



BMMB 7003 DISSERTATION

01 Developing Research Ideas and Topics

TOPICS

- Theoretical frameworks and research areas
 - Strategic management research
 - Organisational behaviour
 - Consumer behaviour
- Research process
- Research ethics

Some of the slides have been used in previous presentations

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

- A theoretical framework is similar to the frame of the house. Just as the foundation supports a house, a theoretical framework provides a rationale for predictions about the relationships among variables of a research study
- A theory is a set of interrelated constructs, definitions, and propositions that present a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relations among variables, with the purpose of explaining and predicting the phenomena.
 - Constructs are concepts adapted for a research purpose
 - Through research, researchers can develop, modify, or evaluate theories.
- In a broad sense, any idea about how things relate to each other can be considered as a theory.

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THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

- Theoretical framework provides a context for examining a problem i.e. theoretical rationale for:
- Developing hypotheses
 - Serves as a guide to systematically identify logical, precisely defined relationships among variables
- Building a frame of reference/base for
 - Observation
 - Definitions of concepts
 - Research design
 - Interpretation
 - Generalisation

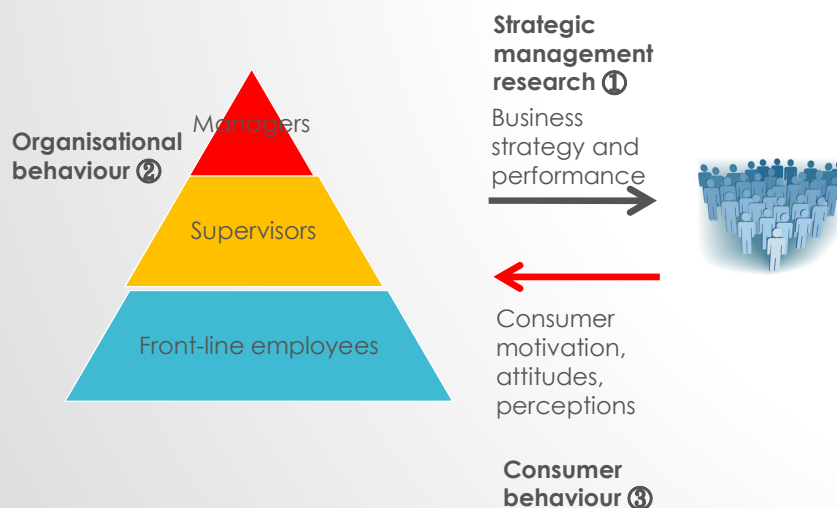
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TYPES OF THEORIES

- Theories may describe a particular phenomenon, explain relationships between or among phenomena, or predict how one phenomenon affects another
- Descriptive theories “describe or classify specific dimensions or characteristics of individuals, groups, situations, or events by summarizing the commonalities found in discrete observations”
 - To test descriptive theories, researchers conduct descriptive research studies
- Explanatory theories “specify relations among the dimensions or characteristics of individuals, groups, situations, or events”
 - Explanatory theories are tested by means of correlational or causal research

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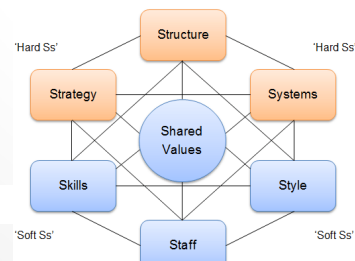
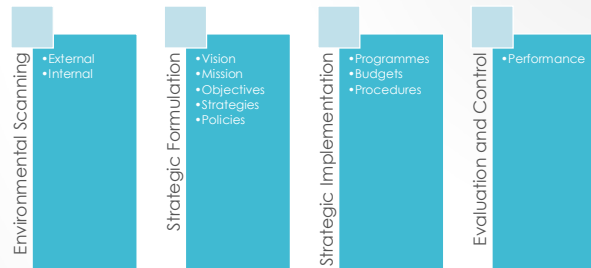
KEY BUSINESS RESEARCH AREAS



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STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT RESEARCH

