

ATHENAEUM 2007 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AT CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY MANAGEMENT RESEARCH (CECMAR) BHARATHIDASAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT (BIM) TRICHY, INDIA.

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On March 17th and 18th 2007, a symposium titled Athenaeum was organized by the Centre for Contemporary Management Research (CECMAR), Bharathidasan Institute of Management (BIM) Trichy, India.

The symposium was aptly named Athenaeum, which is derived from the Greek word “Athenion”, the temple of the goddess Athena, the goddess of wisdom. The temple Athenion symbolizes the place where scholars congregated to deliberate and nurture philosophy and thought.

The Athenaeum at BIM was also a venue where academicians gathered from all over India and abroad; as far away as Canada to discuss and reflect for two days over topics of contemporary management research.

The two broad functional themes which were chosen for the symposium were Human Resource Management & Systems (with approximately twenty one papers) and IT Management (with approximately nine papers).

The symposium was inaugurated by lighting a lamp and rendition of India's national anthem. Speeches were made by the chief guest and other prominent personalities. Centre for Contemporary Management Research (CECMAR) launched its bi-annual research journal during the opening ceremony of the Athenaeum.

Day 1 mainly focused on Human Resource Management & Systems themes with 14 papers presented in two sessions. The main topics presented were Empowerment, Leadership Models, Team building, Issues in Employee Absenteeism, Stress and Creativity and Innovation in Organizations.

One pertinent presentation titled "The purpose, empowerment, praise (PEP) model for Leadership and Motivation" was by S. Srikanth, Management Consultant, in which he highlighted the dearth of literature on the "how" of management and the use of the PEP model. The PEP model suggests that Purpose, Empowerment and Praise are the three vital ingredients that managers can mix to become effective leaders and motivators.

Pakistan was represented at the Athenaeum by PAF-KIET, Ms Amber Raza who presented her paper on occupational stress in Karachi. This presentation was given prominence and was the third presentation.

Day 2 was mainly based on IT Management themes with 12 papers presented in two sessions. The topics deliberated upon were Impact of e-commerce on global business, Knowledge Management and Customer Relationship Management (CRM). Knowledge Management was the topic which was predominately researched and presented. One paper that epitomized the importance of Knowledge Management was presented by the faculty of Velammal Engineering College. The paper pointed out that Knowledge Management answers the most critical question for organizations, which is survival. To survive in the new millennium the knowledge renewal system of learn, unlearn and relearn is necessary and to seek quick solutions to unpredictable challenges of transformations. The presenters further emphasized that an ideal learning organization is one that is capable of exploring efficiently and effectively the required information and knowledge generated by people, processes, systems and others within and outside its environment, leveraging them for enhancing their clients delight.

The event showcased scholarly work from academia and Industry on the same platform, providing a professional forum of idea interchange.

Athenaeum lived up to the organizers' expectations as the papers which were presented encouraged the participants to rethink effective strategies for improvement at all levels of management. The attendance of international speakers underlined the universality of human interaction.