





**Brand image** is the current view of the customers about a brand. It can be defined as a unique bundle of associations or a set of beliefs held about a specific brand within the minds of target customers. In short, it is nothing but the consumers' perception about the product. It is the manner in which a specific brand is positioned in the market. It should highlight an organization's mission and vision, personality, promise to the consumers and competitive advantages. On the other hand, **Brand identity** stems from an organization, i.e., an organization is responsible for creating a distinguished product with unique characteristics. It is how an organization seeks to identify itself. It represents how an organization wants to be perceived in the market. An organization communicates its identity to the consumers through its branding and marketing strategies. A brand is unique due to its identity. Brand identity includes following elements i.e. brand vision, brand culture, positioning, personality, relationships, and presentations.

**Brand Positioning** can be defined as an activity of creating a brand offer in such a manner that it occupies a distinctive place and value in the target customer's mind. It involves identifying and determining points of similarity and difference to ascertain the right brand identity and to create a proper brand image. It ensures that all brand activity has a common aim; is guided, directed and delivered by the brand's benefits/reasons to buy; and it focusses at all points of contact with the consumer.

**Perceived Quality** is an essential determinant of brand image or brand equity as proposed by many authors (Granroos, 1982; Parashuraman et al. 1985; Zeithaml et al. 1996; Aaker, 1991, 1993, 1996; Michell et al., 2001). It is highly subjective in nature based on the consumers' judgement about a product, which is mostly influenced by his personal experience, specific needs and consumption situations (Zeithaml, 1988).

**Advertising** is a very strong tool of external brand communication (Mukherjee and Shivani, 2016). It is a very essential element of promotion and has strong influence on brand equity or brand image (Villarejo and Manuel, 2005). The positively perceived advertisement influences consumers' perception towards products and significantly minimizes the negative feelings consumers have towards a brand (O Cass et al., 2004; Kempf and Smith, 1998).

**Word of Mouth** is a very powerful behaviour and greatly influence the consumers (Bansal and Voyer, 2000; File et al., 1994; Murray, 1991; O'Cass and Grace, 2004; Keller, 2007). It is trusted by people over advertising or other sponsored marketing tactics (Buttle, 1998; Bansal and Voyer, 2000).

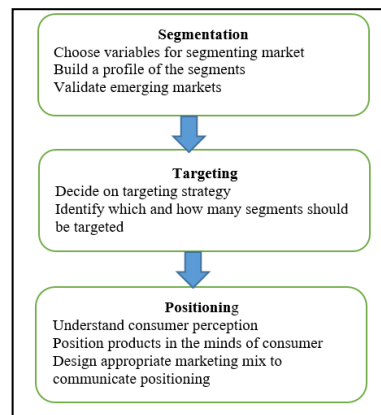
### **3.1.2 Distribution strategies (traditional warehousing and cross docking)**

Effective distribution mechanisms forms an important functional dimension of marketing function. The success of marketing function depends on delivering the right product to the right customer and at the right time when demand arises. Two important distribution strategies i.e. Traditional warehousing (Li et al., 2008; Yan and Tang, 2009) and Cross docking (Gallego et al., 2007; Li et al., 2008) are most prevalent in today's distribution supply chains. The selection is made based on the product characteristics and market demand (Benrqa et al., 2014). Product segmentation aims to segment or differentiate the products based on its features and this is helpful for organizations to determine which distribution strategy is more adapted to their products and markets. Traditional warehousing is a widely used distribution strategy where suppliers and retailers keep stock at their distribution centres (DC). Products are first received and stored at the DC, and shipped to the respective destination or customers as and when request or order comes. The inventory is stored in the DCs of the supplier and retailer and is moved to the stores through the supply chain as per demand arises. In this strategy, the major functions of DC are receiving, storage, order picking and shipping (Van Belle et al., 2012). In cross docking strategy, the DCs operate as transfer points to harmonize the continuous physical flow of products through the supply chain with least storage. In comparison with traditional warehousing strategy, in a cross docking strategy the DCs operate as inventory coordination point (Shakeri et al., 2012; Waller et al., 2006). There is one end to end process to replenish the stores serving the customers. The unconstrained demand of all stores is aggregated at the retailer headquarters and sent to the supplier. The supplier DC sends exact quantities to the retailer DC, which acts as a cross docking platform where information and physical flows are synchronized across the supply chain. Products which are more sensitive in terms of delivery times, have a short life cycle, high value and is characterized by unpredictable demand are more suitable for a traditional warehousing strategy whereas products which are more functional with a stable demand, long life cycle and have a low value are suitable for a cross docking strategy (Lee et al., 2006).

