

UNSW Business School

Module 2 Theory and hypotheses

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- What theory is about
- Introduction
- Literature review
- Conceptual framework



- developing and structuring a narrative engaging prior studies that have examined the theories related to your research topic of interest; questions to be answered include what do we know, what don't we know, and what will we learn
- building and positioning hypotheses in relation to related research
- developing logical argument explaining why focal constructs are related as proposed in the conceptual framework
- discussing efficient ways of stating hypotheses in structural equation modeling



NEW INSIGHTS = PHENOMENON

+ RELEVANCE (theoretical + practical)

+ RIGOR (theoretical + methodological)



There is nothing so practical as a good theory

Lewin (1969)

"A good theory is one that holds together long enough to get you to a better theory."

(Hebb, 1969, p. 21)



Diagrams and conceptual definitions

There must be a compelling logic to explain the underlying causal relationships among variables; why this model is more compelling than any other configuration of variables.

Hypotheses

A well-crafted hypothesis is a statement of what a theory predicts and therefore provides for a test of theory.

Data

Data can provide the inspiration for theory. Data may describe empirical patterns, whereas theory focuses on causal relationships.



EJM 41,7/8

Market orientation versus innovative culture: two routes to superior brand performance

868

Received May 2005 Revised January 2006 Accepted June 2006 Aron O'Cass and Liem Viet Ngo Newcastle Graduate School of Business, The University of Newcastle, Callaghan, Australia

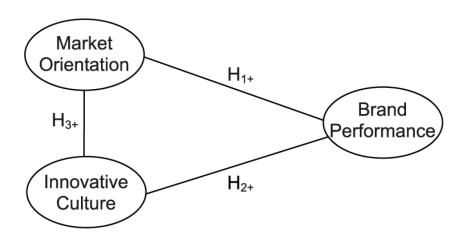


Figure 1.
The conceptual model with hypothesised relationships

British Journal of Management, Vol. 22, 646–671 (2011) DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-8551.2010.00694.x

Examining the Firm's Value Creation Process: A Managerial Perspective of the Firm's Value Offering Strategy and Performance

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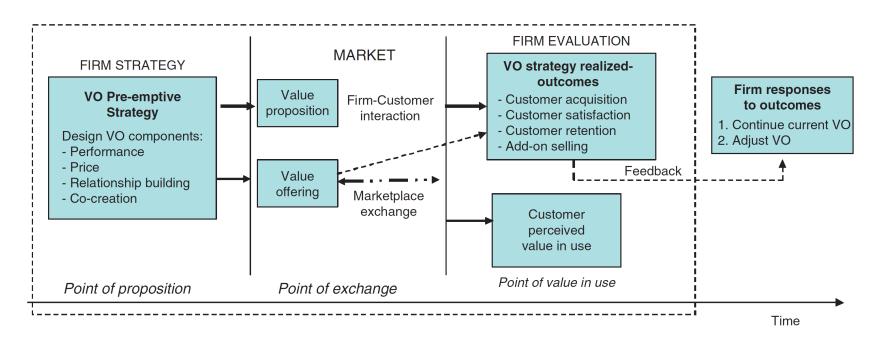


Figure 2. Gaining positional advantage via the firm's pre-emptive value offering (VO) strategy and realized outcomes



J PROD INNOV MANAG 2012;29(5):861–877 © 2012 Product Development & Management Association DOI: 10.1111/j.1540-5885.2012.00939.x

In Search of Innovation and Customer-related Performance Superiority: The Role of Market Orientation, Marketing Capability, and Innovation Capability Interactions

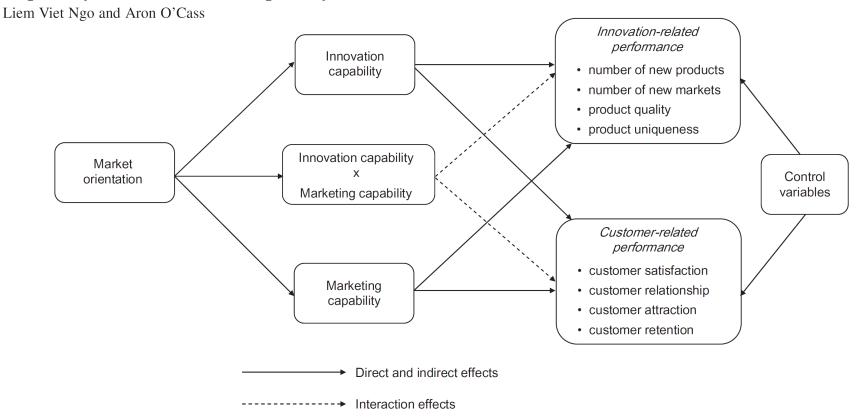


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses





Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services 50 (2019) 22–29

When do-good meets empathy and mindfulness[★]

