



Call for Papers for a Special Issue

Resource Allocation and Strategic Management

Submission window: May 1 through June 30, 2022

Guest Editors

Dan Lovallo, University of Sydney
Catherine A. Maritan, Syracuse University
Brian Wu, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

***SMJ* Advising Editor**

Brian S. Silverman

Background

Resource allocation is a fundamental element of strategic management – whether at the corporate level, business level, or functional level; whether in an established firm or a new firm; whether in the context of a defined competitive environment or an emerging one. Despite its importance, the topic is remarkably understudied. Even when it is examined, resource allocation is often in the background of studies on other strategy topics, or invoked in a general sense, but not the focus of articles. Treating resource allocation as a background feature both underplays its importance and impedes learning about this critical management function. Treating resource allocation in broad terms oversimplifies the specific choices facing managers.

Aims and Scope

The goal of this special issue is to bring resource allocation to the forefront of strategic management research, with an emphasis on nonfinancial resources. Much of the existing research on resource allocation in economics, finance, and strategic management has examined the allocation of financial capital, which is one type of resource. However, this capital is typically converted into nonfinancial resources – physical, technological, knowledge, and human – that are relevant to a firm's strategy. The literature lacks empirical accounts of nonfinancial resource allocation; as a result, we have little understanding of the strategic choices managers make regarding the types, quantities, and combinations of nonfinancial resources that are allocated.

This special issue aims to spur research that addresses this underexplored aspect of firms' resource allocation choices, establishing an empirical base that offers insights into the complexity of the strategic choices that managers make about what resources to allocate in what combinations and for what purposes.

We are soliciting submissions of empirical studies that focus on managerial choices related to the allocation of nonfinancial resources in firms. We seek contributions that examine a range of specific topics, and use a variety of methods, data sources, and research designs to offer novel, more in-depth, more complete, or more nuanced examinations of the allocation of nonfinancial resources.

Although our main goal is to understand resource allocation choices, we welcome submissions that examine performance consequences of those allocations. However, such submissions should not examine performance consequences based on empirical identifications alone. Rather, the primary focus should be to unpack the endogenous resource allocation process that leads to an outcome.

Theoretical papers without empirical content fall outside the scope of this special issue. Also outside the scope are studies with a primary focus on the allocation of financial resources. Submissions that include financial resource allocation but highlight the nonfinancial resources to which capital is converted (e.g., physical, technological, knowledge and human resources) as drivers of allocation choices, or explicitly examine the joint allocation of financial and nonfinancial resources, may be considered providing there is an emphasis on the nonfinancial resources. Finally, our interest is in research that examines explicit choices to allocate resources rather than resource reconfiguration activity and outcomes, more broadly defined.

Here we provide some illustrative examples of potential research themes and questions.

1. Submissions that examine allocation of particular resource types, especially in combination:
 - What processes shape the allocation of physical, technological, knowledge, and human resources? How do firms manage the joint allocation of multiple types of resources to support strategies?
 - How do managers make choices about the joint allocation of resources with different properties (for example tangibility, degree of sunkness, scale-free nature)?
 - How do firms manage the joint allocation of newly acquired resources with reallocation or redeployment of existing resources?
2. Submissions that examine contextual issues on resource allocation choices:
 - How are resource allocation choices related to stages of industry evolution (nascent markets, growing markets, industry shakeout, mature markets, declining markets)?
 - What is the interplay among resource allocation choices made at the functional-level, business-level, and corporate-level?
 - How do external shocks alter resource allocation choices?
 - How does competitive interaction shape resource allocation choices?

3. Submissions that examine organizational and managerial issues shaping allocation choices:
 - How do firms make allocation choices for resources that span internal organizational boundaries?
 - What is the relationship between making allocation choices and features of organization design?
 - How does ownership (for example public versus private, family business, private equity) influence resource allocation choices?
 - What is the impact of stakeholder interests on resource allocation choices?
 - What are the effects of power and politics on selection of resources to allocate for what purposes?
 - How do cognitive biases and cognitive limitations influence managerial choices about what resources to allocate where?
 - How does allocation of managerial attention influence allocation of resources?
4. Submissions that examine particular elements of resource allocation choices:
 - What criteria are used to make choices to allocate different types of resources?
 - How does the treatment of risk and uncertainty shape the selection of resources to allocate?
 - How do time horizons associated with different resource types and strategic objectives affect resource allocation choices?

Example of potential research methods include:

- Quantitative analyses that explicitly capture allocation of nonfinancial resources (e.g., physical, technological, knowledge, and human resources), especially in combination
- Qualitative field studies of processes used to make resource allocation choices
- Laboratory experiments testing drivers of resource allocation choices
- Field experiments relating organizational practices to resource allocation choices
- Surveys of executives about resource allocation practices and allocation choices
- Computer-aided text analyses of reports of allocation choices

Submission Process

Submitted papers must be in accordance with the requirements of the *Strategic Management Journal*. Original manuscripts are due by the Submission Deadline of June 30, 2022 and must be submitted using the SMJ Submission system at <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/smj>. Authors should indicate that they would like the submission to be considered for the special issue “Resource Allocation and Strategic Management.”

Further Information

Questions pertaining to this special issue may be directed to:

Dan Lovallo (dan.lovallo@sydney.edu.au)

Catherine Maritan (cmaritan@syr.edu)

Brian Wu (wux@umich.edu)