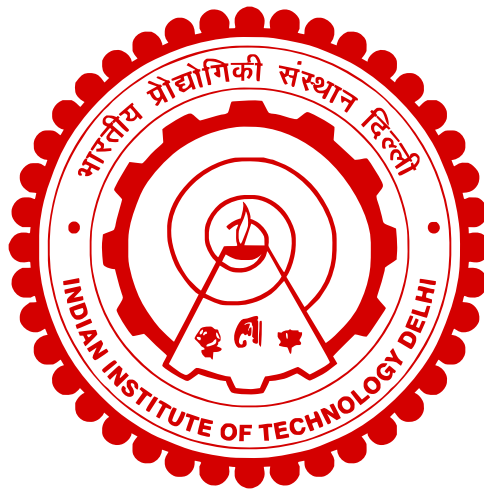


**DIGITAL CAPABILITIES IN SMALL ORGANIZATIONS: AN EMERGENT
AUTONOMOUS ANALYTICAL CAPABILITY-BUILDING THEORY (AACT)**

HONEY YADAV



**BHARTI SCHOOL OF TELECOMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY
MANAGEMENT**

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DELHI

MARCH 2026

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by

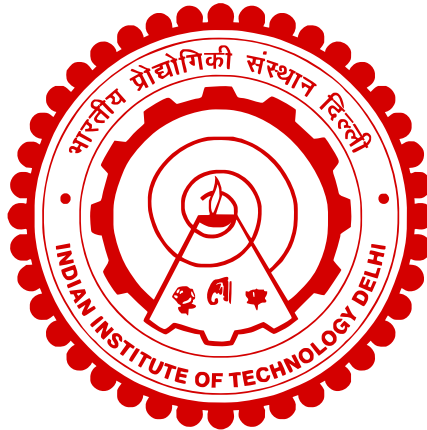
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Submitted

in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

to the



INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DELHI

MARCH 2026

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis titled “**Digital Capabilities In Small Organizations: An Emergent Autonomous Analytical Capability-Building Theory (AACT)**”, which is being submitted by **Honey Yadav** to the Bharti School of Telecommunication and Technology Management, Indian Institute of Technology Delhi, for the award of the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)** is a record of bonafide research work carried out by her. She has worked under my supervision in conformity with the rules and regulations of the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi. The research reports and results presented in the thesis have not been submitted in part or whole for the award of any degree or diploma in any other university or institute.

(Prof. Mahim Sagar)

Research Supervisor

Bharti School of Telecommunication and Technology Management,

Indian Institute of Technology Delhi

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

“The task of a craftsman, they conclude, ‘is not to generate meaning, but rather to cultivate in himself the skill of discerning the meanings that are already there.’”

- *Cal Newport*

First and foremost, I wish to convey my sincere gratitude to my research supervisor, **Prof Mahim Sagar**, whose steadfast support, insightful guidance, and exemplary mentorship have been pivotal throughout this research endeavour. His intellectual leadership and constructive feedback have substantially shaped both the theoretical framework and methodological robustness of this thesis. I am profoundly appreciative of his encouragement, critical perspective, and patience, all of which consistently challenged me to elevate the quality of my scholarly work.

I would also like to extend my appreciation to the faculty members and research committee of **Bharti School of Telecommunication and Technology Management, Indian Institute of Technology Delhi**, for fostering an enriching academic atmosphere and providing essential resources necessary for the completion of this study. Their contributions, whether through coursework, seminars, or informal discussions, have significantly enhanced my understanding of the discipline.

Special acknowledgment is extended to the organizational stakeholders, founders, and employees of the participating SMEs—**VIMHANS, Lumiere Business Solutions, NatHabit, and Educart Publishers**—for their generosity in sharing time and insights. Their willingness to participate in interviews and the data collection process was invaluable to the success and depth of this research. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all interview participants for their valuable insights, which have contributed significantly to the advancement of this study and the broader academic discourse.

I am also grateful to the administrative staff and library personnel at the **Indian Institute of Technology Delhi**, whose dedicated support facilitated the smooth progression of various research stages.