### **3.1.3 Market Segmentation, Targeting, Product Positioning and Product differentiation**

It is obvious that to be successful, a product must occupy an explicit, distinct and proper place, in the minds of potential and existing consumers, relative to other rival products in the market. Product positioning is the tool to achieve the mentioned result (Ostaseviciute and Sliburyte, 2008). Product positioning is about visibility and recognition and what the particular product represents for a buyer. In the current market scenario characterised by the intensiveness of rivalry and competition, buyers have a greater choice, identification and understanding of a

product's intrinsic values becomes crucial. The concept of market positioning seeks to place a product in a certain position in the minds of perspective buyers or target customers (Etzel, Walker and Stanton, (1997); Ries and Trout (1986); Kotler (2006); Armstrong (2006); Fill (2006); Ferrel (1997); Lamb, Hair and Mcdaniel (2004)). Marketers use a position strategy to distinguish their firm's offerings from those of rivals and to create promotions that communicate the desired position (Boone and Kurlz, 2001). Fill (2006) states that positioning therefore is a sequence of activities which forms the core part of marketing strategy. Market segmentation and target marketing are prerequisites to successful positioning. Grancutt, Leadley and Forsyth (2004) presented a STP model (Figure 2) which serves to find and define the desired customer who want a particular product and able to acquire it through segmentation (S) and targeting (T) and positioning (P) serves for placing the product in the desirable position in the minds of target consumers. Selection of product positioning and repositioning strategy is one of the most crucial points and depends on a list of factors i.e. product features, price, quality, product class dissociation, user, competitors, benefit, heritage or cultural symbol, application (Fill (2006); Kotler (2007); Armstrong (2004); Doyle and Stern (2006); Boone and Kurz (2001)). Doyle and Stern (2006) suggests the following repositioning tactics i.e. introduce a new brand, change existing brand, alter beliefs about own brand or competitive brands, introduce new attributes or find a new market segment suitable enough for the brand.



**Figure 2:** The STP Model (Grancutt, Leadley, Forsyth (2004))

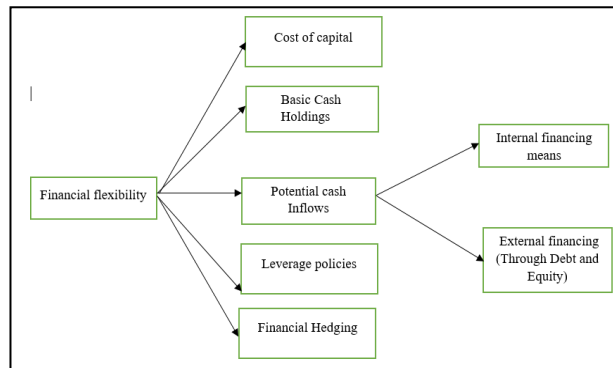
**3.2 Financial flexibility** of organizations or firms has been interpreted by various authors in different ways. A few significant definitions or views about the nature of financial flexibility are listed below (Table 1) which certainly throws light to understand the concepts and several aspects of financial flexibility.

| <b>Definitions</b>  | <b>Authors</b>   |
|---|--|
| Financial flexibility is considered as one of the most important determinants of <b>capital structure decisions</b> in organizations as interpreted by most of the managers.  | Graham and Harvey (2001); Bancel and Mittoo (2004); Brounen et al. (2004)  |
| Financial flexibility are related to the future ability and need of the firms <b>to raise external funds</b> and <b>restructure its financing at lower cost</b> .   | DeAngelo and DeAngelo (2007); Gamba and Triantis (2008); Byoun (2008)  |
| Firms with financial flexibility enjoy <b>easier access to external capital markets</b> to meet the funding needs arising from unanticipated earnings shortfalls or new growth opportunities and to avoid situations of suboptimal investment and poor performance. | Myers (1984); Myers and Majluf (1984); Froot et al (1993); Ozkan et al (2013);   |
| <b>Leverage (low)</b> and <b>cash holding (moderate or high)</b> decisions are the indicators of financial flexibility and can better cope with earnings shortfalls, avoid underinvestment.   | Billet et al. (2007); Byoun (2008); Lins et al. (2010); Campello et al. (2010); Opler et al. (1999); Billet and Garfinkel (2004); Almeida et al. (2004); Acharya et al. (2007); Faulkender and Wang (2006); Dittmar and Mahrt-Smith (2007); Kalcheva and lins (2007); Harford et al. |

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | (2008); Riddick and Whited (2008)  |
| Some studies adopted the view that firms can attain financial flexibility through both their <b>debt financing</b> and <b>cash holding policies</b> .                                    | DeAngelo and DeAngelo (2007); Gamba and Triantis (2008); Byoun (2008)                                      |
| Financial flexibility of firms is directly linked to <b>firm's performance</b> .   | Baron and Kenny (1986); Denis and McKeon (2009); Chun-Ai Ma and Yanbo Jin (2016); Marchica and Mura (2010) |
| Companies use financial flexibility in forms of <b>spare debt capacity</b> to meet large positive shocks to the investment opportunities and to preserve debt capacity for future years. | Denis and McKeon (2009); Jong, Verbeek and Verwijmeren (2011)  |

**Table 1:** Literature review on financial flexibility

From the exhaustive review of literature, it is evident the financial flexibility of organizations is dependent on some significant financial parameters viz. cost of capital, cash holdings, cash inflows, leveraging policies and financial hedging which is enumerated in Figure 3.



