

**THREE ESSAYS ON CORPORATE GROWTH STRATEGY AND
FIRM PERFORMANCE: A CONTINGENCY PERSPECTIVE**

by

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ABSTRACT

Firms pursue growth through a number of strategic means, among which diversification and forming alliances are probably the most usual approaches. However, the effectiveness of such growth strategies is likely to depend on factors that create contingencies in the implementation process. The characterization of these factors is of theoretical and practical relevance and deserves researchers' attention. This thesis work consists of three essays, each of which addresses an important type of corporate growth strategy and studies how contextual factors shape its effect on firm performance.

The first essay is on the intriguing relationship between diversification strategy and firm performance. It is found that the level of information technology (IT) spending represents an important contingency that determines the effectiveness of diversification strategy. The second essay is focused on the economic rents derived from alliances. It specifically examines the role of related alliance experience and IT-enabled knowledge management (KM) capability in the value creation process. The third essay addresses the issue of partner selection in alliances and proposes a contingency argument regarding when the choice of partner selection made by the firm would add value to the firm. It labels the choice of partner selection using the exploration-exploitation framework and identifies a set of environmental and organizational variables that moderate the relationship between partner selection and alliance value.