Thi Nguyet Que Nguyen^a, Liem Viet Ngo^{b,*}, Jiraporn Surachartkumtonkun^c

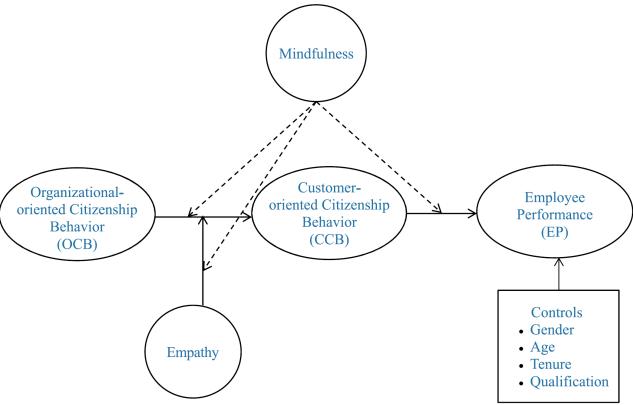


Fig. 1. Conceptual model.



Converting internal brand knowledge into employee performance

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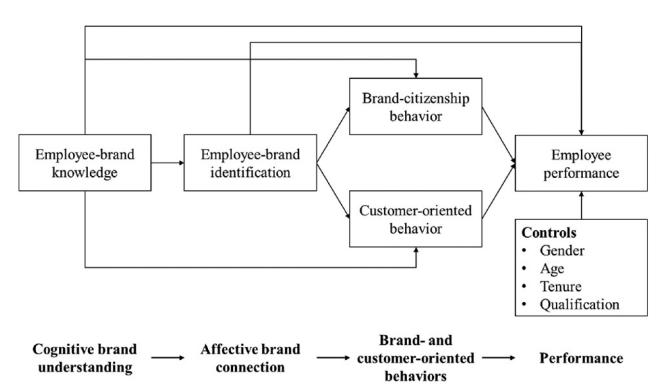
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Figure 1 Conceptual model



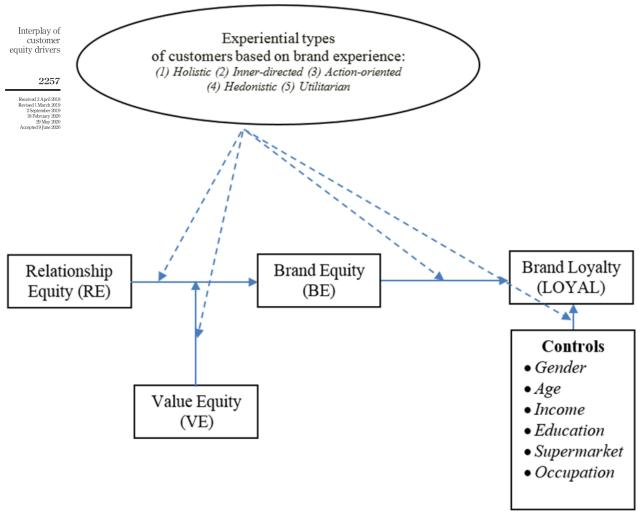


Not all experiential consumers are created equals: the interplay of customer equity drivers on brand loyalty

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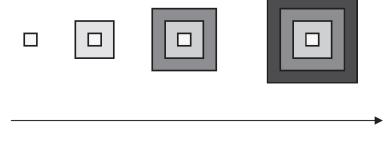
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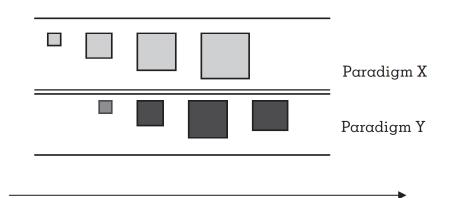
Evolution