- Basic strategic management model
- Five forces framework (Porter)
 - competition, new entrants, power of
 - suppliers, power of customers and
 - substitute products
- SWOT (Andrew, 1967)
- Environmental scanning: PESTLE
- 7-S Model (McKinsey)
 - strategy, structure, systems, skills,
 - staff, style and shared values



<http://www.valuebasedmanagement.net/index.html>

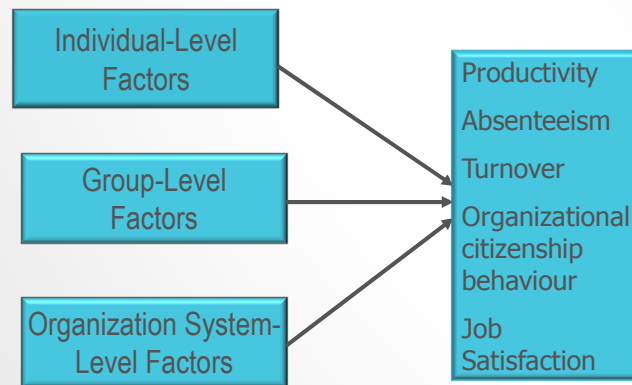
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ORGANISATIONAL BEHAVIOUR

- Organizational behaviour is a field of study that investigates the impact that individuals, groups, and structure have on behaviour within organizations.
- It focuses on improving productivity, reducing absenteeism and turnover, and increasing employee job satisfaction and organizational commitment.
- Organizational studies: Looking at relationships, attempting to attribute causes and effects and drawing conclusions based on scientific evidence

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CONTINUED...



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CONTINUED...

- Individual-Level Variables
 - Capability; personal values; personality; emotion; perception; individual decision making; motivation
- Group-Level Variables
 - Role expectation; norms; group decision making; task
 - Communication
 - Leadership and trust
 - Power, political behaviour and conflicts
- Organization System-Level Variables
 - Organization Structure
 - Job design
 - Human resources policy
 - Organizational culture

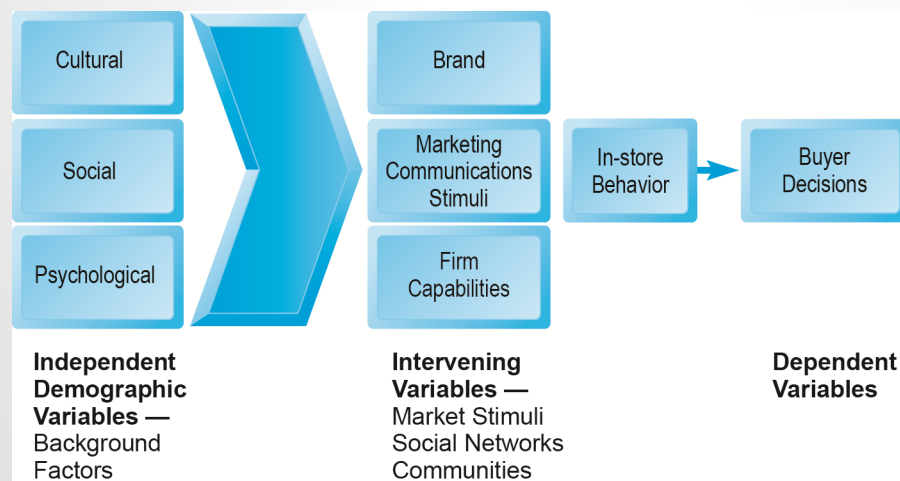
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RESEARCH CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITY FOR ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOUR

- Responding to globalization
- Managing workforce Diversity
- Improving quality and productivity
- Responding to the labour shortage
- Improving customer service
- Improving people skills
- Empowering people
- Coping with “temporariness”
- Stimulation innovation and change
- Helping employees balance work/life conflicts
- Improving ethical behaviour

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A GENERAL MODEL OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR



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RESEARCH PROCESS

1. Begin with a broad question
2. Narrow it down
3. Operationalize
4. Observe
5. Analyse
6. Reach conclusions
7. Generalize back to the population

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1. BEGIN WITH A BROAD QUESTION

