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5th DBA & DMC Annual Doctoral Colloquium

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Papers of the 5th Annual DBA & DMC Doctoral Colloquium

**The University of Gloucestershire
Cheltenham
12th & 13th June 2015**

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Papers

Using natural intelligence to improve business processes

Saleem Asif Basit

Abstract

In this paper I will introduce the two main paradigms in the understanding of intelligence and how they lead me to an alternative approach to business processes based on natural intelligence. The aim of my research is to develop a business process framework that incorporates the features and mechanisms of problem solving and goal achievement in natural systems. After a brief description of these features and how they could be refined to express business processes I will describe how action research will be used to develop this framework and to study its effects on process results and people's attitudes and behaviour.

Introduction

Business processes have been traditionally viewed as a collection of "activities which transform inputs into outputs" ([Lindsay, Downs, & Lunn, 2003](#)). The roots of business process management can be found in the reductionist approaches of the early 20th century as pioneered by people like [Taylor \(1913\)](#) and [Gilbreth and Gilbreth \(1921\)](#). Processes were improved by representing them symbolically and manipulating the representations by some method of calculation. At the beginning of the twentieth century this fitted well with the technological developments. However, the limitations of reductionism were also recognised ([for example, Hartness, 1912](#)) and the complexity of a constantly changing business environment was underestimated. The reductionist philosophy has led to range of business models and frameworks for modelling and optimising business processes. The basic approach of mapping a process and searching for optimisation has parallels with the physical symbol system hypothesis (PSSH) of [Newell and Simon \(1976\)](#), which is used to describe the mechanism of problem solving and goal achievement in the field of artificial intelligence. According to the PSSH, intelligence is the manipulation of symbols which represent in some way physical reality. Indeed Newel and Simon go further and argue that "a physical symbol system has the necessary and sufficient means for general intelligent action." ([Newell & Simon, 1976](#)). However the paradigm of the PSSH was challenged in the 1990's by an alternative view of intelligence. Rodney Brooks' physical grounding hypothesis "bases its

decomposition of intelligence into individual behaviour generating modules, whose coexistence and co-operation let more complex behaviours emerge." ([Brooks, 1990](#)). In other words Brooks is saying that intelligence is not the manipulation of symbols within a constructed representation (human or mechanical), it is instead behaviour within a real physical environment which leads to problem solving. Brooks referred to this notion of intelligence as "nouvelle artificial intelligence" and because, as Brooks points out, it can be found in many natural systems it is also referred to as natural intelligence. The reductionist origins of business process analysis and management and the correspondence to the PSSH invites the question of whether there is an alternative approach based on natural intelligence and the physical grounding hypothesis. My research will investigate this alternative approach.

Research Questions

1. Which features of naturally intelligent systems can be applied to business processes?
2. How can these features be applied in business process design?
3. What are the effects of using these features on the process?

Research Objectives

1. To identify the features which enable problem solving and goal achievement in natural intelligent systems
2. To create a business process framework that applies these features to business process design
3. To investigate the effects of applying the framework on process performance

Relevance of the research and contribution to knowledge

What would a process model look like if it was not based on the PSSH approach but instead on the characteristics of natural intelligence and on the principles of the physical grounding hypothesis? This research aims to identify the mechanisms at work in natural systems and to investigate how these can be incorporated into the design and optimisation of business processes. Creating a new business process framework would deliver the business world with a new tool which is inherently different to existing frameworks for designing and improving processes. As in natural systems problem solving and goal achievement will not be dependent on top down design but instead on the internal and external interactions

involved. Even if the development of a unique framework is not achieved, this research will reveal unique characteristics and understanding of the way business processes work which could be used in future process related research.

Research Method

Creating a framework

The first research objective can be achieved by examining existing literature on the subject of artificial and natural intelligence and comparing this with current literature on business processes. This would be entirely dependent on secondary data sources and would reflect the current state of knowledge about the features and mechanisms of natural intelligence. As it is the overall aim of this research to develop a framework for implementing the features and mechanisms in business processes it is reasonable to take current knowledge of those features as a starting point. It is not necessary to generate new knowledge of these features and mechanisms and the fact that existing knowledge could change and develop in the future would provide reason to improve and develop the findings in future research. The theoretical framework derived from this review would provide the starting point for the development of a widely valid framework for developing business processes.