**Figure 3:** Determinants of financial flexibility

### 3.3 Human Resource flexibility (or concept of flexible human resource management)

Human resources forms the working capital or strength of any manufacturing organization. Their skills and effectiveness acts as a prominent driver for sustainability, growth and performance of the organizations. The flexibility issues of human resources links to competitiveness and stability of the organizations under environmental uncertainty and turbulence. From the review of extant literature, various dimensions or aspects of human resources flexibility are identified and described. Spiegelaele et al. (2013) gave three essential dimensions of labour flexibility: functional, contractual and financial or wage flexibility. The authors defined labour flexibility to the ease with which the disposition of labour power can be adjusted to ever changing demands. Functional flexibility refers to the degree in which companies can swiftly redeploy their staff in various functions to meet the changing demands (Atkinson 1984; Atkinson and Gregory 1986; Atkinson and Meager 1986; Atkinson 1994). Benders (1990) suggested that the functional flexibility can be achieved by two ways: first by deploying multi-skilled workers and implementing forms of job rotation within the plant; and second by deskilling the job functions in order to increase the interchangeability of workers. Contractual flexibility addresses the degree of flexibility employers and employees face regarding the employments contracts. Employment contracts covers the aspects of hiring and firing, regulations on using temporary, part time or agency employment contracts. Financial or wage flexibility covers the degree to which the salary of employees changes over time, depending on economic, company and individual performance. Most of the work on flexibility-oriented HR systems is studied under two aspects: Resource-oriented HRM subsystems or resource flexibility and Coordination-oriented HRM subsystems or coordination flexibility (Sanchez, 1995; Stinchcombe, 1990; Volberda, 1998; Wright and Snell, 1998; Collins and Clark, 2003; Huselid, 1995). The resource flexibility-oriented HR subsystems or resource flexibility refers to the range of HRM practices that together enable a firm to acquire and develop human resources for a wide range of alternative uses. The coordination flexibility-oriented HR subsystems refers to the range of HR practices that together enable a firm to redeploy those resources effectively and quickly to multiple activities (Chang et al., 2013). Do, Yeh and Madsen (2016) gave the concept of organizational adaptable culture and related it to human resource flexibility. Adaptability culture encourages innovation within organization motivate employees to learn new skills and take risks (Woodman et al. 1993).

Organizations with adaptable culture reform themselves to meet market demand by using the dynamic capabilities. An adaptability culture focuses on external environment by being responsive and flexible (Daft, 2007). Denison et al. (2014) refers adaptability to employees' abilities to understand the customer requirements and develop or learn new skills in response to the demand change. Adaptability culture is highly related to technological advancement and job adjustment. Martin et al. (2009) gave a framework of labour flexibility based on a resource based view (RBV) approach. According to RBV approach, resource flexibility is a multi-dimensional concept and comprises of intrinsic flexibility i.e. a resource applicability to different situations, modification flexibility or the extent to which a resource can be easily transformed (malleable or amenable) with low cost and in less time to be applied in a new situation and relational flexibility, which facilitates the combining of one or more resources. The authors defined labour flexibility into intrinsic labour flexibility, modification labour flexibility and relational labour flexibility on the lines of RBV. Intrinsic labour flexibility implies that employees are able to work on different tasks and under diverse circumstances and that the cost and time needed to mobilize the employees for new roles are a minimum (Van der berg and Van der velde, 2005). These kind of workforce are usually multi-skilled and possesses a wide range of competencies which includes abilities like leadership skills, problem-solving abilities etc. (Macduffie 1995; Riley and Lockwood 1997). Modification labour flexibility indicates the extent to which the workforce characteristics are easily changeable or malleable. Malleability is analysed in terms of employee skills and behaviour (Boudreau and Ramstad 1997; Wright and Snell 1998; Breu et al. 2001; Bhattacharya et al. 2005). Skill malleability refers to how easily and quickly employees obtain the abilities needed to carry new tasks (Maurer et al 2003). Wright and Snell (1998) sees employee behaviour as scripts which are sequences of routines followed by employees in their jobs. Behavioural malleability as conceived by the authors refers to adjustments in these routines to face new job challenges. Relational labour flexibility indicates the ease with which individuals can be coordinated and grouped to work together towards common goals. It resembles the idea of collectivism or social capital (Weick and Roberts 1993; Youndt and Snell 2004). It leads to employee mobilisation into cooperative tasks (Forsythe 1997; Breu et al. 2001).

### **3.4 Research and development (R&D) or innovation flexibility**

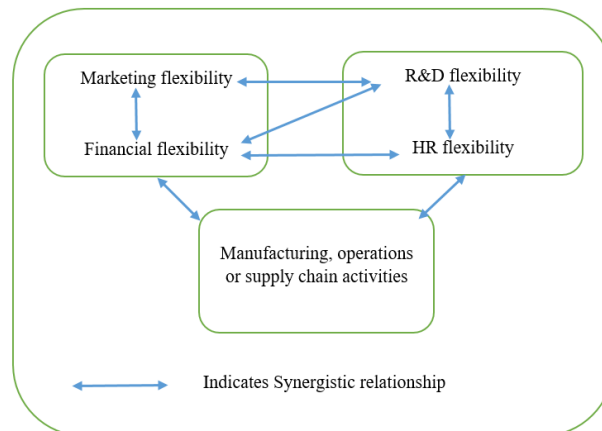
Innovation has been regarded as a crucial factor for an organization's evolution and survival in a dynamic and uncertain environments (Lazonick and Prencipe 2005). Firms with innovative capacity can respond quickly to environmental changes and can perform better than non-innovative organizations in turbulent environments (Miles and Snow, 1984; Brown and Eisenhard, 1995). Innovation can be classified in various ways based on perspective of the study (Damanpour and Gopalkrishnan, 1998). The framework given by Henderson and Clark (1990) categorized innovation into four broad types i.e. **Incremental innovation** having minor improvements in function and form or gradual and lesser degrees of change. This type of innovation is usually market-pull oriented and it adopted by firms that are good at gathering, disseminating and responding to intelligence from the marketplace (Kohli and Jaworska, 1990). **Radical innovation** where both form and function undergo major changes. In other words, radical innovation refers to fundamental changes made to existing practices in the activities of an organization (Knight, 1967; Normann, 1971; Damanpour and Gopalkrishnan, 1998; Hage, 1999; Subramaniam and Youndt, 2005). It is often technology-push oriented (Dosi 1988; Workman 1993; Green et al. 1995) and has the capability to change existing market structures (Veryzer, 1988). **Modular innovation or component innovation** refers to significant improvements/alterations in function due to change in technology, but no change in form. **Architectural innovation** refers to minor changes in technological function but significant alteration of linkages and hence form. Basu (2014) gave a framework linking the various product-market strategies and innovation types. The author used Ansoff's (1957) framework (Table 2) which relates the different characteristics of product-market to the strategies to be adopted.

