Guest editorial

Architecting management scholarship in the era of disruption

Introduction to the special issue

The part of the Special Issue for the South Asian Journal of Business Studies (SAJBS) four of the best articles presented at the sixth biennial Indian Academy of Management (INDAM) 2020 conference held at the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Tiruchirappalli, January 2–4, 2020. INDAM is a biennial conference organized by the Indian Academy of Management, an Associate Member of the Academy of Management, USA and provides a platform for scholars, practitioners, and policy makers to come together and present, discuss and deliberate on ideas and research that can help in the transformation of organizations operating in the Indian sub-continent. Indian organizational settings are complex, varied, and include both private and public sector organizations. India has a big public sector, and its private sector is a mix of both domestic and multinational firms. The family businesses owned by 11 Indian business groups consist of about 30 percent of the India's total market capitalization. The domestic Indian firms are now venturing overseas for business in significant numbers increasing the complexity of their operations and this creates significant challenges and opportunities for managing them effectively.

INDAM has had six biennial conferences to date – the first conference was held in 2009 at XLRI, Jamshedpur, the second in 2011 at IIM Bangalore, followed by conferences at IIM Ahmedabad (2013), IIM Lucknow (2015), IIM Indore (2017), and IIM Trichy (2020). Members of INDAM are leading scholars from various continents, such as Asia, Australia, Europe, and North America. They bring their research and network abilities to make INDAM conference an invaluable global learning experience for Indian management researchers, teachers, and practitioners.

The theme of the INDAM 2020 conference was "Architecting management scholarship in the era of disruption". The conference had 21 theme tracks, that parallel many of the divisions of the Academy of Management and attracted over 600 submissions. Over the last decade we have seen a surge in management research in India, and a deluge of number of scholars engaged in conducting and publishing management research. Three positive developments are noticeable. First, Indian scholars show a capacity to undertake ambitious and holistic research projects. Second, there is an increasing representation of women scholars. In the INDAM Conference at IIM Trichy, the number of papers presented by female scholars was more than their male counterparts. Third, Indian management scholars have used a variety of methods and they show capacity to employ sophisticated methods and analyses. However, based on the papers submitted to the 2020 conference, as well as our experiences of prior conferences, and our experience as editors and reviewers of manuscripts for journals, we observed the papers submitted to the conference were of high-quality and had overcome the common shortcomings in the manuscripts submitted to journals and conferences, which frequently include poor writing and presentation, lack of integration, scanty description of methods, untidy presentation of results, lack of proper structure and organization, and inadequate and sloppy discussion and implication sections (Khatri *et al.*, 2017).

The theme of this special issue is topical in that right after the conference we witnessed Covid-19 pandemic, one of the most disruptive events in the history of mankind. The widespread nature of the event and the scale of the crisis have placed onus on leadership and management teams of organizations. The pandemic has led to challenges arising out of

uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity, and contradictions that the organizations would be called upon to tackle in the post-pandemic world. For organizational leaders and managers, the great uncertainty created by the pandemic and the associated challenges require creative, flexible, and adaptive responses, those that are usually not associated with leadership during "business-as-usual" times (Ahern and Loh, 2020). The role of leaders, HR professionals, and management of organizations is crucial and may require a thoughtful approach to preparing themselves for the world post-COVID. As the world recovers from the pandemic, the relevance of this special issue is even more pronounced. The need for resilience, quick response, clarity in decision-making, empathy and compassion and positivity are all vital qualities in this situation (Mather, 2020; Pearce *et al.*, 2021; Wilson, 2020).

For the special issue, we have selected articles that advance our understanding of the ways in which management and leadership of organisations can adapt to the challenges posed by disruptions, especially in the Indian context. The papers presented in this special issue address topics that may help leaders to better manage and understand the longer-term implications of the various disruptions that are taking place in business as well as the social environment. The articles presented in this issue look at the empirical evidence to better inform us about the ongoing debates on future management and business practices.

Process of shortlisting articles for this special issue

The shortlisting of papers for the special issue involved several stages. In the first stage, we went through the papers identified as the best papers in their respective tracks and identified 20 papers from the tracks (mentioned below) that matched the theme of this special issue. Table 1 presents the breakup of papers shortlisted track-wise for this special issue. Next, we invited the authors of these research papers to submit their revised manuscripts to the special issue. Out of the 20 papers that were invited for the special issue, 10 manuscripts were submitted to the journal for consideration for publication in the special issue. Of these 10 manuscripts, six manuscripts were rejected during the various rounds of review process. We finally accepted four manuscripts for this special issue.

