

Business Strategy Lessons from Mythology and History

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Abstract: *Only in the last century have we seen the emergence of what are now considered to be modern management principles. However, if we examine Mythology, we find that many events, activities, and monuments demonstrate that this would not have occurred without managerial principles. The empirical exploration of mythology is influenced by a framework that recognizes mythology as having been regarded as factual narrative history by traditional cultures of the past, but is considered to be erroneous or otherwise suspect by modern mythologists. This article explores the application of management principles found in mythology and historical events, with a focus on Indian mythological texts. It highlights the existence of principles such as planning, organizing, personnel, communication, and control in these narratives and their relevance to modern business strategy. Compared to other mythologies, Indian mythology has a strong spiritual foundation, which makes the application of principles more effective.*

Keywords: Strategic Management, Mythology, History, Management principles, Business Strategy

1. Introduction

We are currently in the midst of India's holiday season. The mind goes back to the stories one learned as a youngster while the numerous rituals and ceremonies are performed in front of our eyes. These awe - inspiring descriptions of the cosmos and human comprehension served as moral cardinal points for me as a child. But in modern times, could there be more to them? Could brand and marketing strategists find inspiration in a cultural environment that in many ways fostered the evolution of original human thought? The brief answer is that many "darshans" await those who are willing to explore further afield.

Throughout time, the practice of strategic management has adopted a variety of concepts from prior implementations of strategy. More than 4, 000 years have passed since strategic management was first practiced. History can provide an enormous amount of strategic expertise, but failing to learn from its lessons can lead to costly strategic errors that could have been averted. Without a question, the present teaches us priceless lessons. Businesses can determine which techniques work and which do not by examining the strategies of ancient history and mythology.

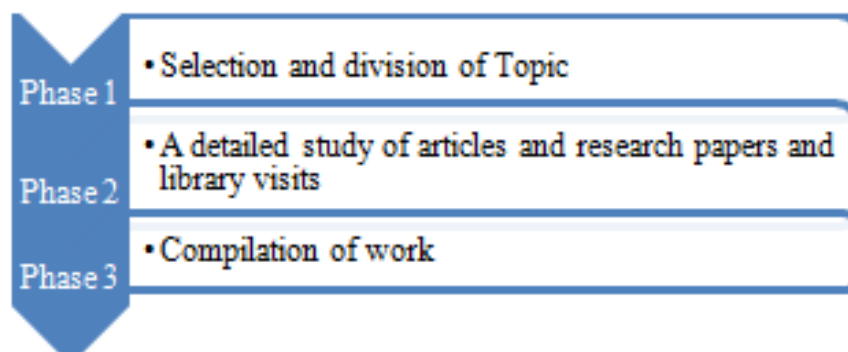
2. Objectives

The means through which a company intends to accomplish its intended aim is through its business strategy. A business strategy addresses significant resource concerns, such as finding the money to finance the construction of a new factory or facility. Choosing which items to invest significant resources in or guarantee a victory in a particular difficulty is other issues that are covered by strategies.

In this article, we've covered a variety of strategic management approaches based on numerous Indian epics and historical research techniques. We go over the advantages and disadvantages of using history and historical research techniques to enhance theoretical accounts of tactical phenomena.

Next, we explore how current research contributes to historically informed strategy research, look at major methodological and empirical issues with such research, and outline a future research agenda.

3. Methodology



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Many articles, review papers and research papers were taken into consideration while doing the analysis of the topic. The

flow of the project was decided and the contribution of each person in it.

