



New Age Ecosystems and Strategies thereof: Inviting New Directions to Strategic Management Research in India

Call for Papers

This is a Call for Papers for the Annual Meeting of Strategic Management Forum to be held at Indian Institute of Management Lucknow between 27th and 29th December 2019. The overarching theme of the conference is, “New Age Ecosystems and Strategies thereof: Inviting New Directions to Strategic Management Research in India” (see details in the next section). We invite full papers (max 8000 words) and proposals (max 3000 words) for presentations in the conference theme track as well as regular tracks below:

1. Resources and Capabilities
2. Firm Performance
3. Corporate Strategy-Diversification, Merger and Acquisition, Joint Venture and Alliances
4. Family Business
5. Entrepreneurship
6. Corporate Governance
7. Corporate Social Responsibility
8. Bottom of Pyramid Strategy
9. Public Private Partnership
10. Teaching Cases

We also encourage doctoral students to submit proposals and brief concept note for the doctoral consortium. The consortium will help doctoral students to get valuable feedbacks from experienced researchers in their respective field of research.

Conference Theme

Firms are embedded in ecosystems. Their survival and performance depend on the health of their ecosystem. How should firms manage their ecosystem is therefore emerging as an important question in the field of strategic management. Emergence of ecosystem perspectives in strategy research is leading to several new and interesting debates in the field. Ecosystem research looks beyond the boundary of the firm to explain its performance which is making us revisit the conventional understanding of firm boundary and performance (e.g. Kapoor and Agarwal, 2017). Rise of ecosystem research is leading us to question our understanding of resources and sustainability with the emergence of ‘Natural Resource Based View’ (hereafter, NRBV) of firm (e.g. Hart and Dowell, 2011). It is throwing new challenges such as how should firms balance their pursuit of managing ecosystem health amidst competing pressures of managing internal organizations and the role of keystone organizations (e.g. Lansiti and Lavien, 2004). It is also calling into question our understanding of the ecosystem itself (e.g. Adner, 2017).

This conference is an attempt to leverage the opportunity provided by radical shifts in the business ecosystem in India and their global undercurrents to highlight newer challenges



as well as to come up with interesting insights on the existing debates in the field of ecosystem research. The conference focusses on three major disruptions in the business ecosystems:

- Resource disruption,
- Technological disruption and
- Institutional disruption.

Thus, the following themes for the conference emerge.

Theme 1: Resource Disruption and Firm Strategies

Between 2005 and 2015, 24 states in India registered a decline or growth stagnation in their natural capital while only three states showed an increase in natural stock by more than 5 percent¹. Firms in India face challenges of managing their performance amidst depletion in the stock of natural resources. They also have the onerous task of moving beyond the traditional dependence on non-renewable and high carbon emitting technologies to resolve the energy crisis². An indicative list of questions informed by the NRBV perspective to be taken up for the discussion in the conference are:

- (a) How do firms develop resources and capabilities that allow for improved environmental performance?
- (b) Which firms are best positioned to develop the dynamic capabilities needed to bring clean technologies to market? Can clean technology capabilities lead to sustained competitive advantage?
- (c) Do our existing theories adequately address how firms can succeed in the BoP? Or do we need to augment or even replace these theories?

Theme 2: Technological Disruption and Firm Strategies

Technological advancements coupled with ‘ecosystems thinking’ has led to emergence of new sources of competitive advantage for firm to achieve high performance by orchestrating the functioning of the ecosystem by providing a platform and setting the rules for other firms to leverage the platform and offer complementary products to the users. Technological developments have also led to increased automation and the way work is organized. A non-exhaustive list of questions for discussion in the conference are:

- (a) How firms take advantage of platform economics to achieve sustained competitive advantage
- (b) How are organizations integrating digital technology into their tasks and routines to develop sustained high performance?
- (c) What opportunities and threats do new technological developments such as Artificial Intelligence and Big Data Analytics pose to sustainability of high performance as well as the future of strategy research?

¹ <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/urbanisation/india-loses-natural-resources-to-economic-growth-report-61836>

² <https://www.technologyreview.com/s/542091/indias-energy-crisis/>



Theme 3: Institutional Disruption and Firm Strategies

The challenge of engendering growth amidst complex ecosystem conditions is calling for new (and sometimes untested) ways to revitalize the local institutions and improve institutional conditions. Firms face unprecedented challenges in cognition and designing response to the new wave of institutional disruption. An indicative list of questions which may be taken up for discussion in this session are:

- (a) How are disruptions in institutional environment (e.g. demonetization, Brexit) offering new opportunities and threats to the business organizations?
- (b) How are firms coping with complex ecosystem conditions?
- (c) What are the implications of institutional disruptions for sustaining of competitive advantage of firms?

References

- Adner, R. (2017). Ecosystem as structure: an actionable construct for strategy. *Journal of management*, 43(1), 39-58.
- Hart, S. L., & Dowell, G. (2011). Invited editorial: A natural-resource-based view of the firm: Fifteen years after. *Journal of management*, 37(5), 1464-1479.
- Kapoor, R., & Agarwal, S. (2017). Sustaining superior performance in business ecosystems: Evidence from application software developers in the iOS and Android smartphone ecosystems. *Organization Science*, 28(3), 531-551.
- Iansiti, M., & Levien, R. (2004). *The keystone advantage: what the new dynamics of business ecosystems mean for strategy, innovation, and sustainability*. Harvard Business Press.