EDITORIAL PREFACE

Risk Approaches in Global Health Pandemics, Economics, and Project Management

Kenneth David Strang, Department of Business and Supply Chain Management, State University of New York, Plattsburgh, NY, USA & APPC Research, Australia

INTRODUCTION

Our fourth issue in 2012 presents risk assessment theories and applied approaches from across disciplines and cultures. As with the previous issue, each research manuscript applies a different methodology and each corresponding author is from a different country.

The sequencing of manuscripts is by theoretical relationship and not by the risk management framework of identification, assessment, evaluation, and control. The first manuscript is a qualitative study of risk control during a health care pandemic in China (the author was from Macedonia). The second paper is a literature review of key quantitative risk theories from a professor of economics in USA. The third manuscript builds on the second by regressing macroeconomic factors on a stock market performance sample in Pakistan. The fourth is a case study by a returning Russian author, where he integrates qualitative and quantitative risk techniques to create visual decision making models.

This issue concludes with an event report from the 2012 International Disaster Conference (written by a USA government employee). This submission was strategically selected because IJRCM is collaborating with IMAGO, City of New Orleans, and others, by inviting presentations for IDCE in 2013.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Qualitative Pandemic Health Risk Factors

Sugaretty (2012) applied an interpretative phenomenology philosophy to describe the risk control best-practice themes which emerged from WHO front-line practitioners dealing with the SARS pandemic in Hong Kong during 2003 (the region had recently returned to administrative sovereignty by the Peoples Republic of China in 1997 from UK colonial rule). She interviewed 22 practitioners and then applied the NVIVO software on the transcript narratives. She was able to identify four key risk control best-practice themes which participants felt were essential for controlling health care pandemics. A strong feature of her manuscript was that she explained the analysis procedures, plus she prefixed her analysis with a thorough literature review citing the relevant risk control factors documented from earlier pandemics.
Key Financial-Economics Risk Models

Read (2012) reviewed the economics literature, explaining the key theoretical quantitative principles underlying risk and uncertainty. He presented financial risk models that describe how stocks are priced and what the assumptions are for market-based hedges. He summarized the pivotal work of prominent theorists Daniel Bernoulli, Carl Friedrich Gauss, Louis Bachelier, Jacob Marschak, Harry Markowitz, William Sharpe, Paul Samuelson, Fischer Black, and Myron Scholes. An important contribution he made was to identify unresolved issues that require additional research to improve financial risk management.

Quantitative Macroeconomic Risk in Pakistan Stocks

Akhtar and Javed (2012) regressed two macroeconomic risk factors - inflation and industrial production - to measure their impact on Pakistan stocks. They sampled 50 companies listed on the Karachi Stock Exchange (KSE) in Pakistan, over 10 years ending in 2008 (at the tail end of the global financial crises). They used regression and the first order Augmented Dick Fuller test to develop a model showing a statistically significant relationship between macroeconomic inflation and production factors and Pakistan stock market performance. Interestingly, the coefficients were negative which indicated that the sampled KSE returns decreased as inflation and production risks increased. Their empirical study applying a modern portfolio analysis technique was a logical compliment to Read’s (2012) theoretical review.

Visual Risk Decision Making in Megaprojects

Returning author Raydugin (2012) documented visual oriented risk estimation best-practices from a case study of a large oil-gas engineering design mega-project. His study nicely compliments the change management mega-project study of Statoil (Norway) and CERN (Switzerland) published in the last issue by Villmo, Torvatn, and Karlsen (2012). In this study Raydugin illustrated how a color-coded risk assessment matrix was used to make decisions from during the engineering design options phase. He applied expected monetary value theory with qualitative rating scales and color coding flags to facilitate comparisons of complex alternatives by all mega-project stakeholders. His aim was also to ensure environmental, safety and quality criteria were evaluated on an equal emphasis as economic/profit goals.

International Disaster Conference

Nash (2012) reported on the International Disaster Conference and Exposition, which was held during January 17-19, 2012 at New Orleans, Louisiana during the exciting Mardi Gras festival. There were approximately 1700 attendees from 27 countries. The presentations included disaster management case studies from the American Red Cross, LA State Penitentiary, World Bank, Netherlands government, Israel government, Haiti government, as well as key USA government agencies such as FEMA and DHS.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Interestingly enough, the event report of Nash (2012) is a good lead in for the upcoming IDCE conference in 2013 where IJRCM is a media partner collaborating with the IDCE and IMAGO (see: http://personal.plattsburgh.edu/kstra003/ijrcm/esp.pdf). IJRCM will publish a special issue from papers accepted for the International Disaster Conference Exhibition (IDCE) in New Orleans LA January 8-10, 2013.
Kenneth David Strang has a Doctorate in Project Management (business research), an MBA (honors), a BS (honors), as well as a Business Technology diploma (honors). He is a certified Project Management Professional® from Project Management Institute, and is a Fellow of the Life Management Institute (distinction, specialized in actuary statistics and pension systems), from the Life Office Management Association. His research interests include: leadership, multicultural e-learning, marketing new product development, knowledge management, and risk/e-business project management. He teaches subjects in business, in class as well as online, plus he supervises doctorate students. He has authored numerous manuscripts and books since 1981. Finally he is an Editor and Associate Editor at several journals.