4. Literature Review

Table 1: Literature Review

Sr. No.	Author	Summary	Type of Paper
1.	Nicholas S. Argyres, Alfredo De Massis	In this paper, they explore how and why such research might strengthen conceptual accounts of operational processes. They then go through how current study in the field of strategy adds to historical research.	Research paper
2.	R. K. Acharya	Strategies are involved with choosing which items to invest significant resources in or guarantee a victory in a certain difficulty. Indian epics' usage of many current tactics as examples is analyzed, and its occurrences and applications are examined.	Research Paper
3.	Ira Swasti	They are constantly looking for purpose and worth in the work we undertake. According to her, everyone should follow in the footsteps of our forefathers and look to India's rich culture of mythology, rituals, and shared stories for business teachings.	Article
4.	Devdutt Pattanaik	The Leadership Sutra explores Indian mythology and how it relates to business while providing "made in India" sutras (concepts) about the need for rules and the relevance of them. It continues the theme from his first book, The Business Sutra.	Article

5. Discussion and Findings

Mythology

Adventures of Theseus

Although his father was mysterious, Theseus was Aethra's son. King Aegeus of Athens and POSEIDON, the God of the Sea, were said to have been Aethra's two potential candidates at the time. In the months before the birth of Theseus, King Aegeus gave Aethra guidance regarding the newborn, believing it to be his own. He instructed Aethra to ask Theseus to lift the boulder and retrieve his sandals and sword when he reached adulthood after burying both of them beneath a huge stone. Aegeus fled for Athens before Theseus was born, condemning him to an early life without a father. Theseus was fostered by Aethra in the tiny settlement of Troezen and gradually evolved into a strong, young man.

Theseus was guided to the stone that was hiding Aegeus's possessions by Aethra after she realized she could no longer withhold him his rightful heritage. He knelt and held the huge stone, holding it with his full body after she ordered him to raise the rock. The enormous stone was effortlessly thrown aside by him as if it were a pebble after he stood up. When his mother asked him to, he went and got the antique sandals and sword. She advised him to travel to Athens to meet Aegeus. Theseus had to settle on a path once he had made up his mind to go to Athens. He opted for the far riskier overland path, which was filled with robbers and thieves of all kinds, rather than the conventional maritime route. Theseus ran into a lot of criminals and thugs during this journey who wanted to kill him and steal his possessions.

Mintzberg's Emergent Strategy is demonstrated in this case. According to this approach, a business should initially enter the market before making plans. You should approach the market unprepared and adjust your behaviour to the circumstances. The "Honda Effect" is a business illustration. Briefly said, the Japanese manufacturer first joined the US motorcycle market in 1959. At that time, all British manufacturers together accounted for 49% of the market. However, Honda swiftly overtook the competition in 1966,

grabbing a 63% share on its own. They outsold British and American producers in the sale of large bikes to leather-clad bikers. Additionally, they developed a new market for little bikes operated by common people.

When tragedy hit and the larger motorcycles started leaking oil and having clutch issues, Honda's credibility was all but shattered. Initially, the company concentrated all of its focus on making larger motorcycles. Honda was then forced to promote the 50cc bike, and they were surprised to discover that the retailers looking to sell their bikes weren't motorcycle dealers. They adopted an emergent strategy rather than a formal planning procedure by making quick judgments in the face of a terrible scenario.

Continuing with this narrative, Theseus encountered a man that resembled Sciron along the route. The man approached Theseus and requested help with a peculiar mission. He begged Theseus for help in holding a pine tree to the ground and lowering it down. While expecting Theseus to come, he presented himself as Sinis, the Pine - Bender, and effortlessly bent down a fully grown pine tree. Once Theseus had a firm hold of the tree, Sinis let go and leapt away. He thought the tree would launch Theseus into the air like a catapult, but he wasn't expecting the boy's incredible power. Sinis didn't dispute Theseus' strength; she knelt to look at the tree from a closed position. The fact that Theseus could keep the tree down by himself led him to believe that the tree trunk had broken. Theseus let go of the tree while leaning over, and Sinis was instantly struck unconscious. He connected each of Sinis' limbs to one of the four bent pine trees, then released them all at once, cutting the guy in half, to finish the job.

This story could be explained as one of the 5 Ps of strategy given by Mintzberg. Strategy as Ploy refers to activities that are actively dependent on the actions of others, such as competitors, industry peers, customers, vendors/suppliers, etc.

