Preface

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Biographical notes: Lavanya (Leo) Rastogi, is an alumnus of Harvard Business School and received his PhD in Leadership from Salford University (UK). Currently, he is an Adjunct Professor and Anahata Group Chair at IINBHW, he serves as the Director of Research on mindfulness-based interventions. He is a blended mix of researcher, best-selling author and thought leader, and his work has been featured in leading publications including Forbes, GQ, Quien, etc. Concurrently, he is also the President and Founder of Minerva Group, USA and Co-Founder of the leading digital selfcare and wellbeing platform ayam™. His prior corporate career includes several stints as CEO of INC500 and GPTW listed business and Public Company board memberships.

In this special issue focusing on India, the following six studies focus on the role of effective branding and consumer perceptions across a range of industries and services across modern India. Through a detailed investigation of current academic literature on their chosen topic and by using qualitative techniques for amassing subject-related data, the collection of international authors lay out their findings. In turn, they propose the usefulness of such studies for marketing and branding experts, governmental bodies and commercial organisations across India.

The first paper is entitled 'Box office collection of sequel movies: exploring brand extension effect' by Dewani et al., affiliated with the Indian Institute of Management Lucknow, State of Pradesh, India. In it, the author examines the role that sequels play in Hindi Cinema, or Bollywood, as brand extensions that equate to monetary and cognitive dividends. Two studies were carried out by the researcher over a period of five years for both sequels and non-sequels to analyse movie earnings and to ascertain the customer perceptions for precursors of purchase behaviour. The first study examined the box office collection of movies in India, while the second study took the form of an experiment based on the effect of sequels on quality perceptions, intention to watch and word of mouth of movies. The author lays out the important impact of brand extensions and the factors that lead to its success, as well as the factors that affect consumer purchase intention. The paper goes on to suggest that overall, sequels perform better than non-sequel movies, and have higher ratings on precursors of purchase behaviour than their non-sequel counterparts.

In the second paper, entitled 'Investigating the relationship of semiotics associated with colour and font of Google logo with brand perception', authored by Vikas Singla and Sahil Raj affiliated with the Punjabi University (India), Viput Ongsakul,

affiliated with the National Institute of Development Administration (Thailand), and Tran Tien Khoa, affiliated with the National University, Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City, (Vietnam), discuss the role of brand semiotics and brand perception, using the Google logo as an example. The paper reveals a qualitative study that was carried out into the effect of colours and fonts on emotions, as well as the influence of semiotics in logos on brand perception, pointing to the aesthetics used to capture consumer attention. The authors outline the success of Google's logo in light of the above study and its overall brand perception, revealing how the multi-colour sans serif logo created a higher brand perception by scoring higher on both aesthetics and ability to capture attention. The contributors suggest how the study could be useful for future studies about single-colour and multi-colour logo combinations and their effectiveness, as well as being an important contribution to logo design as a successful communication strategy for brand managers.

The third paper is entitled 'Effect of earnings smoothness on firm performance: a study of Indian National Stock Exchange' and is authored by Shikhil Munjal and Gurcharan Singh, affiliated with the Punjabi University (India), and Bashir Tijjani, affiliated with the Imam Abdul Rahman bin Faisal University, Dammam (Saudi Arabia). The study aims to empirically examine the impact of earnings smoothness on operational and market performance of the Indian National Stock Exchange (NSE) using panel data. In the study, the dynamic generalised method of moment is used between the time period of 2013–2019 for companies listed on NSE 500 Index. The authors point to the examination of smooth earnings as a key feature of other variables that can provide value through information asymmetry reduction for the organisation, and the impact on shareholders. They also refer to the emergence of high-quality earnings and the growth of the stock market in India in recent years. Through a comparison of present literature on the topic of earnings smoothness and its variables, the study concludes that there is a significant effect of earning smoothing on a company's operational as well as market performance in the Indian scenario, pointing to prior literature on the topic that describes how both ROA and Tobin's Q affect earning smoothness.