Differentiation



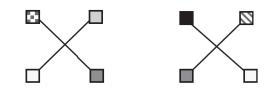
Time/complete knowledge

Three Epistemic Scripts of Knowledge Creation



Time/political situations

Bricolage



Organizational theory ${\tt A}$

Organizational theory B



Theories in business research

- Industrial organization (Bain 1956, Schmalensee 1985)
- Resource advantage theory (Hunt & Morgan 1995)
- Resource-base view of the firm (Barney 1991)
- Contingency theory (Gailbraith 1973, Scott 2005)
- Service-dominant logic (Vargo & Lusch 2004, 2008)
- Network theory (Granovetter 1973, Thorelli 1986)
- Social capital theory (Nahapiet & Ghoshal 1998)
- Stakeholder theory (Donaldson & Preston 1995)
- Transaction cost economics (Coase 1937, Willianson 1975)
- Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner 1979)
- Social exchange theory (Cropanzano & Mitchell 2005)
- Knowledge-based view of the firm (Grant 1996)
- Upper echelons theory (Hambrick 2005)
- Game theory (von Neumann & Morgenstern 1944)
- Agency theory (Jensen & Meckling 1976)
- ----

Theory

"A decision to offer breakfast to homeless people led to radical change in a church and its environment. Existing theories of change do not fully explain observations from our qualitative study; however, complexity theory constructs suggest how and why such change emerged." (Plowman et al, 2007, p. 515)

[We] "apply music theory to the analysis of point-timing questions – questions of when to act." (Albert and Bell 2002, p. 574)

"In this paper we develop the concept of abstractness as an underlying theoretical structure of entrepreneurial action, specifically to connect individual perception of psychological distance to entrepreneurial action. We draw on **Construal level theory** to model distance and abstractness, using construal as the mechanism where, in new venture creation, entrepreneurs are expected over time to engage in more abstract action when they perceive greater psychological distance." (Chen et al 2018, p. 296)

Theory

"Prior research advocates a positive, linear association between relationship investments and relationship performance. Our study challenges this conventional wisdom and . . . build on the competing arguments of transaction cost theory and social exchange theory to propose that there may be potential curvilinear associations between supplier's relationship marketing programs and relationship performance." (Luu, Ngo and Cadeaux, 2018, p. 165-166)

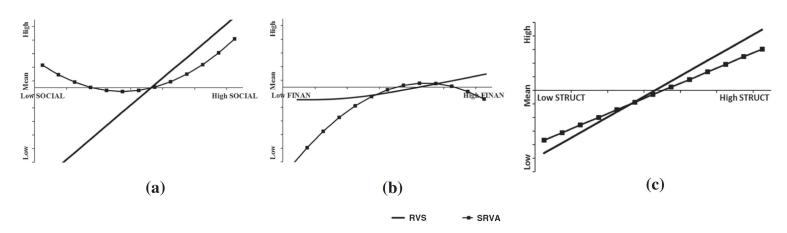


Fig. 2. Effects of (a) social programs, (b) financial programs, (c) structural programs on RVS and SRVA.



- Describe the field of study and identify research topics (novel, interesting, and actionable).
- "What do we know, what don't we know, and so what": acknowledge and chart the depth and breadth of the existing body of knowledge on the research topics.
- This section is short and aims to orient the readers and grasp their attention.



A research topic should be

- Novel
 - Change the existing conversation (e.g. a mere add-on or marginal extension, new vocabulary, new constructs, new insights).
 - Knowledge recombination



A research topic should be

- Interesting
 - Gap-spotting
 - competing explanations
 - overlooked area
 - under-researched
 - > lack of empirical support
 - > extending and complementing existing literature
 - Assumption-challenging



A research topic should be

Actionable

- offering counterintuitive insights
- highlighting the effect of new and important practices
- showing inconsistencies in, and consequences of, practices
- suggesting a specific theory to explain an interesting and current situation
- identifying an iconic phenomenon that opens new areas of inquiry and practice



- Provides the context for "what we will learn" and potentially contributes to the existing literature.
- Is directly related to the conceptual framework and hypotheses and a starting point for formulating appropriate research design and data collection.
 - Focal constructs in the conceptual framework could be reflected in the research problem statement.
- Briefly outline how the research problem is solved in the study



- Describe the field of study and identify research topics (novel, interesting, scope, and actionability).
- "What do we know, what don't we know, and so what": acknowledge and chart the depth and breadth of the existing body of knowledge on the research topics.
- This section is short and aims to orient the readers and grasp their attention.