Sinis had planned to kill Theseus but had underestimated him. Theseus realized Sinis's plans of killing him had created a plan at that moment (emergent strategy). At that moment, he used a ploy as a strategy by showing Sinis that

he didn't have the strength to keep the pine tree bent down. And when Sinis bent down to see if the tree had snapped, he let go of the tree thereby killing Sinis. This was a deception strategy used by Theseus.

Titanomachy

In Greek mythology, the Titanomachy was the major conflict between the Olympian gods, led by Zeus, and the Titans, the elder generation of Greek gods. The old pantheon, which was based on Mount Othrys, was defeated at the end of the ten - year conflict, and a new one, based on Mount Olympus, was established.

This is one of the greatest wars in all mythologies. There is a lot to learn from this war. However, telling this story or writing it down will itself be enough to write a whole report. The analysis is the main part where we have analyzed and found the application of Strategic Alliance.

Zeus fed Cronus mustard and wine to make him vomit out his siblings which were swallowed by Cronus due to the prophecy made by his father. The siblings then joined Zeus in his war to overthrow the Titans. Together, they formed a common goal to overthrow the Titans and rule the world. In the 10 years, the war kept going on and both sides were equally matched. At this point, Zeus went to Tartarus to release Hecatonchires and Cyclopes. They joined Zeus forming a strategic alliance to fight the Titans. Hecatonchires and Cyclopes being amazing artisans created weapons for Zeus (lightning bolt), Poseidon (Trident), and Hades (invisible helmet), and a hundred hands of Hecatonchires used mountains as artillery shells to throw. This created an edge for the Olympians and led to their Victory.

Because they do not see one another as rivals and because defeating the Titans is one of their shared objectives, this strategic alliance was founded as a non - competitive partnership. Additionally, they distributed their riches equally among everyone after the fight. Posiedon and Hecatonshires served as the Titans' prison guards in Tartarus, and Cyclopes would later work as a god's craftsmen. Oceanus remained the freshwater god, Prometheus and Epimetheus were tasked with creating life on earth, Styx was elevated to the status of a powerful river goddess, Metis would become Zeus's first wife, and the cosmos itself was divided among the three male Olympians by lot. And thus, Hades ruled the Underworld, Poseidon became lord of the World's waters and Zeus became lord of the heavens. Therefore, their activities don't coincide concluding a Non - competitive alliance.

Mahabharata

Blue Ocean Strategy

- (1) The tactic applied by Hanuman to acquire Srirama's friendship is his special way of serving Rama and expressing his gratitude to his god Srirama.
- (2) Ravana's special ability to use the jet Pushpaka Vimana to hijack flying in the air with Sitamatha to Lanka is a novel technological implementation technique.
- (3) The Pandavas' Ashwamedha Yaga after the Mahabharata War was a novel method at the time to demonstrate their might and the kingdom's growth.

Ashwamedha Yaga represents the creation of uncontested creation.

- (4) Bhishmacharya's singular power to triumph and choose his demise is the monopolistic tactic in choosing even his demise. The grand instructor of the Kauravas and Pandavas, Bhishma, is unquestionably capable of even controlling his death.
- (5) Hanuman's ability to leap to the Himalayas or Lanka using his unchallenged power and unwavering adoration for his master Srirama.
- (6) The distinction made by Sri Rama in divorcing Sitha is based on a citizen's observation of his principle of treating all of his empire's citizens fairly and with confidence.
- (7) The eldest Pandava brother Dharmaraja's distinction in upholding sincerity throughout his life, like in the Mahabharata narrative.
- (8) The distinction of Karna, the Pandavas' unofficial brother, in his sacrifice to his master Duryodhana up to the point of his death.