On a personal note, I owe profound gratitude to my mother, **Ms. Neetu Jain Yadav**, for her unwavering love, encouragement, and constant presence throughout this journey. Her enduring faith in my abilities, coupled with the values of perseverance and intellectual curiosity she instilled in me, has been a continuous source of strength and inspiration. I also extend heartfelt thanks to my friends and peers, including **Ms. Charu Hasti**, whose support, camaraderie, and timely words of motivation have played a vital role in sustaining my focus and enthusiasm during the most challenging phases of this work.

In closing, I dedicate this thesis to aspiring researchers who believe in the transformative potential of knowledge and strive to create a positive impact through scholarship.

Thank you.

Honey

Abstract

This thesis explores the intricate process of organizational digital capability management within small organizations, with a particular focus on the development of analytical capabilities through the lens of artificial intelligence (AI). The study is grounded in the context of Indian small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which face unique challenges and opportunities in their digital transformation journeys. The research aims to conceptualize the analytical capability development process, theorize its dimensions, and propose a comprehensive framework for understanding how small organizations can build robust analytical models to achieve an AI ecosystem.

The thesis begins with a comprehensive literature review, identifying significant gaps in the existing research on digital capability management. It highlights the fragmented nature of current frameworks and the need for a more integrated approach. The review also underscores the importance of analytical capabilities in converting raw data into actionable insights, optimizing decision-making processes, and enhancing organizational performance. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative research to provide a holistic understanding of the analytical capability building process. The qualitative phase involves grounded theory to generate initial evidence and conceptualize the process, while the quantitative phase uses empirical methods to examine the interrelationships among the identified dimensions. The research also includes four primary case studies to validate the proposed framework and ensure its practical applicability.

The findings of the study formulate an emergent Autonomous Analytical Capability Building Theory (AACT) combining three core capabilities, namely Information Intelligence Capability (IIC), Resource-Dependency Capability (RDC), and Responsible AI Capability (RAC). The initial two dimensions of core capabilities reflect a sequential, recurrent, interdependent evolution, whereas the third capability dimension is recurrent and pervasive,

consistently influencing the other stages. AACT is characterized as an adaptive, evolutionary, and complex change spectrum that demands firms' absorption by interacting with dynamic analytical capabilities embedded in their core competency. Our findings indicate the central role of adaptable, value-driven, customer-centric, and responsible autonomous system development in AACT.

In summary, this research enhances theoretical knowledge while offering practical implications for managers and policymakers across three primary spheres: organizational entities, governmental bodies, and third-party service providers. The AACT framework is designed to be operationalized by managers through four critical phases: assessment, planning, implementation, and subsequent feedback and learning. These findings contribute to the literature by elucidating the importance of a holistic strategy for cultivating analytical capabilities and fostering an ecosystem conducive to AI integration. Moreover, the results underscore the imperative for tailored strategies and sustained support mechanisms that enable small organizations to confront unique challenges and optimally capitalize on the opportunities inherent in digital transformation.

सारांश

यह थीसिस कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता (एआई) के लेंस के माध्यम से विश्लेषणात्मक क्षमताओं के विकास पर विशेष ध्यान देने के साथ छोटे संगठनों के भीतर संगठनात्मक डिजिटल क्षमता प्रबंधन की जटिल प्रक्रिया की पड़ताल करती है। यह अध्ययन भारतीय छोटे और मध्यम आकार के उद्यमों (एसएमई) के संदर्भ में आधारित है, जो अपनी डिजिटल परिवर्तन यात्रा में अद्वितीय चुनौतियों और अवसरों का सामना करते हैं। अनुसंधान का उद्देश्य विश्लेषणात्मक क्षमता विकास प्रक्रिया की अवधारणा करना, इसके आयामों को सिद्धांत देना और यह समझने के लिए एक व्यापक रूपरेखा का प्रस्ताव करना है कि एआई पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र को प्राप्त करने के लिए छोटे संगठन मजबूत विश्लेषणात्मक मॉडल कैसे बना सकते हैं।

