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### **Sustainability, Mobility, Opportunity- Introduction to the ERPBSS-2020 Special Issue of eRTR**

**The 5<sup>th</sup> Emerging Research Paradigms in Business and Social Sciences (ERPBSS)** was held at Middlesex University Dubai from January 14-16 2020. Aligned with the EXPO 2020 themes of Sustainability, Mobility and Opportunity, this conference brought together more than 180 researchers and practitioners from countries worldwide. The conference provided a platform for fruitful discussion of new concepts, progressive methodologies, and innovative practices from multiple disciplines in line with the conference themes and sub-themes. Over 90 research papers and case studies were presented at ERPBSS-2020, along with several plenary and panel sessions, and student poster presentations. Over 90 research papers and case studies were presented at ERPBSS-2020, along with several plenary and panel sessions, and student poster presentations. This special issue showcases some of the diverse topics of discussion at the conference, and features 7 research notes and papers.

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Since 2011, Middlesex University Dubai's ERPBSS conferences have provided researchers from the United Arab Emirates and beyond with a platform for critical discussion of their research, dissemination of findings, and opportunities for networking and collaboration. eRTR is proud to supporter of the fifth conference in this series, ERPBSS-2020. This special issue

included some of the research findings presented at, and stemming from, this conference. For this special issue, we received several submissions, and, after the review and revision process, we accepted nine papers for publication. The topics of discussion in the special issue address a range of pertinent issues facing the wider tourism industry, and offer unique insights which are aligned with the special issue theme of sustainability, opportunity, and mobility perspectives.

Several papers were aligned more with the **sustainability** theme. This includes Nair and Dileep's case study of responsible tourism in Kumarakom, India, which focuses on integrating 'social sustainability' through women empowerment. The study shows how various stakeholders can contribute to empower women and develop their roles as key players in the future of tourism.

Three papers focused on the **opportunity** theme. The study by Handoko and Purwijantiningsih explored the role of vocational education and training in empowering underprivileged youth in Indonesia to develop their personalities as well as their professionalism to build a career in the hospitality and tourism industry. The study found that vocational education can help young people secure jobs in the hospitality and tourism industry, and help break the chain of poverty. Vreckova, Paris, and Jeffrey's study examined the intercultural sensitivity between women and men flight attendants using a sample of 204 flight attendants in the Middle East. Given their finding that female flight attendance displays greater intercultural sensitivity than their male colleagues across several domains, they make recommendations for airlines' training programmes and thus providing opportunity for both male and female flight attendants to build a successful career. Pawłowska-Legwand study explores the opportunity of co-creation of tourism experience which is beneficial for both the Destination Management Organisations and tourists. Specifically, the paper focuses on the use of ICT, using the example of Małopolska Voivodeship, Poland, in the co-creation of tourism experience including its inherent benefits and potential challenges.

Three papers were linked with the **mobility** theme. The first one by Kumar De and Rajbongshi investigates the mobility issues and associated costs facing city commuters due to traffic congestion particularly in the peak business hours in Shillong, India. The study provides several policy recommendations to address the substantial direct and indirect cost imposed by traffic congestion including time loss, excessive fuel expenditure and increase in vehicle operating costs. The second one by Dsilva, Balasubramanian, Ajayan, and Paris examine the gap that

exists between expectations and (actual) experience with the services of low-cost airlines across the various dimensions of service quality (SERVQUAL) among international business travelers. The study is useful practitioners of low-cost airlines to look beyond their traditional market of leisure travellers and forge strategies to attract business travelers. Feldbauer and Paris study explored the relationship between EU political opinion, Euroscepticism and populist attitudes with destination image perception of European tourists. Their study has its origins in the recent rise and mobilization of right-wing populist parties in the EU and other contemporary changes and challenges to the European project.

We thank the organizers and participants of the ERPBSS-2020 conference, the editorial team of this special issue, the reviewers, and last but not least the authors themselves. Overall, we believe this special issue is timely for practitioners and academics to extend the debate across special issue theme of sustainability, opportunity, and mobility the use the insights to address the significant challenges facing the travel and tourism, and hospitality sector due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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