Red Ocean Strategy

- (1) A well - known instance of the Red ocean tactic is the rivalry between King Wali and his brother Sugriva for control of the Vanara realm Kishkinda in the Ramayana. The conflict rivalry between older brother Wali and younger brother Sugriva is constantly growing, The younger brother eventually sought Lord Srirama's assistance to resolve his dilemma of liberating his bride out of his older brother Wali's custody.
- (2) The rivalry between Kaikeyee and Kausalya, Dasharatha's wives, in the Ramayana the Ayodhya king, to pass the throne to their sons Bharatha
- (3) In the Mahabharata, the struggle between the Pandavas and Kauravas for control of Hasthinapura's throne. This is the aim of the entire Kurukshetra battle. The Pandavas enlisted the aid of Lord Srikrishna and others to win the contest.
- (4) Kauravas made use of the might of their group. Karna and Arjuna's battle in the Mahabharata is another illustration of the competitive strategy between the Pandavas and the Kauravas.
- (5) In Mahabharata, Drona and Arjuna, a teacher and a student, engaged in combat conflict even though they respected one another.
- (6) Bheema and Duryodhana's battle in the Mahabharata War is also intended to secure the ruling over Hasthinapur.

History

Introduction

“Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.”

—George Santayana, The Life of Reason

Strategic management is significantly affected by Santayana's statement. It is possible to trace the history of strategic management back thousands of years. Understanding the past can lead to great strategic insight, but ignoring history's lessons can result in costly strategic errors

that could have been averted. Certainly, the present provides extremely valuable teachings; businesses can learn which strategies work and which do not by analyzing the current actions of other businesses.

Universities offer numerous academic disciplines, such as physics, literature, chemistry, computer science, and engineering. Some academic disciplines, such as literature, date back centuries, while others, such as computer science, are relatively new. Strategic management has been significant throughout history, but we will discuss the evolution of strategy. (Bracker 1980)

Strategy in Ancient Times

- The Old Testament of the Bible is among the earliest and most well-known examples of strategic management in action. It is exemplified by Moses, who overcame many difficulties after leading his fellow Hebrews out of Egyptian slavery. Moses started handing over power to the other committee members after consulting with God and his father-in-law. As a result, he was able to focus on making broader choices and putting other plans into action.
- Sun Tzu, a Chinese philosopher and strategist, also contributed ideas on strategic management that are still studied by corporate and military leaders today. For instance, Apple has employed this method by choosing to develop distinctive features for its computers, features that have produced a group of users that are passionately devoted. Apple significantly overcharges and costs more than its rivals for its products, such as computers. They don't give compatibility issues with computer software any thought. Apple dominates the industry by creating distinctive items and continues to draw in new clients.
- The Trojan Horse is another well-known illustration of strategy from antiquity. The goal of the Greek troops was to breach Troy's walls and launch an internal assault. They came up with a scheme that required building a huge wooden horse. Soldiers were concealed inside the horse when it was offered to Troy. Due to deception, the Trojans allowed the horse access to their city. The Greeks were victorious because their men emerged from the saddle as night fell. The Trojan horse is a term used to describe a method that, on the outside, seems to be helpful and effective but has a nefarious intention.
- The idea of mission is a further application of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table for strategic management. Their arduous and protracted quest to locate the Holy Grail—the fabled cup that Jesus and his disciples allegedly drank from at the Last Supper—serves as an illustration of the need of having a central and primary objective to direct business strategy and actions.
- King Arthur of Britain is credited with developing a far more noble approach to strategy than the Greeks did. In contrast to Moses' hierarchical and delegated organisational style, Arthur believed that he and each of his knights had an equal voice in selecting and formulating the crowd's plan. It is alleged that the gang convened at a round table. So no one's voice, including the King's, was seen as more important than the others. In today's times, most meetings are held at a rectangular

table, showing one person, the CEO probably the head or in charge.

The Story of Moses

God appointed Moses as a prophet to carry out his mission. When Moses was under a burning bush, God had spoken to him and asked him to free the Hebrew children from Egypt's harsh slavery. For 430 years, the Israelites were held as slaves in Egypt. The Egyptian pharaoh gave Moses and his followers the order to leave after much suffering, grief, and sadness.

