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**Special Issue Introduction**

**Guest Editor**

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I am honored to introduce this special issue featuring student papers in the *Federation of Business Disciplines Journal* (FBDJ) for the year 2023. As the Vice President of Student Liaison at the Southwest Decision Sciences Institute (SWDSI), I have been invited to share the best student papers presented at the 51st SWDSI Annual Meeting in 2023.

This student issue includes two papers that received the best student paper award at the conference meeting. The papers address distinct problems with different methodologies. However, both studies provide practical implications for either the local community or businesses. The first paper, by Kiran Patil from the University of North Texas, explores blockchain behavioral adoption through theoretical and empirical approaches. The second paper, by Jennifer D. Milczewski from University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, is a conceptual study focusing on technology inequities proposing home-based solutions for low-income communities.

Kiran Patil’s paper is entitled “Determining Blockchain Behaviroal Adoption Through Theory of Planned Behavior Perspective”. Blockchain technology facilitates organizations in various industries via extended visibility and traceability, organizational decentralization and digitalization, smart contracts, and improved data security. This paper provides a comprehensive overview of blockchain, identifies the research gap based upon literature review in this area, and determining motivational factors for an organization to implement blockchain. These factors are awareness, organizational culture, training, management commitment, and resource constraints. The author further developed measurement instruments for all determinators as well as the main interest factor of intention to adopt, adapted from the Theory of Planned Behavior and previously established scales in the literature. This study helps to evaluate the hype surrounding Blockchain technology and make decisions on Blockchain applications. In addition, it provides a future research opportunity of an empirical validation of the measurement model.

Jennifer D. Milczewski’s paper is entitled “Closing the Digital divide with Home-based Solutions for Low-income Populations”. There is a need to close the digital divide in communities with technology inequity issues. This is because that improving digital equity can potentially increase people’s access to knowledge, and resources that are needed for higher levels of education and wellbeing, which is especially crucial in impoverished areas. This study is conducted in such a background and focuses on strategic implementation through interagency collaboration and home-based solutions. It assesses the Rio Grande Valley of Texas as a special case example, considering that South Texas is notoriously impoverished, and these high poverty rates coincide with elevated levels of digital inequity. The author then analyzed three solutions in terms of broadband infrastructure, access to low-cost computing equipment and internet, and digital literacy training. Furthermore, the author made three practical recommendations to address the digital inequity issues. This study provides managerial implications regarding collaborations between federal policy makers.

I would like to express my gratitude to the editor, Mary Fischer, for the opportunity to contribute to the intellectual growth and enrichment for the FBD associations. Additionally, I extend my appreciation to the reviewers of the student papers for their evaluations. I hope that this special issue will encourage graduate students further their academic and professional development.

**ABOUT THE EDITOR**

**Lu Xu** is an Associate Professor of business statistics and quantitative methods in the Mike Cottrell College of Business at the University of North Georgia. She has a PhD in management science from the University of North Texas. Her research interest includes business research methods, quality management, sustainable supply chain management, and consumer behavior.