थीसिस एक व्यापक साहित्य समीक्षा के साथ शुरू होती है, जो डिजिटल क्षमता प्रबंधन पर मौजूदा शोध में महत्वपूर्ण अंतराल की पहचान करती है। यह वर्तमान ढांचे की खंडित प्रकृति और अधिक एकीकृत दृष्टिकोण की आवश्यकता पर प्रकाश डालता है। समीक्षा कच्चे डेटा को कार्रवाई योग्य अंतर्दृष्टि में परिवर्तित करने, निर्णय लेने की प्रक्रियाओं को अनुकूलित करने और संगठनात्मक प्रदर्शन को बढ़ाने में विश्लेषणात्मक क्षमताओं के महत्व को भी रेखांकित करती है। अध्ययन एक मिश्रित-तरीकों के दृष्टिकोण को नियोजित करता है, विश्लेषणात्मक क्षमता निर्माण प्रक्रिया की समग्र समझ प्रदान करने के लिए गुणात्मक और मात्रात्मक अनुसंधान का संयोजन करता है। गुणात्मक चरण में प्रारंभिक साक्ष्य उत्पन्न करने और प्रक्रिया की अवधारणा बनाने के लिए ग्राउंडेड सिद्धांत शामिल है, जबकि मात्रात्मक चरण पहचाने गए आयामों के बीच अंतर्संबंधों की जांच करने के लिए अनुभवजन्य तरीकों का उपयोग करता है। अनुसंधान में प्रस्तावित ढांचे को मान्य करने और इसकी व्यावहारिक प्रयोज्यता सुनिश्चित करने के लिए चार प्राथमिक केस स्टडी भी शामिल हैं।

अध्ययन के निष्कर्ष एक आकस्मिक स्वायत्त विश्लेषणात्मक क्षमता निर्माण सिद्धांत (एएसीटी) तैयार करते हैं जो तीन मुख्य क्षमताओं, अर्थात् सूचना खुफिया क्षमता (आईआईसी), संसाधन-निर्भरता क्षमता (आरडीसी), और जिम्मेदार एआई क्षमता (आरएसी) को जोड़ती है। कोर क्षमताओं के प्रारंभिक दो आयाम

एक अनुक्रमिक, आवर्ती, अन्योन्याश्रित विकास को दर्शाते हैं, जबकि तीसरा क्षमता आयाम आवर्तक और व्यापक है, जो लगातार अन्य चरणों को प्रभावित करता है। एएसीटी को एक अनुकूली, विकासवादी और जटिल परिवर्तन स्पेक्ट्रम के रूप में जाना जाता है जो अपनी मुख्य योग्यता में एम्बेडेड गतिशील विश्लेषणात्मक क्षमताओं के साथ बातचीत करके फर्मों के अवशोषण की मांग करता है। हमारे निष्कर्ष एएसीटी में अनुकूलनीय, मूल्य-संचालित, ग्राहक-केंद्रित और जिम्मेदार स्वायत्त प्रणाली विकास की केंद्रीय भूमिका को इंगित करते हैं। संक्षेप में, यह शोध तीन प्राथमिक क्षेत्रों में प्रबंधकों और नीति निर्माताओं के लिए व्यावहारिक निहितार्थ प्रदान करते हुए सैद्धांतिक ज्ञान को बढ़ाता है: संगठनात्मक संस्थाएं, सरकारी निकाय और तृतीय-पक्ष सेवा प्रदाता। AACT ढांचे को चार महत्वपूर्ण चरणों के माध्यम से प्रबंधकों द्वारा संचालित करने के लिए डिज़ाइन किया गया है: मूल्यांकन, योजना, कार्यान्वयन, और बाद में प्रतिक्रिया और सीखना। ये निष्कर्ष विश्लेषणात्मक क्षमताओं की खेती के लिए एक समग्र रणनीति के महत्व को स्पष्ट करके और एआई एकीकरण के लिए अनुकूल पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र को बढ़ावा देकर साहित्य में योगदान करते हैं। इसके अलावा, परिणाम अनुरूप रणनीतियों और निरंतर समर्थन तंत्रों के लिए अनिवार्यता को रेखांकित करते हैं जो छोटे संगठनों को अद्वितीय चुनौतियों का सामना करने और डिजिटल परिवर्तन में निहित अवसरों को बेहतर ढंग से भुनाने में सक्षम बनाते हैं।

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