| <b>Product-market strategy</b> | <b>Innovation type</b>   | <b>Activities and benefits</b>   |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Market penetration strategy    | Incremental innovation   | Adding incremental values to existing set of activities to get expected profits              |
| Product development strategy   | Modular innovation       | Adding or replacing new activities (components) to get more than expected results            |
| Market development strategies  | Architectural innovation | Changing sequence of activities (reconfiguring components) to get more than expected results |
| Diversification strategies     | Radical innovation       | Completely redesigning activities-may or may not get expected results                        |

**Table 2:** Product market strategies and innovation type- a fit framework (Basu, 2014)

Another significant classification is based on product versus process innovation. Product innovation is connected to the generation of new ideas which is reflected in the changes of product features (Prajogo and Ahmed 2006). Process innovation refers to innovations in the ways that an organization conducts its business such as techniques for producing or marketing goods or new practises developed internally. Process and product innovation may interplay with each other. Traditionally, manufacturing firms focused on developing new technologies in house and applying them in their own products (Calantone and Stanko, 2007). Over the past few decades, these closed innovation strategies have been substituted because many firms across industries now acquire or share a considerable volume of their technologies from external sources (Cohen and Levinthal, 1990; Tsai and Wang, 2008). In the current era of increasing inter-firm technology transfer, Henry Chesbrough coined the term open innovation to contrast with closed innovation strategies (Chesbrough, 2003). Open innovation is a paradigm that assumes that firms can and should use external ideas as well as internal ideas, and internal and external paths to market, as the firms look to advance their technology. Innovating with partners by has its own risks and reward. The boundaries between a firm and its environment have become more permeable; innovations can easily transfer inward and outward. Inbound open innovation refers to inward technology transfer. It describes the practice of leveraging the discoveries of others because firms need not rely exclusively on their own R&D (Chesbrough and Crowther, 2006). Outbound open innovation refers to outward technology transfer, and it suggests that firms can look for external organizations with business models that are suited to commercialize a technology exclusively or in addition to its internal application (Chesbrough and Crowther, 2006). Thus, outbound open innovation points to actively pursuing external technology exploitation, which refers to the commercialization of technological knowledge exclusively or in addition to its internal application, e.g., out-licensing (Lichtenthaler and Ernst, 2006). Van de Vrande et al (2009) linked the concept of technology exploration and exploitation to inbound and outbound practices.

#### 4. Research Framework and Hypothesis Development



**Figure 4:** Schematic representation of the synergistic relationships existing between functional flexibility

From the exhaustive review of literature and subsequent understanding of the functional flexibility existing within the manufacturing organizations, it is evident that there exists synergistic relationships between the various functional flexibility (Figure 4). Hence we hypothesize:

**H1:** For cost leader or defender type of organizations, financial flexibility and manufacturing flexibility will be binding.

**H2:** For differentiator or prospector type of organizations, marketing flexibility and research and development flexibility will be binding.

The area of flexibility and its measurement even for the domain of manufacturing and for all functional areas of management, has little clarity and in this situation contingency theory may come into the picture where case study based research is most suitable. The prescription depends on case to case basis as a general theory is yet to be established.

## 5. Conclusions

Functional flexibility is an essential aspect of any manufacturing organization. Identification of the synergistic relationships between the various functional flexibilities is essential as these relations could be exploited in the interest of the organizations to meet the environmental uncertainty.

