

**Interview with Prof. Pervez Ghauri,
Editor of International Business Review,
by e-mail on August 11, 2005.**

Prof. Hoshino: You are the founding editor of International Business Review.

When this journal was published for the first time?

What were the main ideas and objectives behind the beginning of this Journal?

Prof. Ghauri: We started working on the idea in 1990 and the first issue was published in 1992. The main reason was to provide a forum for IB scholars, from all over the world, for dissemination of knowledge in international business field. At that time, in Europe it was considered that journals coming out of the United States of America were rather parochial and were publishing papers mostly coming out of America that followed a set pattern and methodological approach. European and Asian researchers were thus considered at disadvantage and we felt that there was need for such a journal that would have no bias towards any region or methodological approach.

Prof. Hoshino: For how long have you been the editor of this journal? How many of your own papers have been published in this journal?

Prof. Ghauri: I have been editor since the idea stage, i.e. from 1990 (first volume came out in 1992). As a principle, I do not publish in my own journal, so none of my papers has ever been published in this journal. I took that decision right from the start to establish my credibility as editor and for the credibility of the journal.

Prof. Hoshino: You are the founding editor of International Business Review since 1992. You taught in Uppsala University for 10 years and then in the Norwegian School of Management, Norway for five years. For almost eight years, you have been professor of Marketing in University of Groningen, The Netherlands. Being the editor, does this journal also move with you in different locations? Would you please tell something about that era?

Prof. Ghauri: The journal started with my idea, with a lot

of support from my colleagues in Sweden, Norway and UK, so I am the founding editor. This means that the journal moves with me wherever I move. This is also because, I spend my own time on this journal all the schools I have been have not financially contributed towards this journal. I have a contract with the publisher and not with any school.

Prof. Hoshino: You are professor of international business at Manchester Business School, author of five books, in the field of international business and several research papers in different journals. How you feel about your role as an author, an editor and as a teacher? Which role you like? Which one is more difficult you think?

Prof. Ghauri: Well, if you want to have numbers, I have published some 20 books as author or editor, some 40 journal articles, some 30 book chapters and numerous conference and working papers. While I enjoy writing, which is part of our job in academic life, I do like teaching and having contact with students. The editorship has helped me to learn a lot and also to establish a good network of colleagues. The most difficult job, in our field is however, to get your papers published in top journals.

Prof. Hoshino: You have a team of three associate editors and members of editorial board. Would you please explain your role and the role of associate editors in the journal?

Prof. Ghauri: The associate editors have been supportive of the idea right from the beginning and in the early years they helped me a lot in handling the journal and other issues, such as focus and vision of the journal. Also, their name and credibility helped us to find a good publisher and to get accepted in the market. These days however, I consult them only in case of difficult decisions, such as change in vision or strategy etc. The editorial board members help us to review the papers and give their support in many ways, such as recommending their colleagues to send papers to us and recommending their schools, at least in early years, to subscribe for the journal.

Prof. Hoshino: How you select your team of associate editors and editorial board? Are there some criteria for

the selection? Is there any fixed time-span for these positions?

Prof. Ghauri: Yes, I have selected all the associate editors and members of the board depending upon their standing and reputation, as this helps in getting the journal accepted in the market. The main criteria are the credibility/ reputation of the people and of course personal contacts. For the last two years, we have been official journal of European International Business Academy (EIBA), while discussion with them, they asked us to include more members of EIBA on the editorial board. At that time we made some changes. Normally there is no fix time-span for these positions and these positions are totally honorary. However, every four or five years, we do make some changes due to several reasons, such as if one member of the board wishes not to serve any more, or if s/he is not able to devote any time towards reviewing papers etc.

Prof. Hoshino: Do you invite papers from all variety of business areas for example HRM, Finance, marketing? Is there some specific areas in which this journal is comparatively more suitable for publication?

Prof. Ghauri: Yes, the only condition is that the paper has to be international in its contents and is academically written i.e. contributes towards theory development or theory testing. We do publish paper from all disciplines in business/management studies. Mostly we get papers on Marketing, Strategy, Organizational Studies and Internationalization process of the firm.

Prof. Hoshino: Currently a common problem faced by authors is the long time span taken during the reviewing process. Generally, when a paper reaches in the hands of reader, it is already one to two years old (some time even more than that). This problem is more vulnerable in those cases when some current issue is being addressed with current data. Do you think this time span can be reduced by some means? What are the problems faced by you as an editor to reduce this time? What future developments you see in this area?

Prof. Ghauri: Yes, I agree it is a problem. However, at present electronic submission of papers and reviewer's

comments have helped us to improve on the time lag. Most papers that are accepted take 2 to 3 revisions. This means that the authors are asked to revise and resubmit and quite often they take a long time in sending us back the revised version. 3 – 6 months is not uncommon. The other main reason is that quite often the reviewers are late in reviewing the paper, and we have to send reminders and some times we have to find new reviewers etc. However, reviewers are doing us a great favor by reviewing the papers without any compensation or reward, so we cannot push them too hard. This is the case with most academic journals. I think we have to live with it. Especially if we want high quality papers, that have to go through proper peer review.

Prof. Hoshino: Journal of International Business Review is one of the top journals in the field of business. These journals portray the face of the business practices in the world. What will you suggest to enhance this role of research journals, especially for the managers and business people who are not specialized in research but want to get advantage of new developments in their field? Do you think some further improvements can be made in the way of presenting the research?

Prof. Ghauri: Yes, I agree that sometimes the managers cannot read papers in academic journals. That is why we should be open for all type of papers and do not restrict ourselves to one particular methodology (e.g. quantitative/ empirical) or approach. I believe there are some journals that are quite readable for managers. I would like to believe IBR is one of them. We do publish conceptual and case study based papers.

Prof. Hoshino: You are also the editor of the International business and management series published by Elsevier Science, UK. Do you also organize some conference of these forums?

Prof. Ghauri: No, normally we do not arrange any conferences for this. However, editors of one or two of these volumes had arranged special conferences/ meetings/workshops to get together all the contributors and to let everyone comment on each others papers. I am sure this ensures a better coherence within the volume. This is however, done by the respective author or editor

of the particular volume and not by me as series editor. The volume Oxelheim, L. and Ghauri, P. (editors) European Union and the Race for Foreign Direct Investment in Europe, 2004, is a good example. I am always open for proposals.

Prof. Hoshino: Does your business school help your journal financially or by some other forms?

Prof. Ghauri: Not financially, but they provide me with some assistant hours and they are quite supportive of my work as editor.

Prof. Hoshino: Anything else you want to add in this interview.

No, thank you.

Thank you.