Much work has been done in recent years on natural intelligence ([Brooks, 1990](#); [OpenUniversity, 2007](#)), for example on swarm intelligence and ant colony behaviour (see for example; [Bonabeau, Dorigo, & Theraulaz, 1999](#); [Deneubourg, Aron, Goss, & Pasteels, 1990](#); [Franks, Gomez, Goss, & Deneubourg, 1991](#)). This research has revealed the following characteristics of naturally intelligent systems:

Internal characteristics: problem solving, where the problem is intrinsic to the system solving the problem, as defined by the purpose and motivation of the system itself. These are the drivers of the systems such as survival.

Capabilities allowing interaction with the environment: Recognition, classification, response, communication and learning

Mechanisms, which enable the problem solving ability: Adaption, Interaction, selection, emergence, positive feedback, negative feedback, amplification of fluctuations, multiple interactions

Properties, which can often be seen in naturally intelligent systems: Spatiotemporal structures, coexistence of several stable states, bifurcations

These features can be used to define a business process framework with the following features:

- Drivers/Goals
- Measurable indicators of success
- An environment
 - physical; where does it take place
 - social; people involved
 - systems; what systems are being used
 - other business processes
- Points of contact with the environment; where does the process have an effect on its environment
- Activities which can be documented to aid learning

The case for action research

The focus of my research is to develop a new framework for describing and improving business processes and investigate the effects of the framework on process performance. As a critical realist I believe that it is only possible to "understand what is going on when we understand the social structures that have given rise to the phenomenon which we are trying to understand" ([Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012, p. 136](#)). In addition, the act of developing processes in a organisation involves changes to the existing structures and is inevitably an intervention. I will therefore take an interventionist approach to achieve the second and third research objectives. The aim is to learn from the changes taking place. An iterative process of planning, acting, observing and reflection will be used to develop business processes guided by my framework. Reflection on how these processes develop will lead to knowledge about the application of the framework and an understanding of its

advantages and disadvantages. This will guide improvements and development of the framework.

The challenge of this research is to develop a business process framework in such a way that, in its generic state, it is understandable, implementable in practice and widely accepted by all stakeholders. It should provide:

- a model for describing and analysing processes
- a framework for identifying and implementing improvements and
- a basis for management to decide on necessary action.

For [Reason and Bradbury \(2001\)](#) action research is about "working towards practical outcomes, and also about creating new forms of understanding". This form of research will provide the link between the theoretical framework and practical meaning it has within an organisation. It will create understanding of how the framework can best be applied and what results can be expected. The framework will act as a lens to focus the group on those aspects of business processes which could lead to what could be called naturally intelligent behaviour in the organisation based on the findings of my literature review. In this sense I will be helping the group to understand the process they are involved in and at the same time I will be reflecting on the suitability of my framework to achieve this.

Applying my framework in a real organisation will involve two learning actions: The first is what I as a researcher will learn about the framework I have developed, about how it can be used and about the affects it has on the people and processes involved. This learning will result from observations of the behaviours within the group and the resulting changes to the defined processes. Observation and critical reflection will be the central learning mechanisms. The iterative nature of action research will lead to improvements in my framework as well as providing diverse experiences with changing conditions to reflect upon. The second learning action will be the learning experience of the people involved in the process development. My role as a process consultant ([Schein, 1990](#)) will be to help the people involved to develop their understanding as well as defining new processes. This second learning action will however not be part of my research.

Data collection and analysis

The action of developing a process within a group will provide me with the cases on which I can gather the data needed for my reflection on my framework. This will be information about the business process at each stage of its development as well as information about the way in which it was developed, the reasons for changes to the process and the changes in the perceptions of the people involved. These experiences will be important for understanding the effects of applying the framework. One of the difficulties of interpreting this data will be its highly subjective nature. Comparisons of attitudes, beliefs, behaviour and action will be reliant on the makeup of the group and on the fact that they are involved in the research in the first place. Using at least 4 different groups and 4 dissimilar processes will give me a broader base of experience on which to reflect.