- Most social research originates from some general problem or question
- Curious/troubled about some aspect of society
- Example: Why would any rational guest want to develop a "relationship" with a hotel?
- General question that can't be adequately addressed by one study

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2. NARROW IT DOWN

- Next, we come up with a more specific research question
 - one we can realistically address
- Here, a review of the literature can serve as a guide
 - Tells you what other researchers have found
 - Builds a foundation for your research study
- Example: What are the non-financial benefits, from the consumer's perspective, of maintaining a relationship with a hotel?
 - Relational benefits include confidence benefits, social benefits, special treatment benefits (Gwinner, Gremler & Bitner, 1998)

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2. NARROW IT DOWN

- It can be stated as a descriptive theory –
 - A description of the situation
- Example: Which relational benefits are most important to the consumer?
- It can also be stated as a causal theory –
 - an explanation of the relationships between phenomena
- Example: Economic benefits are more important to leisure travellers than business travellers

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3. OPERATIONALIZE

- Which relational benefits are most important to the consumer?
- Economic benefits are more important to leisure travellers than business travellers
 - The underlined terms are concepts – abstract ideas
 - concepts are ambiguous
- Operationalize
 - Define a concept in a way that it can be measured or turn it into variables...
 - something measurable
 - any trait that can change values from case to case
- Example: Relational benefits was measured with three dimensions, rated on a 5-point scale. The three measures, that is, confidence benefits, social benefits and special treatment benefits were adopted from Gwinner, Gremler & Bitner (1998).

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3. OPERATIONALIZE

- Hypothesis:
 - derived from theory
 - statement about a relationship between variables
 - it is more specific/exact than a theory
 - it is testable
- Example: Leisure travellers attach greater importance to economic benefits than business travellers.
- Independent variable (x)
 - Travel purpose (i.e., leisure/business traveller)
- Dependent variable (y)
 - Importance of economic benefits
- $x \rightarrow y$

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4. OBSERVE

- Observations allow for hypothesis testing
 - Science is a systematic method for explaining empirical phenomena
 - Empirical means measurable & observable
- Research methods are the tools used at this stage
 - How are data to be sampled and gathered?
 - Lab experiment
 - In-depth interview
 - Survey
 - Analysis of existing data
- Observations produce data

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5. ANALYSE DATA

6. REACH CONCLUSIONS

- Statistical procedures give the ability to tell
 - whether the data support our hypotheses and by extension, whether our theory is supported
- Two classes of statistical techniques:
 - Descriptive – used to summarize/organize/describe data.
 - Example: What is the average number of hours per week people spend on Facebook?
 - Inferential – used to generalize findings from a sample to a population
 - Example: polling just a few hundred customers to predict how customers respond to different communication strategies

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FORMULATING A RESEARCH PROBLEM

Research ideas and problems can arise from a range of sources: business problems, personal or professional experience and media, theories or previous studies

BUSINESS PROBLEMS/QUESTIONS

- Should a new product be introduced?
- Should the price of the brand be increased?
- Should the advertising campaign be changed?
- How to retain profitable customers?

SPECIFIC RESEARCH PROBLEMS/QUESTIONS

- To determine consumer preferences and purchase intentions for a new product
- To determine the perceived value of a brand
- To determine the effectiveness of the current advertising campaign
- To examine the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty

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OUTLINE OF A RESEARCH PROPOSAL

- Title of your proposed research
- Introduction, background or rationale for the research
 - Provide an overview of your research project, explaining why it is of academic and/or practical importance; state your research questions and objectives
- Literature review
 - Discuss the importance of previous related research and how your own research questions might make a useful contribution to the area.
- Methodology
 - Research methods: state the main research techniques and data collection procedures you propose to answer the research questions you have posed. Justify why these are appropriate.
 - Data collection: explain how you will collect data for your study. Justify why your strategy is a good one and explain how you can successfully collect the data you need in the timeframe.
- Timeline
 - Outline your proposed timetable of activities.
- References

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PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- Title and student name
- Introduction/summary
- Why topic is important and the academic and practical contribution your research might make
- Core academic theory that underpins your research topic
- Idea about methodology
- Access that you have to necessary data/information sources