The king dispatched 600 chariots and soldiers, forcing them to flee, and trapping them along the Red Sea's banks while Moses led the Israelites to freedom and out of the nation. When this occurred, the Israelites panicked, were terrified, and cried out to God for assistance.

God instructed Moses to raise his staff and reach out over the sea to split the waters. Israelites fled to safety on dry ground as Moses obeyed the order, and the Red Sea split. Moses guided the Israelites to God's promised land while rescuing them from captivity and torture. Moses was followed to the dry land by over 600,000 individuals, including women and children. These people looked up to Moses for leadership.

Leading the Israelites

With God's help and instruction, Moses then took over as the Israelites' leader. Additionally, according to certain excerpts, Moses was a kind leader who travelled to judge and listen to the people from sunrise till nightfall.

When Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, saw everything he was doing for the people, he told Moses that while what he was doing was excellent, it was too much for him to carry alone. In other words, Moses was acting independently while sitting in judgement by himself. He had not acquired delegation skills. Moses was instructed by Jethro to instruct the people in God's laws and ordinances and to lead the path.

But after doing so, he ought to teach them how to lead and rule themselves.

Moses was a superb leader. But he was exerting himself excessively in this circumstance. He was the one who undertook all of God's obligations and commands, acting independently. This was less productive and efficient in addition to being exhausting. He appointed other judges to assist him after carefully considering his father Jethro's counsel. Moses could assist many more Israelites with that assistance.

Moses' leadership and example offer us lessons. Not every task needs to be completed by the leader. It also entails assigning work to others. Managers must be informed that their responsibility is to complete the task.

Moses and Delegation

Fortunately, Moses had realised early on that he didn't have to handle everything himself. He eventually mastered the art of assigning tasks to succeed as a leader.

Moses delegated to hasten God's mission. God gave Moses and his followers the task of building a tabernacle, or house of prayer, where the Israelites may offer sacrifices to the Lord. He also gave detailed directions on how to carry it out. When Moses gave the Israelites these instructions, most of them complied. Moses didn't try to handle every situation on his own.

To aid in the construction of the tabernacle, all Israelites offered gifts of building materials. The kings brought onyx stones and spices, while others brought jewellery, gold, brass, and other items. The ladies spun exquisite linen.

Then, through Moses, God assigned Bezaleel, Anoliab, and every wise - hearted man to work on constructing the tabernacle and altar.

Even after a lifetime of labour, Moses would not have been able to construct the tabernacle on his own. But they were able to construct the tabernacle in a lot less time because he efficiently assigned the task to others.

We can use delegation to expand our businesses and develop into effective leaders, just as Moses did to hasten God's work. In any organisation, a manager must be able to delegate.

British East India Company

The British East India Company was founded in 1600. It was not the last and the first colonial organisation to come out of England, but it was the most famous as it helped the Royals to capture the jewel in their crown, i. e., India. The British East India Company is regarded as the most powerful corporation the world has ever known. The company asked Queen Elizabeth to let them go to India, representing the crown, in exchange for a monopoly on trade from India. The company raised 700, 000 pounds of their own money and embarked on a journey that forever changed the course of history.

The corporation entered into a treaty with Jahangir, and together they established their first factory. They wanted to set up their factory in an appropriate location which suited all the geopolitical factors, a place which was well connected with the rest of the world. At that time, Surat was one of the most prosperous cities in the world as well as one of the largest ports. It had earlier served the Dutch East India Company. Because of all these geographic factors, Surat was selected as the location for their first factory.

The corporation used representatives known as "factors," who were representatives left behind by the British East India Company who helped in setting up trading posts, which helped them to source and negotiate for goods.

The strategies of the East India Company mainly relied on adopting monopolistic trading practices and diversification into businesses away from spices, like textiles, cotton, and silk trading. The British East India Company had a monopoly, which meant that no other British company could legally indulge in all the trades and businesses that the British East India Company was competing in. The company

had monopolies over raw materials from India and opium from China.