## References

- Raymond E. Miles, and Charles C. Snow, Organizational, Strategy, Structure and Process, *Academy of Management Review*, July 1978, pp. 546-562, 1978.
- Porter, M. E. (1980) *Competitive Strategy: Techniques for Analyzing Industries and Competitors*. New York: Free Press.
- Kumar, S. and Singh, N. (2015). Marketing flexibility: Significance and implications for automobile industry. vol. 16, no. 3, pp. 251-262.
- Adler, L. (1967). Systems approach to marketing. *Harvard Business Review*, 45, pp. 105-118.
- Goyal, M. and Netessine, S. (2011). Volume flexibility Product flexibility or Both: The role of demand correlation and product substitution. *Manufacturing and Service Operations*, vol. 13, no. 2, pp. 180-199.
- Kotler, P. and Armstrong, G. (2008). *Principles of marketing*. Upper Saddle River: Prentice-Hall Inc.
- Ahmed, Sadrudin A. and Alain d'Astous (2008). Antecedents, Moderators and Dimensions of country of origin evaluations. *International Marketing Review*, vol. 25, no. 1, pp. 75-106.
- Koschate-Fisher, Nicole, Adamantios Diamantopoulos, and Katharina Oldenkotte (2012). Are consumers willing to pay more for a favourable country image? A study of country of origin effect son willingness to pay. *Journal of International Marketing*, vol. 20, no. 1, pp. 19-41.
- Pappu, Ravi, Pascale G. Quester and Ray W. Cooksey (2006). Consumer-based brand equity and country of origin relationships. *European Journal of Marketing*, vol. 40, no. 5-6, pp. 726-745.
- Verlegh, Peter W.J. and Jan-Benedict E.M. Steenkamp (1999). A review and meta-analysis of country of origin research. *Journal of Economic Psychology*. vol. 2, no. 5, pp. 521-546.
- Hsieh, Ming-Huei, Shan-Ling Pan and Rudy Setiono (2004). Product corporate and country-image dimensions and purchase behavior: A multi-country analysis. *Journal of Academy of Marketing Science*, vol. 32, no. 3, pp. 251-270.
- Lee, Dongdae and Gopala Ganesh (1999). Effects of partitioned country image in the context of brand image and familiarity. *International Marketing Review*, vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 18-39.
- Diamantopoulos, Adamantios, Bodo Schlegelmilch, and Dayananda Palihawadana (2011). The relationship between country of origin and brand image as drivers of purchase intentions. *International Marketing Review*, vol. 28, no. 5, pp. 508-524.
- Leonidou, Leonidas C., Dayananda Palihawadana and Michael A. Talias (2006). British consumers' evaluation of US versus Chinese goods. *European Journal of Marketing*, vol. 41, pp. 786-820.
- Papadopoulos, Nicolas and Louise A. Heslop (2003). Country equity and product-country images: State of the art in research and implications. *Handbook of Research in International Marketing*, S.C. Jain, ed. Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar, pp. 402-433.
- Pharr, J. M. (2005). Synthesizing country of origin research from the last decade: is the concept still salient in an era of global brands? *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 13, no. 4, pp. 34-44.
- Allman, H.F., Fenik, A.P., Hewett, K. and Morgan, F.N. (2016). Brand Image Evaluations: The Interactive Roles of Country of Manufacture, Brand Concept, and Vertical Line Extension Type. *Journal of International Marketing*, vol. 24, no. 2, pp. 40-61.
- Gronroos, C. (1982). An Applied Service Marketing Theory. *European Journal of Marketing*, vol. 16, no. 7, pp. 30-41.
- Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V.A. and Berry, L.L. (1985). A conceptual model of service quality and its implications for future research. *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 49, pp. 41-50.
- Zeithaml, V.A., Berry, L.L. and Parasuraman, A. (1996). The behavioral consequences of service quality, *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 60, no. 2, pp. 31-46.
- Aaker, D. (1991). *Managing Brand Equity: Capitalizing on the Value of a Brand Name*, Free Press, New York, NY.
- Aaker, D. (1993). Are brand equity investments really worthwhile? Aaker D.A. and Biel, A. (Eds), *Brand Equity and Advertising; Advertising's Role in Building Strong Brands*, Erlbaum, Hillsdale, NJ, pp. 333-41.
- Aaker, D. (1996). *Building Strong Brands*, Free Press, New York, NY, pp. 150.



