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SPECIAL ISSUE ON
RESEARCH METHODS IN STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT:
OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

In the 1960s, strategic management emerged as a distinct field of inquiry devoted to building knowledge about how managers make major decisions and the implications of those decisions for firm outcomes. In the intervening decades, scholars have relied on a variety of methodological approaches to address these issues, including case studies, surveys, archival analysis, ethnography, and simulations. Today, the field is undergoing a rapid transformation in methodological rigor. This presents researchers with new opportunities to better capture strategic phenomena in their investigations, as well as new challenges about how to conduct their studies and in understanding the implications that are associated with their research choices.

Given this context, the purpose of this special issue is to help close the gap between 'what we know' and 'what we need to know' about philosophical, design, measurement and analysis issues in the strategic management field. In particular, we seek to (a) codify existing challenges about how methods are applied, (b) develop understanding about how to resolve current dilemmas, (c) lay a foundation for increased rigor in future studies, and (d) consider the implications of methodological rigor on the development of the field. Therefore, Organizational Research Methods (ORM) is pleased to announce a Special Issue on "Research Methods in Strategic Management: Opportunities and Challenges."

Papers that address, but are not necessarily restricted to, the following topics are most welcome:

1. Explanations of how methods developed in other fields (e.g., finance, geography, anthropology) can enhance strategic management research;
2. Evaluations of the integration between theory and method;
3. Assessments of how well extant studies have used particular research designs, measurement approaches, and analytical techniques relative to 'best practices;'
4. Providing guidance on how experimental designs can improve understanding of strategic management
5. Evaluating the construct validity of key metrics, such as strategy and performance;
6. The pitfalls of using archival proxies (e.g., R&D expenditures, patents), and potential remedies;
7. Providing insights into studying ‘unobservables’ such as strategic resources, competitive advantages, transaction costs, and information asymmetries;
8. Amplifying the insights that qualitative approaches offer the study of strategic management;
9. Philosophy of science issues in the strategic management context.

We invite empirical, conceptual (i.e., new theory about method), methodological, and literature review papers. Two types of papers will be published: (a) Feature Articles and (b) Research Notes. Feature articles are full-length manuscripts typical of ORM contributions. Research notes are narrower in scope than a feature article. Research notes should make an important contribution regardless of length, but the contribution would be narrower, perhaps addressing a more specific issue/topic as opposed to broader issues. They should be approximately 2500 words in length (excluding tables and references).

All papers will undergo the standard double-blind ORM review process and must meet the standards of the ORM Editorial Policy Statement (see http://orm.sagepub.com). All articles published in this feature topic must make strong contributions to improving our understanding of research methods in strategic management. Papers that address substantive as opposed to methodological issues are better suited for more substantively focused outlets.

The Guest Editors for this Feature Topic are Drs. David Ketchen, Florida State University (dketchen@fsu.edu), Brian Boyd, Arizona State University (briankboyd@asu.edu), and Donald Bergh, Purdue University (ddbergh@exchange.purdue.edu).

In order to be considered for publication in this Feature Topic section, a one-page article proposal/summary should be sent by email to dketchen@fsu.edu by March 1, 2006. As discussed in the guidelines for the Feature Topic format (ORM, Jan. 1999), these summaries will be used only to ensure that the focus and scope of each paper is appropriate for the Feature Topic. Please indicate in your summary whether you will plan to submit a Feature Article or Research Note. The guest editors will review summaries and authors will be contacted with invitations to submit the full-length article. Authors with accepted proposals must plan to submit completed manuscripts by July 15, 2006.