Examples

Introduction

hile the resource-based view (RBV) of the firm has provided substantial advances in the understanding of performance differentials through firm resources, the focus has recently shifted from the resources to the outcomes of the resource deployment process (e.g., Vorhies, Morgan, and Autry, 2009). This

dran, 2008; Morgan et al., 2009). The focus on resource–capability interactions also fits with the contentions raised by Gebhardt, Carpenter, and Sherry (2006) that the lack of research on internal processes seriously limits the understanding of performance differentials. The importance of capabilities can be seen in the arguments of Ketchen, Hult, and Slater (2007) and others who contend that resources have only potential value, and that the actions (i.e., capabilities) developed and utilized by firms are what capitalize on the resources and result in superior firm performance. The RBV has not yet fully explored which actions are critical and how such actions matter in realizing the value of available resources.



- Provides the context for "what we will learn" and potentially contributes to the existing literature.
- Is directly related to the conceptual framework and hypotheses and a starting point for formulating appropriate research design and data collection.
 - Focal constructs in the conceptual framework could be reflected in the research problem statement.
- Briefly outline how the research problem is solved in the study

Statement of the problem

Examples

While some researchers argue that developing firm capabilities is a means to implementing firm strategies (Slater et al., 2006), little attention has been devoted to exploring capabilities, particularly innovation and marketing capabilities, as mechanisms through which firms realize their market orientation (MO). Despite the theoretical and practical importance of this issue, an examination of the RBV and capability theory reveals that not a single empirical study has assessed whether innovation capability (IC) and marketing capability (MC) aid in implementing a firm's MO or how these firm capabilities connect MO and performance.

Drawing on RBV-capability theory, the paper develops and empirically tests a theoretical model that integrates MO, MC, IC, and CRP and IRP using a sample of 163 manufacturing and services firms. The paper pro-



What will we learn

- Explain how important is the research problem on theoretical and practical grounds?
- Who will get benefits from the study findings (e.g. practitioners, academic, customers, policy makers)?
- What are contributions of the study to the extent literature?

Significance of the study Examples

The opportunity to advance the understanding of firm capabilities and performance by addressing, at least partially, some of the above research gaps provides the foundation for this paper. This paper makes two distinct contributions to the strategic management and marketing literature. First, the paper shows how the contribution of MO as "know-what" resources to firm performance can be realized through the mediational roles of innovation and marketing capabilities. Importantly, this paper focuses on customer-related performance (CRP) and innovation-related performance (IRP) as disaggregated dependent indicators of marketplace performance outcomes (see Amit and Schoemaker, 1993; Collis and Montgomery, 1995; Peteraf and Bergen, 2003; Ray, Barney, and Muhanna, 2004). Second, the paper shows that improving the complementarity between IC and MC is a useful approach to preventing imitation of firm capabilities and to enhancing marketplace performance outcomes.



Takeaways for writing the Introduction section

- Clearly written and concise
- Effectively identify a research gap by underscoring limitations of prior research
 - (or challenge existing assumptions and develop alternatives)
 - •Convince the readers that the research topic is significant, novel, interesting, and actionable
 - Effectively explain how the study addresses the research gap
 - Clearly explain how the study will achieve its objectives (detailing the main conjectures and empirical setting)
 - → the strongest introductions focus on addressing questions, problems, puzzles, and paradoxes, not gap filling

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Takeaways for writing the Introduction section

Avoid common mistakes

- Failing to motivate and problematize
- Lack of focus
- Overpromising



Criteria to be used in the evaluation of submission to an academic journal

		Evaluative dimension					
Criterion	Low				High		
Appropriateness for the journal	1	2	3	4	5		
Significance of paper topic	1	2	3	4	5		
Interest to a broad audience	1	2	3	4	5		
Clarity of the problem definition	1	2	3	4	5		
Balance and fairness in coverage of alternative views	1	2	3	4	5		
Thoroughness of the literature search	1	2	3	4	5		
Impartial criteria for inclusion of studies		2	3	4	5		
Appropriateness and quality of data synthesis		2	3	4	5		
Correspondence between data and inferences drawn		2	3	4	5		
Quality of writing (clarity, coherence, organization)	1	2	3	4	5		
Importance of contribution	1	2	3	4	5		