In order to collect data I will select four business processes with the agreement of management and select four groups of people in the organisation with a stake in those processes. The iterations of the action research method would be as follows:

Diagnosing: I will start by guiding the group to define the current process using the current version of the framework. One goal at this stage would be to establish within the group whether there is an agreed need to change the process or not.

Planning: The next stage of the discussion will be to analyse the process again using my framework and establishing potential changes. If there is no perceived need for change, then the potential for optimisation will be considered and, again, the next stage of the discussion will be to analyse the process using my framework and establish potential changes. The analysis would involve the critical questioning of the status quo and how well it fits the goals. Challenging the group with different scenarios and possibilities would help them view the processes from different perspectives.

Action: Any changes and improvements will then be implemented over a sufficient period of time as agreed with the group and depending on the complexity of the process to gain some experience with the new process.

Reflection: In a follow up workshop the amended process will again be described using the new framework to identify changes in actual behaviour and perceptions. Reflection on these will lead to the identification of further potential changes to the process design and on the effectiveness of the framework

This iterative cycle will be repeated until no further need for change is perceived. In addition to the group workshops individual interviews will reveal deeper personal experiences of the process development and the affects of the new framework. Direct observation of the process in action and measurements of process output would also deliver information about the success of the process development. Depending on the process chosen the output may be quantitatively measurable (with, say, improved sales or reduced waste) or subjective (such as quality improvements).

Conclusions

Having created a business process framework based on current knowledge of the features and mechanisms of natural intelligent systems, it is necessary to investigate the appropriateness of the framework in a real life situation. As business processes inevitably take place within the social context of a organisation it is important to understand the context of the process in order to understand the effects of the framework used to develop those processes. Action research is a fitting method for implementing the framework and obtaining qualitative information about its suitability and effectiveness. This information can be used to develop the framework further and to ensure it is robust in a variety of differing context.

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The impact of SAP on the utilisation of business process management (BPM) maturity models in ERP projects

Markus Grube

Abstract

Aim of the Research

The aim of the research is to investigate and analyse the interaction between the use of the SAP software package and the deployment of BPM maturity models. This will entail a comprehensive mapping of different maturity models to SAP processes and required changes in SAP implementation if specific BPM maturity models are used.

Contextualisation and Literature Review

As this research deals with the technical terms - SAP, Business Process Management (BPM) and maturity model - this section first discusses these terms in the context of this research.