These regulatory policies helped the company capture all the markets all over the silk route from Iran to China. Though it faced some competition from the Spanish and Portuguese, its control over India and eastern China gave it all the competitive advantages.

Due to extensive diversification and capturing vast territories, it became impossible for them to govern as well as maintain their businesses. The efforts of the company in administering India meant that the company couldn't focus on its main businesses, and it was deprived of its trade monopoly in 1813. Later, it also lost its administrative functions to the British government after the Sepoy mutiny in 1857.

In present times, these types of strategies can be seen in mixed economies like India, where government entities like ISRO and IRCTC have these monopolies.

6. Conclusion

- a) Theseus chose the far more perilous land route, which was swarmed with bandits and robbers, instead of the traditional ocean route. This situation, now that we are aware of it, exemplifies Mintzberg's Emergent Strategy. This could be considered riskier than standard strategic methods. This is because it is less organized and frequently produces unexpected outcomes. The emergent strategy may also fail if organizations fail to adequately consider all available options prior to taking action. This is due to the fact that it frequently relies on trial and error, which can be costly if performed carelessly. Additionally, a substantial amount of resources are frequently misapplied. Therefore, he should have travelled by sea to avoid criminals and thugs on his journey.
- b) Titanomachy was the primary conflict in Greek mythology between the Titans, the elder generation of Greek gods, and the Olympian gods, led by Zeus. The previous pantheon, which was based on Mount Othrys, was defeated after the ten - year conflict, and a new one, based on Mount Olympus, was established. Cronus swallowed his siblings because of his father's prophecy, and Zeus fed him mustard and wine to make him vomit them up. Zeus then traveled to Tartarus in order to release the Hecatonchires and Cyclops. Since the destruction of the Titans is one of their shared objectives, they joined Zeus in forming a strategic alliance to achieve this objective. They had no choice but to form a strategic alliance between the Olympians, cyclops, and Hecatonchires, in my estimation. They gain knowledge from one another, thereby dividing the risk of failure (losing the war). Despite the fact that the partners may misunderstand what they contribute to the table (resources), their partnership proved fruitful.
- c) The new phrase for a competitive strategy used to outperform rivals in terms of company performance is "red ocean strategy." This method was used to build the whole Mahabharata epic. The struggle between the Pandavas and the Kauravas to conquer the empire

drives the entire narrative. Similar to this, the entire epic of Ramayana develops from Srirama and Ravana's competition to keep or seize Sithadevi, respectively. Both the Mahabharata and the Ramayana employ monopoly methods that are known as "blue ocean" strategies.

- d) Leaders are entrepreneurs. Building a startup or a new company demands that businessmen or entrepreneurs be involved with many different business components and phases from the outset, including staffing, content production, management strategy, marketing, sales, finances, and customer services. Like Moses, we might take on several tasks at once, but it doesn't imply we have to manage everything by ourselves. Delegation is a skill that can be learned and put to use to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our job. Successful people often delegate tasks to others. Hiring team members to carry out certain duties and assume responsibility on our behalf is necessary for our company to grow. We will have more time to concentrate on our greater goals if we seek aid with the daily tasks. Moses worked from early in the morning until late at night when he was the only one evaluating the people. But after appointing additional judges, he had much more time to focus on other crucial tasks. Freeing up time will enhance our productivity by lowering tension and tiredness. We will have more talent, creativity, hours, and ideas to work with as our team grows. Effective delegation improves our chances of achievement and monetization. Giving duties to others around us and watching them complete them is not the only definition of delegation. We must be effective delegators, which mean we must support their success. This entails giving instruction and resources, exercising power, giving feedback, having faith in others, outlining expectations clearly, and, finally, accepting responsibility for the outcomes.
- e) From the downfall of the British East India Company, we can learn that a company should not diversify in all areas very quickly and should also focus on its core competencies, unlike here, where the company in its latter stages got more engaged in controlling India rather than focusing on its business and later lost its monopoly as well as power. In the modern world, many companies fail while diversifying, Google Glasses and Facebook Phone.

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