Source: Cooper (2003)



A manuscript with a truly significant contribution will

- Succinctly summarize and synthesize insights from past studies related to the topic,
- Clearly suggest what the manuscript's contribution is beyond what is already known,
- Use a theoretically and methodologically rigorous approach for investigating the issues,
- Succinctly discuss the findings from the investigation,
- Compellingly demonstrate how insights from the findings add to current knowledge by offering new theoretical, methodological, and practical insights,
- Acknowledge and build on the current investigation's limitations, and suggest issues and direction for future research.

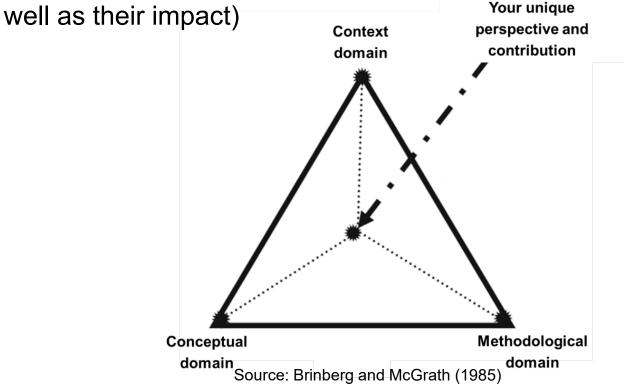
Source: Ladik and Stewart (2008)



Literature Review

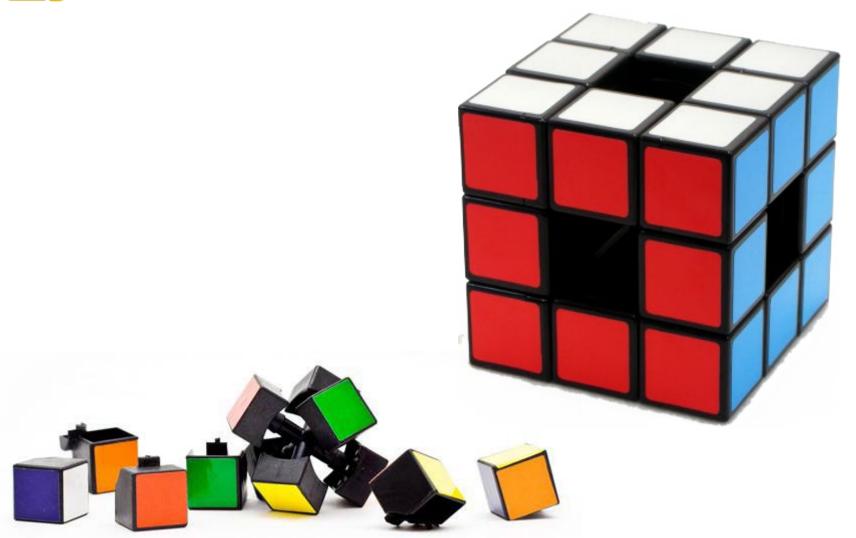
- Identification of central issues (e.g. picking a research topic)
- Integration (generalization, conflict resolution, bridge building)

Criticism (e.g. to analyze and compare the various contributions as





Literature Review





Strategies for identifying and selecting resources

- Starting with leading journals in relevant disciplines (e.g. ABDC ranking, FT50) in journal databases (e.g. ABI/INFORM, Business Source Premier, JSTOR, ProQuest, Sage, ScienceDirect)
- Search strategies include keywords, subject terms, authors, title, date, and so forth.
- Go backward by reviewing the citations for the articles identified previously to determine prior articles you should consider.
- Go forward by using Google Scholar or the Web of Science to identify articles citing the key articles identified in the previous steps. Determine which of these articles should be included in the review.
- A systematic search should ensure that you accumulate a relatively complete census of relevant literature.



Literature Review

Structuring selected resources

- Concept-centric versus author-centric
 - Concept X . . . (author A, author B, . . .). Concept Y . . .
 (author A, author C, . . .)
 - Author A . . . concept X, concept Y, . . . Author B . . . concept X, concept W.

