When I was requested to write a foreword for this contribution of Dr. Rajagopal and Dr. Raquel Castaño, I had no second thought to just accept it for the reasons that these seasoned academics have contributed research on consumer behavior and market shifts for many years and have always stayed contemporary with their knowledge. As we all know, consumer markets are growing manifold since the mid-twentieth century alongside the innovation and technology in the global business arena. Consumers in the twenty-first century have turned dynamic, analytical, experimental, and also emotional towards spending and consumption. A consumer passes through a variety of stages in gaining experience on consumption and sharing it with peers. Consumers in the age of advanced information and communication technology are experiencing the four Cs, comprising convenience, cost, customer care, and communication. Recent technology advances in virtual shopping and enhanced reality are breaking the boundaries between traditional and Internet retailing. Such advancement in retailing is driving interactions between companies with consumers through multiple touch points. However, the consumer contentment is driven by trust, emotions, psychodynamics, and self-reference criterion that are often complex and characterized with high volatility. Authors present substantial arguments in this book on managing the above subtle consumer behavioral issues on the unconsciousness of consumers, well-being and happiness, vulnerability, multiculturalism, social media, and virtual platforms in global markets.

In my view, consumer decisions are often driven by the resilient emotions. As consumers grow in community, their decision-making abilities are also largely affected by social views. An effectively channeled communication can make consumers passionate for associating with a company and their marketing policies. However, failure of companies to keep their promise constructs negative emotions that are potentially destructive in developing trust and loyalty among consumers. This book addresses the positive and negative attributes in building consumer experience in a balanced manner and offers a new framework for improving the consumer behavior in changing marketing conditions. Authors’ diagnosis to the interactive experiences
of consumers in the markets today illustrates two routes to cognition or knowledge consisting of affective and rational typology. The discussions are based on the critical review of classical, neo-classical, and modern theories on consumer behavior, emotions, cognitions, and experiential marketing that suggest that emotion can be a cause as well as an effect of information processing and deriving market experiences by consumers.

Rajagopal and Raquel Castaño not only validate the theoretical assumptions on consumer experience and emotions in exhibiting behavioral traits but also demonstrate new frameworks aligning the consumer knowledge and experience with the marketing strategies of the companies to strike a win-win face in the market. The success of the efforts of authors in showcasing their ideas appears convincingly in this book. I am confident that this book will blaze a new trail towards revisiting consumer behavior knowledge by analyzing the obscure attributes of experience, emotions, empathy, and emancipation. I take a judgmental stand after appraising the contents of the book and their style of writing that this will be a welcome addition to the existing literature on the subject and followed by many to drive research in the future.

Congratulations to Rajagopal and Raquel Castaño for this valuable contribution.

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María de Lourdes Dieck Assad has been Dean of EGADE Business School at Tecnológico de Monterrey, Mexico, since January 2011. She has held senior professorships and leadership positions in prestigious academic institutions and public and private organizations in Mexico and internationally. She served as Mexico’s Ambassador to Belgium and Luxembourg and as Chief of the Mexican Mission to the European Union and Permanent Representative to the European Council, and was decorated with the Grand Cross of the Order of the Crown of Belgium for distinguished service. In Mexico’s Federal Government, she served as Under-Secretary of Economic Affairs and International Cooperation at the State Department and as Chief of Advisors to the Secretary of the Economy. She has been an economic consultant to several international institutions including the World Bank in Washington, DC. In 2010, she was appointed as a professional board member to two subsidiaries of Petróleos Mexicanos (PEMEX). Her research centers on macroeconomics, monetary theory, and policy and globalization and the Latin American economic context. Dr. Dieck Assad earned her PhD in Economics (1983) from The University of Texas at Austin (USA), a Master’s degree in Economic Development (1976) from Vanderbilt University (USA), and a BEcon Cum Laude (1975) from Tecnológico de Monterrey (Mexico).