Managing business in emerging markets (e.g., Brazil, India, China, and Russia) has been a difficult task for managers due to several notable issues such as changing preferences of the consumers, availability of variety of products, rapid growth in innovation, changes in customers’ ways of engaging with the firms, and changing dynamics in marketing tools to name a few. In recent years, for example, emerging markets have witnessed a huge transformation in consumers’ preferences for products and services influenced by the geodemographic, socio-cultural factors, psychographics norms and behavior. Changes in consumer preferences and behavior are also associated with the availability of many branded products at relatively cheaper prices, which were not available (or were costly) two decades ago. Growth in disposable income provides a big boost to the consumer culture, driving increased spending and generating consumer demand for a wide range of new goods and services.

Despite resource constraints, emerging markets have been able to provide innovative products and solutions to the entire world. Developing countries’ ability to contribute specifically to the grass-root and reverse innovation strategies for firms globally is truly remarkable. However, firms are still not able to cope with the innovation demand. Further, due to development of technology and growth in digital and social media, consumers’ mode of contact with the firm has also undergone significant changes. Specially, emerging markets have seen huge transformation in terms of the ways consumers engage with firms. Additionally, abilities of such firms to market their products, i.e., marketing mix strategies, have also evolved. While marketing through traditional media is still valuable to firms, there is an increased influence of digital and social media based marketing tools on consumer behavior. In this context, it is critical to look at how marketing-mix dynamics are changing and how firms can incorporate the same in their business strategies. As emerging markets have been the growth engine of the world economy and businesses in recent years, understanding the practice of marketing in developing markets is critical to firm success.

In this special issue of the Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science (JAMS), we are interested in papers that help to undertake and discuss the above mentioned issues and develop better business strategies for firms. Marketers who understand the above issues and adopt the same in their organizational routines can develop more effective strategies. We are interested in both quantitative and qualitative studies that specifically address the above issues and bring significant new knowledge to academia and practices. However, studies that capture only a portion of the above discussed issues are welcome as well.

The topics include, but are not limited to:

1. Innovation in emerging markets
2. Developing customer engagement strategies in emerging markets
3. Understanding marketing-mix dynamics in emerging markets
4. Implementing social and digital marketing strategies in emerging markets
5. Understanding customer journey in emerging markets
6. Nurturing firms’ branding strategies for better insights with special reference to emerging markets
7. Managing products and services in emerging markets

Papers targeting the Thought Leaders Conference on Managing Business and Innovation in Emerging Markets, held at the Indian School of Business (ISB), Hyderabad, India from April 26-28, 2018, should submit their draft to the JAMS Editorial office at jamesed@uw.edu (papers for presentation at the conference will be accepted on an ongoing basis). Authors are requested to submit an extended abstract of 1500 words by February 1, 2018, to be considered for presentation in the conference.

Papers targeting the special issue on the same topic should be submitted through the JAMS submission system (www.edmgr.com/jams) and will undergo the same review process as regularly submitted papers. Submissions of full papers for the special issue will begin on June 1, 2018, with the final deadline for submissions being August 30, 2018.

Extra efforts will be taken by the Special Issue Editors to promote collaboration among international researchers for the special issue and conference. Attending the conference and/or submitting a manuscript to JAMS for publication consideration are independent activities; authors are welcome to engage in one or both of these activities.

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