Concept matrix

	CONCEPTS					
ARTICLES	А	В	С	D		
1	Х		Х			
2		X	Х			
3		X		X		



Structuring selected resources

Concept matrix augmented with unit of analysis

Articles	Concepts											
	A			В		D						
Unit of analysis	0	G	I	0	G	I	0	G	1	0	G	ı
1					Х				Х			Х
2	Х				Х	Х		Х				
								Х		Х		

Note: O=organizational; G=group; I=individual



Literature Review

Table 1 Summary of key research examining antecedents of NWOM

Study	Antecedent of NWOM	Nature of the factor	Main findings
Current paper	Hubristic pride	Emotions	 Individuals with hubristic pride are more likely to have a higher intention to engage in NWOM. Hubristic pride increases psychological entitlement and subsequently leads to a higher intention to engage in NWOM.
Antonetti and Maklan (2018)	National identity	Individual differences	 Consumers will be more likely to spread NWOM agains a corporation when the victims of corporate social irresponsibility (CSI) share the same nationality (with consumers) than when the victims are foreign. This is because consumers have positive feelings of sympathy towards the victims who are perceived as more similar (because they share the same nationality)
Alexandrov et al. (2013)	Self-affirmation, social comparison, and social intentions	Individual differences	 Individuals engage in negative WOM is motivated by the need to affirm identity, social intentions (i.e., to help others and to share social information), and the need for social comparison.
Balaji, Khong, and Chong (2016)	Firm attribution, firm image, face-concern, reappraisal regulation	Firm performance, individual differences	 Customers who with strong face concern, strong ties with another network, and actively use SNS are more likely to use NWOM using SNS. Customers who perceive that the firm is responsible for a service failure and experience a negative service experience in an excellent reputation firm are less like to engage in NWOM using SNS.
Blodgett, Granbois, and Walters (1993)	Stability/controllability, firm's willingness to remedy problems, product importance	Firm's performance, product characteristics, individual differences	 Consumers are more likely to engage in NWOM when they dissatisfied with products that they feel are important and when the firm's willingness to remedy the problem is low. Customers' perception of companies' stability and controllability of problems, companies' likelihood of failure to deal with problems, and importance of product to customers activate perceive injustice and subsequently increase NWOM.



Crafting a literature review

- Summative form: description of what is known.
- Analytical form: concentrating on the nature of a problem, its cause and effect as a basis for action to solve it.
- Formative form: an emphasis on explanation compares and contrasts the various points of view that exists on an issue as a basis for determining which is to be preferred and what might be to be done to confirm this.

Source: Baker (2000)



- Engaging prior research
 - develop a constructive dialogue with other researchers
 - not just a literature review but a clear, theoretically driven narrative

Examples

Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses

The RBV has been widely viewed as a prominent frame of reference for explaining performance differentials between firms (Barney, 1991). Specifically, the RBV's underlying logic is that the heterogeneity of resources across firms is a fundamental reason for the differences in advantages that firms gain in their marketplace (Barney, 1991). Importantly, the notion of the marketplace has

Despite the strong appeal of focusing on resources and performance differentials, the evolving debate has centered on explaining how resources are deployed to achieve superior firm performance. For example, Mahoney and Pandian (1992) argue that a firm may out-

Extending previous work by Griffin and Hauser (1996), Moorman and Rust (1999), and Song et al. (2005), the argument is developed that the presence of both IC and MC is essential for firms to realize the potential of MO and to achieve superior IRP and CRP



What do we know, what don't we know, and so what?

- Establishing the field
 - enter two different conversations and bridging them (synthesized coherence)

or

 identify an ongoing conversation and describe how it needs to move forward (progressive coherence)

or

 present competing perspectives and explain how you will resolve them (noncoherence)

Literature Review

What do we know, what don't we know, and so what?

- Problematizing the field
 convince readers that knowledge about the research topic
 - need to be developed further (incomplete)
 - is deficient because it fails to incorporate important perspective (inadequate)
 - is altogether inaccurate (incommensurate)



Avoid common mistakes

- Unclear about your reader
- Lack a clear sense of purpose
- Assume the reader familiar with literature
- Generalization with insufficient support from literature cited
- Poor organization of the selected resources



What the reader will be looking for in your literature review:

- You have a clear understanding of the topic
- You have identified all major studies related to the research topic and discussed most of them
- You have developed, on the basis of the review, a clearly stated research problem
- You have drawn clear and appropriate conclusions from prior research

Source: Hart (1998)



What the reader will be looking for in your literature review (continued)

- You have established and described various points of view related to the research topic
- You are proposing valid recommendations based upon analysis of the information contained in your sources
- You have demonstrated that there is a genuine research issue that has to be addressed.