- Michell, P., King, J. and Reast, J. (2001). Brand values related to industrial products. *Industrial Marketing Management*, vol. 30, pp. 415–425.
- Mukherjee, S. and Shivani, S. (2016). Marketing mix influence on service brand equity and its dimensions. *Vision: The Journal of Business Perspective*, vol. 20, no. 1, pp. 9-23.
- Villarejo-Romos, A.F. and Sanchez-Franco, M.J. (2005). The impact of marketing communication and price promotion on brand equity. *Journal of Brand Management*, vol. 12, no. 6. pp. 431-444.
- O'Cass, A. and McEwen, H. (2004). Exploring Consumer Status and Conspicuous Consumption. *Journal of Consumer Behavior*, vol.4, no. 1, pp. 25-39.
- Kempf, D.S. and Smith, R.E. (1998). Consumer Processing of Product Trial and the Influence of Prior Advertising: A Structural Modelling Approach. *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 35, pp. 325-338.
- Bansal, H. S. and Voyer, P. A. (2000). Word-of-Mouth Processes within a Services Purchase Decision Context. *Journal of Service Research*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 166-177.
- File, K.M., Cermak, D.S.P. and Prince, R.A. (1994). Word-of-mouth effects in professional services buyer behavior. *The Service Industries Journal*, vol. 14, no. 3, pp. 301-314.
- Murray, K.B. (1991). A test of services marketing theory: consumer information acquisition activities. *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 55, pp. 10-25.
- Grace D, O'Cass A (2004). Service brands and communication effects. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, vol. 1, no. 4, pp. 241-254.
- Keller, E. (2007). Unleashing the power of word of mouth: Creating brand advocacy to drive growth, *Journal of Advertising Research*, vol. 47, no. 4, pp. 448-452.
- Buttle, F.A. (1998). Word of mouth: understanding and managing referral marketing. *Journal of Strategic Management*, vol. 6, pp. 241-254.
- Li, Z., Low, M. Y. H., Lim, Y. G., & Ma, B. (2008). Optimal decision-making on product ranking for cross docking/ warehousing operations. *IEEE International Conference on Industrial Informatics*, pp. 871–876.
- Yan, H., & Tang, S. (2009). Pre-distribution and post-distribution cross docking operations. *Transportation Research Part E: Logistics and Transportation Review*, vol. 45, no. 6, pp. 843–859. doi:10.1016/j.tre.2009.05.005.
- Gallego, G., Ozer, O., and Zipkin, P. (2007). Bounds, heuristics, and approximations for distribution systems. *Operations Research*, vol. 55, pp. 503–517.
- Benrqaia, Y., Estampe, D. Vallespir, B. and Babai, M.Z. (2014). Impact of product characteristics on distribution strategy selection. *Supply Chain Forum: An International Journal*, vol. 15, no. 3, Best Papers RIRL conference
- Van Belle, J., Valckenaers, P., and Cattrysse, D. (2012). Cross-docking: State of the art. *Omega*, vol. 40, no. 6, pp. 827-846.
- Shakeri, M., Low, M. Y. H., Turner, S. J., and Lee, E. W. (2012). A robust two-phase heuristic algorithm for the truck scheduling problem in a resource constrained cross dock. *Computers & Operations Research*, vol. 39, no. 11, pp. 2564–2577.
- Waller, M. A., Cassidy, C. R., & Ozment, J. (2006). Impact of cross-docking on inventory in a decentralized retail supply chain. *Transportation Research Part E: Logistics and Transportation Review*, vol. 42, no. 5, pp. 359-382. Doi: 10.1016/j.tre.2005.01.002.
- Lee, Y. H., Jung, J. W., & Lee, K. M. (2006). Vehicle routing scheduling for cross docking in the supply chain. *Computers & Industrial Engineering*, vol. 51, no. 2, pp. 247-256.
- Etzel, M.J., Walker, B.J. and Stanton, W.J. (1997). *Marketing*. 11th edition New Jersey.
- Ries, A. and Trout, J. (1986). *Marketing welfare*. , vol. 3, no. 4, pp. 77-82.
- Kotler, Ph. (2006). *Marketing management* 12th edition. Upper Saddle River, 2006.
- Armstrong, M. (2006). Competition in two sided markets. *The RAND Journal of Economics*, vol. 37, no. 3, pp. 668-691.
- Fill, Ch. (2006). *Marketing communications: engagement, strategies and practice* / Harlow, 2006.
- Ferrel, P. (1997). *Marketing* 10th edition / Boston.
- Lamb, W.Jr, Hair, W.Jr. and Mcdaniel, C. (2004). *Marketing*. 7th edition Thompson south Western.
- Boone, L. and Harcourt, D.K. (2001). *Contemporary marketing* 10th edition.
- Grancutt, J., and Leadley, P. and Forsyth, P. (2004). *Marketing: essential principles, new realities*. London, 2004.
- Doyle, P. and Stern, P. (2006). *Marketing management and strategy* Fourth edition.
- Graham, J.R. and Campshell, R.H. (2001). The Theory and Practice of corporate finance: evidence from the field. *Journal of Financial Economics*, vol. 60, no. 2-3, pp. 187-243.

