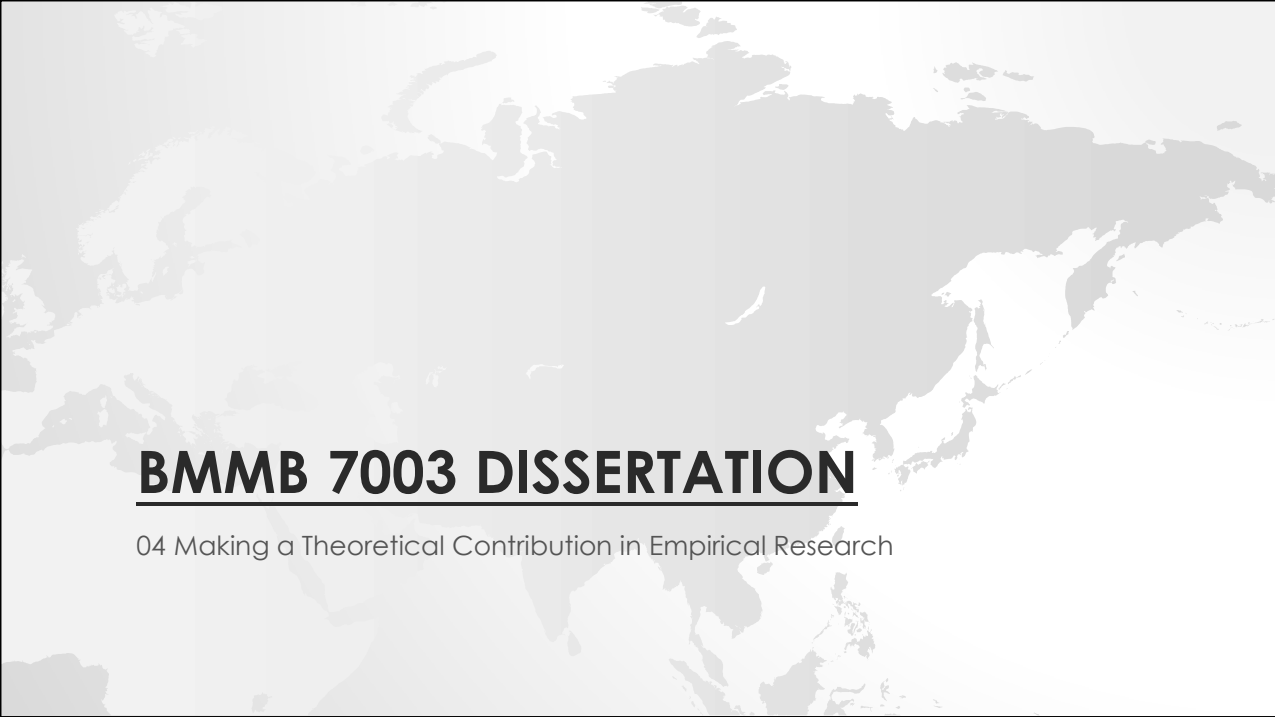




BMMB 7003 DISSERTATION

04 Making a Theoretical Contribution in Empirical Research

THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

- 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.

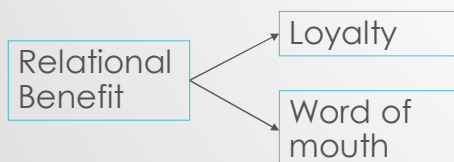
THE FOUR ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF A THEORY*

- What: Which constructs should be considered as part of the explanation of the phenomena?
- How: How are constructs related?
- Why: What are the underlying psychological, economic, or social dynamics that justify the selection of constructs and the proposed causal relationships?
- Who, where and when: These questions specify the boundary of the theory. They are contextual factors that affect the behaviour.

* Dublin, 1978; Whetten, 1989

COMMON TYPES OF THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

- What: Introducing a new construct and explaining how it relates to important constructs.
- Example: Gwinner, K. P., Gremler, D. D., & Bitner, M. J. (1998). Relational benefits in services industries: the customer's perspective. *Journal of the academy of marketing science*, 26(2), 101-114.
- The benefits that customer loyalty can bring to firms are well understood but the kind of benefits that customers truly value are unknown.



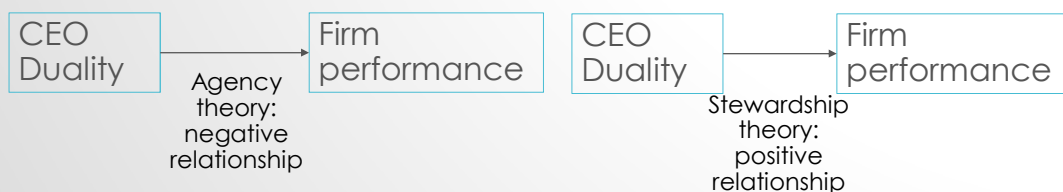
COMMON TYPES OF THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

- How and why: Identifying factors that mediate key relationships.
- Example: Vandenberg, W. (2009). The mediating effect of job satisfaction and organizational commitment on self-reported performance: more robust evidence of the PSM—performance relationship. *International review of administrative sciences*, 75(1), 11-34.



COMMON TYPES OF THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

- Why: Developing the logic that reconciles predictions from competing theories.
- Example: Desai, A. Kroll, M. & Wright, P. (2003). CEO duality, board monitoring, and acquisition performance: A test of competing theories. *Journal of Business Strategies*, 20(2), pp. 137-156.
 - CEO duality: CEO is also chairman of the board.
 - Competing theories: Agency theory versus stewardship theory.



COMMON TYPES OF THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

- Who, where and when: Identifying factors that moderate key relationships.
- Example: Djurkovic, N., McCormack, D., & Casimir, G. (2008). Workplace bullying and intention to leave: the moderating effect of perceived organisational support. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 18(4), 405-422.



COMMON TYPES OF THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

- Who, where and when: Extending a theory to explain a phenomenon where it has not previously been applied.
- Example: Chatterjee, A., & Hambrick, D. C. (2007). It's all about me: Narcissistic chief executive officers and their effects on company strategy and performance. *Administrative science quarterly*, 52(3), 351-386.
- This study uses unobtrusive measures of the **narcissism** of chief executive officers (CEOs)—the prominence of the CEO's photograph in annual reports, the CEO's prominence in press releases, the CEO's use of first-person singular pronouns in interviews, and compensation relative to the second-highest-paid firm executive—to examine the effect of CEO narcissism on a firm's strategy and performance.