In paper four, we find the study entitled 'Delineating the outcomes of fans' psychological commitment to sport team: product knowledge, attitude towards the sponsor, and purchase intentions', which is written by Jaskirat Singh Rai, affiliated with the Chandigarh Business School of Administration (India), Maher N. Itani affiliated with the Ajman University (United Arab Emirates), and Apar Singh and Amanpreet Singh affiliated with the Punjabi University (India). This study examines the relationship between fans' psychological commitment to a team (PCT) and the three outcomes to sponsors, namely; cognitive (product knowledge), affective (attitude towards sponsors), and behavioural (purchase intentions). By applying the PCT scale on attendees of two teams in the Indian Premier League (IPL), the study aims to understand if the concept of PCT varies depending on the sponsor. Through covariance-based structural equation modelling (CBSEM), fans' commitment on sponsors and the influence of each outcome of fans' commitment on one another, the scholars provide evidence to support the significant impact of PCT on cognitive and affective outcomes, and the negative or no impact found on behavioural outcome. The study goes on to outline how customers make decisions relating to consumption, the findings of which can have implications for sports management and how to extend their knowledge of sponsorship.

The fifth paper in this issue bears the title 'Scale development of customer satisfaction with complaint handling and service recovery in an e-commerce setting', and

its contributors are Parveen Kumari and Satinder Kumar affiliated with the Punjabi University (India) and Maher N. Itani, affiliated with the Ajman University (United Arab Emirates). This study examines the dimensionality of customer satisfaction with complaint handling in the service failure and recovery context within the e-commerce setting, and offers evidence of construct validity as a new multi-item measure of customer satisfaction for e-commerce. Through comparing seminal works in the complaint handling and service recovery literature, a five-factor structure of recovery and return, employee dealing and timely response, complaint solution, payment and security, and website related information was examined. A sample of consumers from northern India who had experienced a failure in online shopping over the last months was used, in which a questionnaire was provided in relation to complaints. The results showed how customer satisfaction is strongly related with complaint handling and service recovery and offers insights into the effect of customer shopping satisfaction from service recovery after service failure in e-commerce.

The sixth and final paper entitled 'Dynamics of Punjab state's tourist image: a social media analytics perspective', and has been authored by Viput Ongsakul, affiliated with the National Institute of Development Administration (Thailand), Tanveer Kajla and Sahil Raj, affiliated with the Punjabi University (India), Uju Violet Alola, affiliated with the Istanbul Gelisim University (Turkey), and Tran Tien Khoa, affiliated with the International University, Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City, (Vietnam). This research paper deals with the dynamics of Punjab State's tourist image from the standpoint of social media analytics and analyses available data on social media platforms for user-generated content. Using techniques such as word cloud, keyword frequency counts and word association, this study locates various motivations for the popularity of Punjab State as a tourist attraction among its consumers, which could be of benefit to the state's destination management organisations on how to market tourist attractions across the country and internationally. The authors include a review of current literature relating to data acquisition, online complaints, the credibility of online content, web data and the tourism industry, and use data taken from the social media platforms TripAdvisor and Twitter to analyse the tourism destinations in the Punjab. Through frequent term analysis, the researchers were able to lay out some of the deciding factors in the popularity of various tourist sites or destinations, and the methodology used in the study can assist managers and tourist authorities to analyse the freely available tourist related online content.

In all six papers of this special issue, we find a range of study methodologies used to examine the effect and influence of certain types of marketing for brands and services that can be extremely useful for businesses and other organisations. As data collection on consumer habits becomes more and more sophisticated, the authors also show that tried and tested methods can be adapted to the new digital age.

The models proposed leave room for further research and can be useful tools in helping brand managers, marketing companies and organisations to assess their branding and marketing strategies, with a view to increasing consumer engagement and loyalty, as well as improving financial performance.