efforts to mislead, distort, disguise, obfuscate, or otherwise confuse" (Williamson, 1985, p. 47).

Unfortunately, the TCA literature lacks an understanding of what determines limited rationality and opportunism, and which are the factors that have an influence on these dimensions of human behavior.

The papers collected in this issue of The International Journal of Economic Behavior (IJE) contribute in continuing the construction of the complex mosaic of concepts and tools that is necessary for the study of economic behavior. They provide different perspectives on interactions in which individual and organizations are involved, responding to influencing factors whose knowledge is still limited.

The study of Wei-Bin Zhang is focused on dynamic interactions among capital accumulation, environmental change, habit formation and preference change. The Author proposes a model which integrates the economic, environmental and habit formation dynamics in the neoclassical growth theory and the traditional models of environmental economics. The study demonstrates some dynamic interactions among economic variables which cannot be predicted by the neoclassical growth theory or the traditional models of environmental change.

Silvio Brondoni, Margherita Corniani and Sabina Riboldazzi analyze the approach followed by global retailers facing the dramatic growth in competition within the retail sector. The state of over-supply of global markets pushes mass retailers to adopt hard competitive policies based on market-driven management, which emphasize continuous product

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<sup>1</sup> Coase R.H. (1937), "The Nature of The Firm", *Economica*, n. 4, pp. 386-405.

<sup>2</sup> Williamson O.E. (1975), *Markets and Hierarchies*, New York, Free Press. Williamson O.E. (1985), *The Economic Institutions of Capitalism*, New York, Free Press.

<sup>3</sup> Simon H.A. (1959), "Theories of Decision Making in Economics and Behavioral Sciences", *American Economic Review*, n. 49, June, pp. 223-83.

<sup>4</sup> Rindfleisch A., Heide J.B. (1997), "Transaction cost analysis: past, present, and future applications", *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 61, n. 4, Oct., pp 30-54.

innovation in order to satisfy temporary demand opportunities (demand bubbles). The authors provide an overview of the main issues concerning market-driven innovation for global retailers, and they propose a framework of potential areas of innovation to compete in global markets.

The communication of foreign products through retail stores in the Chinese market is the subject of the paper from Francesca Checchinato, Lala Hu and Tiziano Vescovi. Since stores can be an important starting point to communicate the country of origin image of foreign products, the Authors conducted a research on Italian products by analyzing through the mystery shopping technique whether Italy is somehow recalled in the hard elements of products or during the shopping experience. Results highlighted a relatively traditional, marginal, and iconic use of the country of origin factor in a market that is new, important, and highly dynamic.

Laurentiu Mincu and Thorsten Gruber explored the factors of influence on the use of self-service technologies in the East European markets. The empirical research conducted by the authors reveals similarities, but also differences compared to the extant literature on the use of self service technologies, most of which is referred to Western countries.

Tonino Pencarelli, Barbara Francioni and Linda Gabbianelli provide an analysis on the factors influencing consumers choices and purchasing intention towards sporting firearms, based on a research on hunters and firearms retailers in Italy.

The article from Antonio Iazzi, Oronzo Trio, Monica Fait and Lea Iaia focused on the role of web communication and customer relationship management for marketing strategies. The authors conducted an analysis on the wine industry, examining the contribution given by the social media in redefining firm-client relations within customer relationship management systems.

In the same field of web communication is the article from Marco Cioppi, who pointed the attention on the ways in which websites are used by retailers. The analysis has been based on a model that identifies specific variables relating to websites, which can influence communication effectiveness at any phase of the purchasing process.

John Kolade Obamiro's work help us to understand which are the effects of waiting time on patient satisfaction in the healthcare centers. The author presents a study on a sample of outpatients of public and private hospitals in Nigeria to ascertain their views as regards to waiting time and its influence on their level of satisfaction.

An analysis on political and economic effects of citizen education policies if offered by Edi Puka and Dilina Beshiri, based on a literature review.

The work of Francesco Petrucci focuses on consumer behavior deepening the effects of music on food preferences. Through an experiment on food consumption in different musical background conditions, the study provides evidence that music influences subjects' response enhancing perceived liking and pleasure, and that expertise dimension do not influence individual perceptions.

Antonio Coviello and Giovanni Di Trapani developed their work on the concept of supply risk management and the adoption of proper risk mitigation strategies within firms. Based on a literature review, the analysis provides guidelines for companies on the adoption of risk management solutions.

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***Fabio Musso***  
*Editor-in-Chief*