Source: Hart (1998)



What you might do:

- Seek to gain and sustain the interest of your reader. Try to communicate why you feel your topic is important and why you are enthusiastic about it.
- You have a clear beginning, middle and end. You should tell the reader what you are going to tell them, why, and in what manner. Tell them, following the logic and structure you have laid out, and then tell them what you have told them by summarizing the key arguments and conclusions or recommendations drawn from your analysis.

Source: Baker (2000)



What you might do (continued):

- Write clearly and coherently there is a world of difference between scholarship and obfuscation. It is your task to make the complex clear, not to confuse the reader with obscure and obtuse references in the mistaken belief that the more difficult it is to understand the more erudite it must be.
- Finally, try it out on an intelligent layperson with no pretensions to expertise on the topic to see if it passes the acid tests of being both understandable and interesting.

Source: Baker (2000)



What to do next . . . using literature review to

- select research topics,
- identify research gaps,
- formulate research questions,
- develop theoretical framework and hypotheses,
- craft measurement instruments
- support discussion and implications



What to write

- Utilizing multiple theories to explain how and why the relationships among focal constructs are developed in the conceptual framework
 - competing
 - complementary

Examples

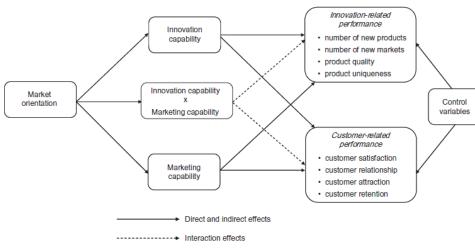


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses



What to write

- Building compelling arguments based on explanatory logic.
- Balance between linking to prior work and developing new novel insights.
- The proposed hypotheses should be linked a way that creates an overall contribution to the research topic

Examples

tionship building, and customer retention. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:
H1: MC mediates the relationship between MO and (a) IRP, and (b) CRP.
design (Atuahene-Gima, 1996), and consequently serve customers better. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:
H2: IC mediates the relationship between MO and (a) IRP, and (b) CRP.
comes, and that their integration results in better IRP and CRP. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:
H3: MC and IC interact to positively affect (a) IRP, and (b) CRP.
comes through the integration of innovation and market- ing. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:
H4: The interaction between IC and MC mediates the

relationship between MO behavior and firms' (a) IRP

and (b) CRP.



Positioning hypotheses in relation to related research

- Balancing between engaging prior research and carefully developing your own novel insights
 - merely citing prior studies does not constitute a logical argument
 - however, ignoring prior related conversation leads the readers to questions the value of the contribution
 - citations should be used to illustrate various elements of the logic of your own argument
- Crafting clear and compelling arguments based on explanatory logic
 - craft a narrative without a single citation to prior research
 - go back and incorporate prior work; give credit to those related, and explain how the new work complement or challenge the prior work



Positioning hypotheses in relation to related research

- By the time the readers read your effectively grounded hypotheses,
 the theory section should have led them to the point that
 - the hypothesis is not a surprise (e.g. the paper clearly led up to this specific prediction)
 - The readers understand clearly why the constructs are associated.

They might not completely agree, but they clearly understand the underlying relationship that is the focus of the hypothesis.



Crafting a clear, logical argument explaining why the focal constructs are related as proposed in the theoretical framework

- To persuade readers that the claims made in the hypotheses are plausible
- Substantiating hypotheses
- ➤ A hypothesis is a claim that Y, a dependent variable, is systematically related to X, and independent variable
- Logic forges the connection between the two can be framed in several ways



Crafting a clear, logical argument explaining why the focal constructs are related as proposed in the theoretical framework

- To persuade readers that the claims made in the hypotheses are plausible
- Substantiating hypotheses
 - Building on established theory to link a hypothesis to a similar logical relationship that is a central tenet of an established theory or conceptual framework
 - Offering relevant empirical evidence to support claims similar to what the hypothesis states. Note that empirical evidence is persuasive, however, only when accompanied by a logical rationale.
 - Explaining how variation in X leads to variance in Y by crafting a narrative that describes the role of intervening states and/or processes.
 - Identify the context (boundary conditions) that the relevance of the proposed relationship is explicit



Crafting a clear, logical argument explaining why the focal constructs are related as proposed in the theoretical framework

- Utilizing multiple theories
- to explain why addressing this research question requires using theses theories;
- and how exactly the theories will be joined in a way that creates a unique contribution to the research topic
 - pitting one theory against another through competing hypothesis and letting the data decide the winner.
 - articulating how the two theories are complementary and should be integrated.