- Bancel, F. and Mitto, U. (2004). Cross-country Determinants of Capital Structure Choice: A Survey of European firms. *Financial Management*, vol. 33, no. 4, pp. 104-133.
- Brounen, D., Jong, A. and Koedijk, K. (2004). Corporate finance in Europe: Confronting theory with practice. *Financial Management*, vol. 33, no. 4, pp. 71-101.
- DeAngelo, H. and DeAngelo, L. (2007). Payout Policy Pedagogy: What Matters and Why, *European Financial Management*. vol. 13, no.11-27. doi:10.1111/j.1468-036X.2006.00283.x
- Gamba, A. and Triantis, A. (2008). The Value of Financial Flexibility. *The Journal of Finance*, vol. 63: pp. 2263-2296. doi:10.1111/j.1540-6261.2008.01397.x
- Byoun, S. (2008). How and When Do Firms Adjust Their Capital Structures toward Targets? *The Journal of Finance*. vol. 63, no. 3069-3096. doi:10.1111/j.1540-6261.2008.01421.x
- Myers, S. C. (1984). The Capital Structure Puzzle. *The Journal of Finance*, vol. 39, pp. 574-592. doi:10.1111/j.1540-6261.1984.tb03646.x
- Myers, S.C. and Majluf, N.S. (1984). Corporate financing and investment decisions when firms have information that investors do not have. *Journal of Financial Economics*, vol. 13, no. 2, pp. 187-221.
- Froot, K.A., Scharfstein, D.S. and Stein, J.C. (1993). Risk management: Coordinating corporate investments and financing polices. *The Journal of Finance*, vol. 48, no. 5.
- Lins, K.V., Servaes, H. and Tufano, P. (2010). What drives corporate liquidity? An international survey of cash and lines of credit. *Journal of Financial Economics*, vol. 98, no. 1, pp. 160-176.
- Campello, M., Graham, J.R. and Harvey, C.R. (2010). The real effects of financial constraints: Evidence from a financial crisis. *Journal of financial Economics*, vol. 97, no. 3, pp. 470-487.
- Opler, T., Pinkowitz, L., Stulz, R. and Williamson, R. (1999). The determinants and implications of corporate cash holdings. *Journal of Financial Economics*, vol. 52, no. pp. 3-46.
- Billett, M.T. and Garfinkel, J.A. (2004). Financial flexibility and the cost of external finance for US bank holding companies. *Journal of Money Credit and Banking*, vol. 36, no. 5, pp. 827-852.
- Almeida, H., Campello, M. and Weisbach, M.S. (2004). The cash flow sensitivity of cash. *The Journal of Finance*, vol. 59, no. 4, pp. 1777-1804.
- Faulkender, M. and Wang, R. (2006). Corporate Financial Policy and the Value of Cash. *The Journal of Finance*, vol. 61, pp. 1957-1990, doi:10.1111/j.1540-6261.2006.00894.x
- Dittmara, A. and Smith, J.M. (2007). Corporate governance and value of cash holdings. *Journal of Financial Economics*, vol. 83, pp. 599-634.
- Kalcheva, I. and Lins, K.V. (2007). International evidence on cash holdings and expected managerial agency problems. *The Review of Financial Studies*, vol. 20, no. 4, pp. 1087-1112.
- Harford, J., Mansi, S.A., Maxwell, W.F. (2008). Corporate governance and firm cash holdings in the US. *Journal of Financial Economics*, vol. 87, pp. 535-555.
- Riddick, L. A. and Whited, T. M. (2009). The Corporate Propensity to Save. *The Journal of Finance*, vol. 64, pp. 1729-1766. doi:10.1111/j.1540-6261.2009.01478.x
- Denis, David J. and Stephen B. McKeon, (2009). Debt financing and financial flexibility: Evidence from pro-active leverage increases. *Purdue University*, SSRN abstract no. 1361171.
- Chun-Ai Ma and Yanbo Jin (2016). What Drives the Relationship Between Financial Flexibility and Firm Performance: Investment Scale or Investment Efficiency? Evidence from China. *Journal of Emerging Markets Finance and Trade*, vol. 52, pp. 2043-2055.
- Marchica, M.T. and Mura, R. (2010). Financial Flexibility, Investment Ability, and Firm Value: Evidence from Firms with Spare Debt Capacity. *Financial Management*, vol. 39, pp. 1339-1365. doi:10.1111/j.1755-053X.2010.01115.x
- Jong, A., Verbeek, M. and Verwijmeren, P. (2011). Firm's debt-equity decisions when the static trade-off theory and pecking order theory disagree. *Journal of Banking and Finance*, vol. 35, no. 5, pp. 1303-1314.
- Spiegelaere, S.D., Gyes, G.V. and Hootegem, G.V. (2013). Labour flexibility and innovation, complementary or concurrent strategies? A review of the literature. *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, vol. 35, no. 4, pp. 653-666.
- Atkinson, J. (1994). The flexible firm. In: Clark H, Chandler J and Barry J (eds) Organizations and identities: Text and Readings in Organizational Behavior. *Cengage Learning EMEA*.
- Atkinson, J. (1984). Manpower strategies for flexible organizations. *Personnel Management*, August, pp.28-31.
- Atkinson, J. and Gregory, D. (1986). Is flexibility just a flash in the pan? *Personnel Management*, September, pp. 26-29.
- Atkinson, J. and Meager, N. (1986). Changing working patterns, how companies achieve flexibility to meet new needs. London: National Economic Development Office (NEDO).

- Benders, J. (1990). Over de inzetbaarheid van werknemers. *Tijdschrift voor Politieke Economie*, vol. 13, no. 2, pp. 94-106.
- Sanchez, R. (1995). Strategic flexibility in product competition. *Strategic Management Journal*, vol.16 (special issue), pp. 135-159.
- Volberda, H.W. (1998). Building the flexible firm, How to Remain Competitive. New York: *Oxford University Press*.
- Wright, P.M. and Snell, S.A. (1998). Towards a unifying framework for exploring fit and flexibility in strategic human resource management. *Academy of Management Review*, vol. 23, pp. 756-772.
- Huselid, M.A. (1995). The impact of human resource management practices on turnover, productivity and corporate financial performance. *Academy of Management Journal*, vol. 38, pp. 635-672.
- Way, S.A., Fay, C.H., Wright, P.M., Snell, S.A., Chang, S. and Gong, Y. (2015). Validation of a multidimensional HR flexibility measure. *Journal of Management*, vol. 41, no. 4, pp. 1098-1131.
- Chang, S., Gong, Y., Way, S.A. and Jia, L. (2013). Flexibility oriented HRM systems, Absorptive capacity and market responsiveness and firm innovativeness. *Journal of Management*, vol. 39, no. 7, pp. 1924-1951.
- Collins, C.J. and Clark, K.D. (2003). Strategic human resource practices, top management team social networks and firm performance: the role of human resource practices in creating organizational competitive advantage. *Academy of Management Journal*, vol. 46, no. 6, pp. 740-751.
- Woodman, R.W., Sawyer, J.E. and Griffin, R.W. (1993). Toward a theory of organizational creativity. *Academy of Management Review*, vol. 18, no. 2, pp. 293-321.
- Daft, R.L. (2007). Organization theory and design, South-Western, Cincinnati, OH.
- Berg, V.D. and Velde, V.D. (2005). Relationships of functional flexibility with individual and work factors. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, vol.20, pp. 111-129.
- Macduffie, J. (1995). Human resource bundles and manufacturing performance: Organizational logic and flexible production systems in the world of auto industry. *Industrial and Labour Relations Review*, vol. 48, pp. 197-221.
- Boudreau, J. and Ramstad, P. (1997). Measuring intellectual capital: learning from financial history. *Human Resource Management*, vol. 36, pp. 343-356.
- Breu, K., Hemingway, C. and Strathern, M. (2001). Workforce agility: the new employee strategy for knowledge economy. *Journal of Information Technology*, vol. 17, pp. 21-31.
- Bhattacharya, M., Gibson, D.E. and Doty, D.H. (2005). The effects of flexibility in employee skills, employee behavior, HR practices on firm performance. *Journal of Management*, vol. 31, pp. 622-640.
- Maurer, T.J., Wrenn, K.A., Pierce, H.R., Tross, S.A. and Collins, W.C. (2003). Beliefs about improvability of career-relevant skills: relevance to job/task analysis. Competency modelling and learning organization. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, vol. 24, pp. 107-131.
- Weick, K.E. and Roberts, K.H. (1993). Collective mind in organizations: heedful interrelating on flight decks. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, vol. 38, pp. 357-381.
- Youndt, M.A. and Snell, S.A. (2004). Human resource configurations, intellectual capital and organizational performance. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, vol. 16, pp. 337-360.
- Forsythe, S. (1997). Human factors in agile manufacturing: a brief overview with emphasis on communication and information infrastructure. *Human factors and Ergonomics in Manufacturing*, Vol.7, pp.3-10.
- Basu, S. (2014). Product market strategies and innovation types: finding the right fit. *Strategic Direction*, Vol. 30, No. 3, pp. 28-31.
- Brown, S.L. and Eisenhard, K.M. (1995). Product development: past research, present findings and future directions. *Academy of Management Review*, vol. 20, no. 2, pp. 343-378.
- Damanpour, F. and Gopalakrishnan, S. (1998). Theories of organizational structure and innovation adoption: the role of environmental change. *Journal of Engineering and Technology Management*, vol. 15, no. 1, pp. 1-24.
- Henderson, R.M. and Clark, K.B. (1990). Architectural innovation the reconfiguration of existing product technologies and the failure of established firms. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, vol. 35, no. 1, pp. 9-30.
- Kohli, A.K. and Jaworski, B.J. (1990). Market orientation: the construct, research propositions and managerial implications. *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 54, no. 2, pp. 1-18.
- Knight, K. (1967). A descriptive model of the intra-firm innovation process. *Journal of Business*, vol. 40, pp. 478-496.
- Normann, R. (1971). Organizational innovativeness, product variation and reorientation. *Academy Science Quarterly*, vol. 16, pp. 203-215.
- Hage, J. (1999). Organizational innovation and organizational change. *Annual Review of Sociology*, vol. 25, pp. 597-622.