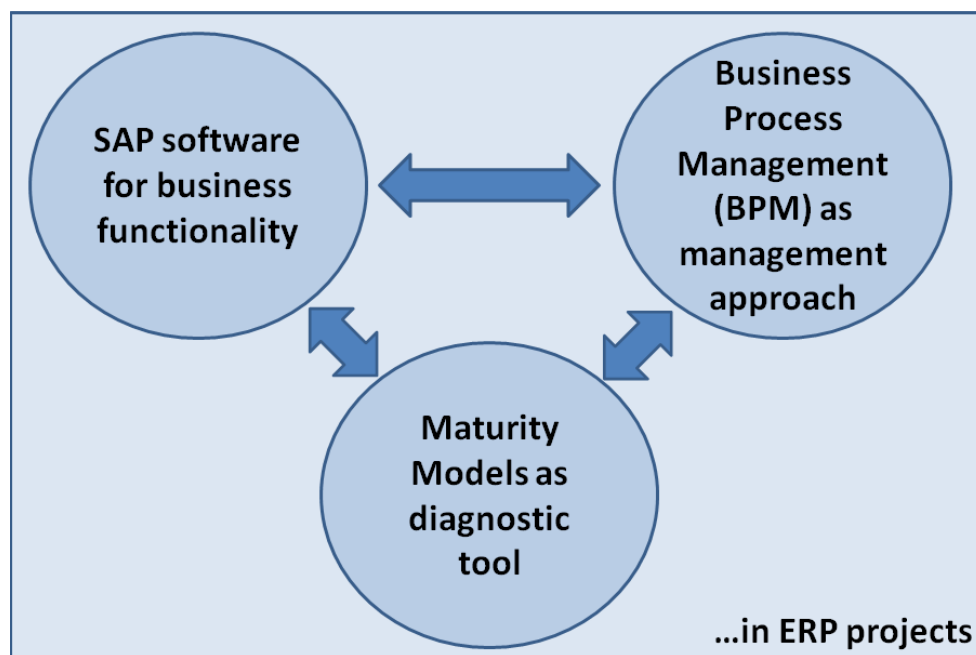


Figure 1: Technical terms in the context of ERP projects

SAP AG is a German company created in 1972 and the world's largest provider of enterprise software that serves more than 258,000 customers in over 188 countries in 2014 (SAP AG, 2014). The Enterprise Software division of the company has developed industry-specific characteristics in the software for over 25 industries to manage business operations and customer relations for companies

(SAP AG, 2010). This enterprise software is in practice called SAP. (The official name is SAP ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning)). The SAP ERP application provides software solutions for the full range of business functions in companies – such as a leave request process for employees for human resource management or a requirements planning process for material planning (SAP AG, 2012). There are many other ERP packages available on the market, notably from Oracle, but SAP is generally seen as the market leader (Colombus, 2013).

BPM is a management approach designed to create and manage organizations' business processes (Hagemann Snabe et al., 2008). The basic idea is to think in terms of processes and to deal with the questions: who does what, when, how and whereby? (Tscherwitschke, 2011). BPM deals with organizational aspects and technical issues for the identification, designing, documentation, controlling, implementation and improvement of business processes in companies (vom Brocke & Rosemann, 2010). The improvements for the BPM approach will be started with a process analysis of the actual business processes (Busch & Fettke, 2011) by the usage of methods, techniques and tools (Bekele & Weihua, 2011).

A maturity model is described by Saco (2008) as a diagnostic tool for an organization. The maturity models provide a framework to test, analyse and improve business quality (Ericsson et al., 2010). For example, a maturity model analyses the quality of processes and classifies them into different levels (see Figure 2) such as "Initial", "Repeatable", "Defined", "Managed" and "Optimizing" (Humphrey, 1988). There are different maturity models for specialised fields – for example software development, product manufacturing or the business process management of a company (De Bruin, Freeze, Kaulkarni, & Rosemann, 2005; Von Wangenheim et al., 2010).