Creating a sense of coherence in the relationships among the constructs and the processes in the theoretical framework

- Explain why a specific set of explanatory variables chosen over others.
- Explain how these selected variables fit together in a way that creates a strong and coherent theoretical contribution and doesn't leave the readers wondering why other variables weren't included.
- A strong conceptual framework does not require a figure with boxes and arrows to explain how the hypotheses fit together. What matters is that a clear, overarching research question drives the hypotheses, and one explains clearly, by drawing on the underlying theoretical and empirical work on the research topic, how these explanatory variables come together.



What to write

Clearly provide definitions of focal constructs presented in the conceptual framework

Examples

Constructs	Definitions	
MO	the organization-wide generation, dissemination, and response to market intelligence pertaining to customer needs, competitor strategic moves, and supplier requirements (Kohli & Jaworski, 1990)	
MC	a firm's interrelated organizational routines for performing marketing activities such as product, pricing, channel management, marketing communications, marketing planning, and marketing implementation (Morgan et al., 2009; Song et al., 2005).	
IC	a firm's interrelated organizational routines for performing innovation activities related to products and services, production process, management, market, and marketing (Han et al., 1998)	



Takeaways for crafting a conceptual framework

TABLE 3.1

The role of theory in applied marketing research

Research task	Role of theory	
Conceputalising and identifying key variables	Provides a conceptual foundation and understanding of the basic processes underlying the problem situation. These processes will suggest key dependent and independent variables.	
2. Operationalising key variables	Theoretical constructs (variables) can suggest independent and dependent variables naturally occurring in the real world.	
3. Selecting a research design	Causal or associative relationships suggested by the theory may indicate whether a causal or descriptive design should be adopted.	
4. Selecting a sample	The theoretical framework may be useful in defining the population and suggesting variables for qualifying respondents, imposing quotas or stratifying the population.	
5. Analysing and interpreting data	The theoretical framework (and the models, research questions and hypotheses based on it) guide the selection of a data analysis strategy and the interpretation of results.	
6. Integrating findings	The findings obtained in the research project can be interpreted in the light of previous research and integrated with the existing body of knowledge.	



Takeaways for crafting a conceptual framework

- Two ways to gather knowledge:
 - Inductive approach
 - A method that takes extensive observation then draws conclusions
 - Deductive approach
 - A method that theorises from existing data and then sets out to prove the theory based on hypothesis and experimentation
- Deductive approach starts with the theory
- Inductive approach starts with the information



Takeaways for crafting a conceptual framework

- Independent variables
 - Variables that are manipulated by the experimenter and whose effects are measured and compared
- Dependent variables
 - Variables that measure the effect of the independent variables on the test units
- Moderating variables (moderators)
 - Variables that change or alter the natural influence the independent variable has on the dependent variable
- Intervening variables (mediators)
 - Variable that are intermediaries generated by the independent variable and having a definable effect on the dependent variable



Takeaways for crafting a conceptual framework

Impactful research convey "a message which is important, timely, and relevant . . . interesting and well-written" and possess "originality of one type or another".

(Thompson 1981, p.1)

"Writing a highly cited [impactful] article is a low probability event that involves hard work, creativity, good timing, and luck" (Mount and Barrick 1998, p.856)



Topic choice and positioning

Introduction

Number of publications Manager 1988	Developing ■ Complicated ■ Antecedents and consequences e.g. IMM (2009)	 Mature More complicated Moderation, mediations, moderated mediations e.g. JPIM (2012)
Number of p	Newly developed Exploratory Conceptual Scale development e.g. BJM (2011)	Decline■ Replication■ Meta analysise.g. APJML (2012)

Shallow Deep Knowledge



Topic choice and positioning

