

S-face

SFC makes the future through researches

Strategic Management — In Practice and as Science

Masahiro Kotosaka



VOL.

022 /100

2017.Sep ISSUE

Japanese Color: KAKITSUBATA-iro

Linking Practice with Research Giving Back Widely to Society

The role that management studies should fulfill is becoming increasingly significant amidst intensified competition as a result of the acceleration and globalization of technological innovation, due to advancements in technology. However, even within the topic of “management,” a large gap exists between “the practice of strategy” and “strategic management as a field of research.” Associate Professor Masahiro Kotosaka is putting his best efforts into bridging this gap between “practice” and “research” by harnessing his experience as an entrepreneur, management consultant, and researcher.

Linking Practice with Research Pursuing Universal Values

After completing my course of “training” as a practitioner lasting about 8 years, I began walking down the path of a researcher. In my first 4 years as a practitioner, I managed 3 small companies alongside with pursuing my studies at university. After that, I joined McKinsey & Company as a

consultant, where I provided support for resolving various management issues in more than 10 countries while based in Japan and Germany. As a consultant, in my discussions with corporations and governments around the world, or with the managers of multinational corporations that have their beginnings in Europe or Southeast Asia, I was confronted by the question “Is there a

universal and optimal solution to managing operations in diverse countries and/or regions?” Should I continue working as a consultant while struggling with this question? Or should I face up to this unresolved question that emerged in the course of my work as a consultant? After much agonizing, I resigned from McKinsey & Company, and set my heart on becoming a researcher as I

moved to Saïd Business School, University of Oxford. Since then, I have held the conviction that contributing to “management as practice” and contributing to “management studies as a field of research” are different things even while they are closely related to each other. Today, I provide “valuable knowledge” to those who are working on the frontlines of practice. At the same time, I am tackling the difficult challenge of “pursuing universal values” in order to bring about the evolution of management as a science.

What I Am Currently Working on— 3 Themes

I am currently engaged in research based on 3 pillar themes, centered around the relationship between “markets” and “actors.” The first theme is how actors, especially the firms, adapt to increasingly complex environments in a globalizing market. Previously, it had been sufficient for many Japanese corporations to adapt only to the environment of the Japanese market. However, corporations that have begun to seek out markets in many countries alongside with the rise of globalization are now under pressure to adapt to diverse environments. The second theme is how actors are changing the given market environment. Most actors act to adapt to the environment that they are given. However,

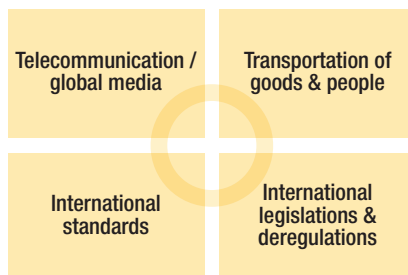
some actors not only adapt to the environment, but continue to grow by changing the environment itself. In what ways are such actors interact with the environment? The third theme is what impact market environments that exist within actors have on the actors’ decision-making processes and actions. My research focuses on start-up companies, and looks at the questions of how emergent management strategies are born, how they are propagated throughout an organization, what factors drive business growth and internationalization, and further, how the relationships between corporations and individuals grow and change in what we term “ecosystems.” Through such research, I engage in multifaceted discussions about the management style that is required by organizations of the future, and the image of the practitioners existing in such organizations.

Contribute the Society as Researcher, Educator, and Practitioners

Management studies is an academic field positioned on the frontlines of the reality of humankind, and which seeks to capture and understand reality as facts. For that reason, if one does not have an ultimate interest in human society, the research would not contribute to the provision of

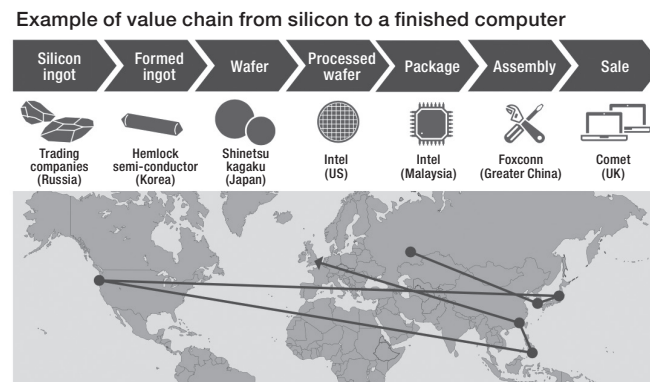
fundamental values. In other words, however, I believe that if one can reach a certain height of achievement in this field, there are no other fields of academic study that offer deeper insight than management studies. I am now engaged in the field of management studies from 3 standpoints: as a research, as a practitioner (consultant), and as an educator. I will now touch on my future goals from each of these standpoints. My goal as a researcher is to continue disseminating research that I believe to be valuable to the world, and to have it highly rated by many people. However, even if it were not highly rated, I do not wish to compromise to the trends and norms of the world. My goal as a practitioner is for all the practitioners that I have ties with to gain success beyond their expectations through the application of the advice they receive from me. My goal as an educator is for my students to become researchers and practitioners who are more capable and successful than I am. Going forward, I aim to build up knowledge in the areas of establishing start-up businesses, growth, and internationalization, and at the same time, engage in activities with the aim of giving back this wealth of knowledge widely to society.

Factors that Drive Globalization



Technological advancement that enables us to capture information around the world instantaneously, realization of timely and prompt means of transportation at low prices, and development of international standards and pacts for technology, have great impact on the evolution of international business.

Global Value Chain



The global value chain is an important key phrase for next-generation international business strategy. Today, where it has become common for many companies from various countries to work together to produce and supply a single product, corporations that are highly influential in the value chain are able to generate high levels of profits.



Profile Masahiro Kotosaka

Associate Professor, Faculty of Policy Management, Keio University. While enrolled in Faculty of Environment and Information Studies at the same university, he founded 3 companies in the fields of retail and IT. After graduation, he worked as a consultant at the Tokyo and Frankfurt offices of McKinsey & Company. While working as a teaching research associate at the Saïd Business School, University of Oxford, he obtained his doctoral degree (D.Phil. in Management Studies). He taught at Ritsumeikan University before taking up his current position in 2016.

Please visit S-face website for details!

There are more articles and
video of Masahiro Kotosaka.

S-face

Search



Keio Research Institute at SFC
Office of Research Development and Sponsored Projects,
Shonan Fujisawa Campus, Keio University
5322 Endo, Fujisawa, Kanagawa, 252-0882, Japan
Tel: +81-(0)466-49-3436
E-mail: info-kri@sfc.keio.ac.jp