- Subramaniam, M., and Youndt, M.A. (2005). The influence of intellectual capital on the types of innovative capabilities. *Academy of Management Journal*, vol. 48, no. 3, pp. 450-463.
- Workman, J.P. (1993). Marketing's limited role in new product development in one computer systems firm. *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 30, pp. 405-421.
- Dosi, G. (1988). Sources, procedures and microeconomic effects of innovation. *Journal of Economic Literature*, vol. 26, no. 3, pp. 1120-1171.
- Green, S.G., Gavin, M.B. and Aiman, S.L. (1995). Assessing multidimensional measure of radical innovation. *IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management*, vol. 42, no. 3, pp. 203-214.
- Veryzer, R.W. (1988). Discontinuous innovation and the new product development process. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, vol. 15, no. 4, pp. 304-321.
- Ansoff, I. (1957). Strategies for diversification. *Harvard Business Review*, vol. 35, no. 5, pp. 113-124.
- Prajogo, D.L. and Ahmed, P.K. (2006). Relationships between innovation stimulus, innovation capacity and innovation performance. *R&D Management*, vol. 36, no. 5, pp. 499-515.
- Calantone, R.J. and Stanko, M.A. (2007). Drivers of outsourced innovation: an exploratory study. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, vol. 24, pp. 230-241.
- Cohen, W.M. and Levinthal, D.A. (1990). Absorptive capacity: a new perspective on learning and innovation. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, vol. 35, pp. 128-152.
- Tsai, K.H. and Wang, J.C. (2008). External technology acquisition and firm performance: a longitudinal study. *Journal of Business Venturing*, vol. 23, pp. 91-112.
- Chesbrough, H. (2003). *Open Innovation: The New Imperative for Creating and Profiting from Technology*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Chesbrough, H. and Crowther, A.K. (2006). Beyond high tech: early adopters of open innovation in other industries. *R&D Management*, vol. 36, pp. 229-236.
- Lichtenthaler, U. and Ernst, H. (2006). Attitudes to externally organizing knowledge management tasks: a review, reconsideration and extension of the NIH syndrome. *R&D Management*, vol. 36, pp. 367-386.
- Van de Vrande, V., Lemmens, C. and Vanhaverbeke, W. (2006) Choosing governance modes for external technology sourcing. *R&D Management*, vol. 36, pp. 347-36.

## **Biographies**

**Somen Dey** is currently pursuing his Ph.D. in the Department of Industrial and Management Engineering, IIT Kanpur, India. He obtained his B.Tech (hons) degree in Production and Industrial Engineering from NIT Jamshedpur and Master of Engineering (M.E.) degree in Production Engineering from Jadavpur University, Kolkata. His primary research interests includes optimization of manufacturing systems, manufacturing strategy and supply chain management. He was the recipient of the 'Best Track Paper Award' in operations management at the IEOM Morocco conference 2016.

**Prof (Dr.) R.R.K. Sharma** is Professor and former Head of Department of Industrial and Management Engineering, Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, India. His research interest includes operations management, operations research and manufacturing strategy. He has written 140 research papers in international journals and conferences.