The South Asian Journal of Business Studies is a multidisciplinary journal with a focus on showcasing both theoretical as well as empirical articles from various fields of management as long as they demonstrate contributions to management theory and practices in South Asia. In line with the aims and scope of the journal, we believe that the selected articles will enhance

Track	Shortlisted papers
Strategic management	3
International management	2
Leadership	2
Organizational behaviour	2
Organization and management theory	2
Critical management studies	1
Consumer behavior and retail management	1
Diversity and inclusion in organizations	1
Entrepreneurship and small business management	1
Human resource management	1
Humanistic management	1
ICT	1
Indian culture, philosophy and spirituality	1
Operations and supply chain management	1
Total	20

Table 1.
Track-wise list of papers invited for submission to the SAJBS special issue

the deliberations and conversations in their respective focus areas and contribute richly to informing practice in the region.

The first article is titled "Impact of task priority on software supply chain: a simulation approach". This study aimed at exploring negative emotional reactiveness under the emerging field of emotional diversity in the workplace and the role of inclusive leadership in it. The study showed that mentoring, and providing personal feedback helped in improving effectiveness of emotionally reactive employees. Approaches like delegation made them feel energized. Similarly, one-on-one communication and support helped them become more confident. All these supportive initiatives also helped in improving their (subjects) perception about themselves for future leadership roles. The analysis also showed that empowerment and freedom to experiment were supportive for negatively emotionally reactive employees. The study concluded that inclusion results in an atmosphere of openness and dialogue within which participants can share aspects of themselves (the "me") that might otherwise have been overlooked in the collective identity (the "we") of the organization. Therefore, organizations can reap the benefits of diversity only through inclusive approaches and strategies. The study contributes to our knowledge of creating empathetic workplaces where leaders are caring for employees' emotions and feelings.

The second study is titled as "How I became an entrepreneur: an exploratory study of young start-up entrepreneurs". This study examined the role of big-five personality traits, namely, openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism in regulatory-focused job crafting behaviours, i.e. promotion- and prevention-focused job crafting and their interrelationships. Data for the study was collected through a survey from 444 executives of Indian public sector energy companies and were analysed using structural equation modelling. The study showed that the big-five personality traits differentially influence individuals' ways of managing job demands through promotion- and prevention-focused job crafting. These influences are easily identifiable in case of openness to experience, conscientiousness and neuroticism. The findings of the study will be helpful for organisations in developing an effective recruitment, job designing and job allocation process, devising a framework for uncertainty management, encouraging their employees to undertake personality aligned job crafting to manage their ever-emerging jobs and enhance person-job fit. The study, for the first time, provided a comparative influence of big-five personality traits on both forms of regulatory-focused job crafting.

The third paper is titled "Employee reactiveness and inclusive leadership: time to manage emotional diversity". The study explores the phases that an entrepreneur traverses before the enterprise is started and established as a venture. It uses a qualitative methodology (narratives) to understand the lived experiences of young Indians as they negotiate the entrepreneurial path. The study is based on in-depth interviews of 15 start-up entrepreneurs. The results of the study indicated that there are five distinct stages in the development of a start-up entrepreneur, namely, pre-entrepreneurial stage, inflection point, cocoon period, initial stage, crisis stage and, depending upon the success factors and support received during crisis stage, either a success stage or failure stage. The study reveals that the growth pattern of the start-up entrepreneur and a successful entrepreneur diverges into different patterns after initial similarities.

The last study is titled as "Role of Big Five personality traits in regulatory-focused job crafting". The paper aims to improve our understanding of the role of the bottlenecks in the dynamic software development supply chains. It examines the effects of the task priorities in the software development and investigates the possible strategies to manage them effectively. The study simulates a software development supply chain and models various sizes of software requirement, different priorities, variations in development times, and quality defects etc. The model in this study was optimised for the bottlenecks, throughput and work in progress (WIP) under various scenarios. The findings of the study indicate the

job priorities impact the bottleneck formulation, throughput and work in progress of software development. The paper helps practitioners evaluate the impact of bottlenecks with various task management approaches and analyses possible trade-offs between priority and throughout. The study makes a pioneering effort in utilizing simulation and modelling approach for understanding the software supply chains better.

The studies in this special issue provide important insights about creating, sustaining and managing organizations in the post-pandemic world. The first study demonstrates the importance of organizational values such as inclusion, empathy and empowerment in creating inclusive workplaces. The findings of the second study suggest that organizations must take care in selecting employees with the right personality traits that will drive them to engage in promotion-focused job crafting. Such employees will be critical in steering their own performance as well as productivity improvements within their organizations. Post the pandemic, there has been a renewed emphasis on startup creation in India. The fact that India is a fast-growing market for start-ups and the higher rate of failure of start-ups in India makes the third study relevant for academicians, entrepreneurs, as well as policy makers. The study provides insights into the life journeys of entrepreneurs. Software and technology are going to become increasingly important. The findings of the fourth study will be useful for technology firms that are into software production and development.

As guest editors, we have made our sincere efforts to select the best studies presented in various tracks for this special issue. Each of these studies is unique and tackle important management problems, and present solutions that have both theoretical as well as practical relevance. We believe that these papers will make useful contributions to management scholarship and will inform practice in years to come.

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