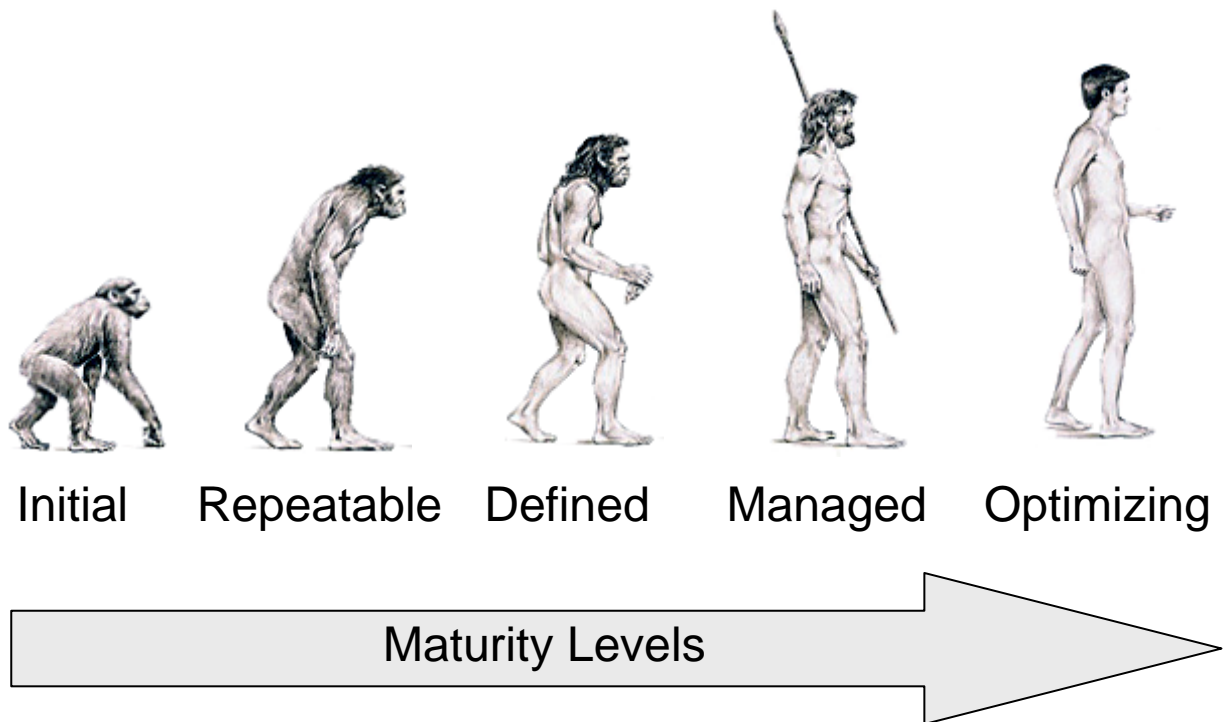


Figure 2: Levels of maturity
Source: Wengel (2010)

This research deals with these three subjects – SAP, BPM and maturity models – in the context of ERP implementation in companies.

Historically, Carr (2003) initiated a debate with his publication “IT Doesn’t Matter” in the Harvard Business Review on the role of IT in companies. In this debate Smith and Fingar (2003) note that IT can affect the company’s business process behaviour. Based on Carr’s publication, Van Looy (2010) explores this assertion through a literature review of business process maturity models and concludes that “IT does not matter, but it enables higher process maturity”. In general, IT implementations, like SAP ERP, give an organization the ability to automate and standardize core business processes (Heilig & Möller, 2014). To assist the development of an organization’s IT strategy and objectives, it may choose a business process maturity model that supports its IT applications (such as the one used by SAP ERP) (Van Looy, 2010).

There is relatively little in existing literature about the relationship between general IT or ERP systems and the use of business processes. Neubauer (2009) points out that IT software like ERP can influence the company's business processes. Patig, Casanova-Brito, and Vögeli (2010) support this in their empirical study about IT requirements of business process management maturity. These studies focus on the general company level and IT systems as a whole, but do not address the question of which business process maturity model could be used if SAP is the central business IT system in the company. Additionally, Van Looy (2013) has put forward the "BPMM Smart Selector" - a decision tool to choose the "best fit" maturity model for an organization. However, this tool does not consider which IT system or ERP application is used in the organization – and this could be relevant to achieving higher process maturity. In an additional article, Van Looy, De Backer, Poels, and Snoeck (2013) point out that further research could investigate the question of whether maturity models could be selected on the basis of business-IT alignment. This would require investigation of the relationship between BPM maturity models and business IT systems at strategic, tactical and operational levels.

Existing literature analyses different numbers of BPM maturity models, from nine (vom Brocke & Rosemann, 2010), to 18 (Röglinger, Pöppelbuß, & Becker, 2012), up to a research study of 69 business process maturity models (Van Looy et al., 2013). Concerning Van Looy's research a restriction must be made, because her sample of 69 models could be classified into different capability areas and not only pure BPM maturity models. All these sources only mention the existing models and do not describe the relationship between business IT systems and BPM maturity models. Current literature also explores general IT requirements and BPM maturity models, and also examines how ERP software like a SAP system can influence the company's business processes. However, no literature was found about the relationship of BPM maturity models and SAP ERP systems. This research will address this lack and investigate and analyse the interaction between the use of the SAP software package and the deployment of BPM maturity models.

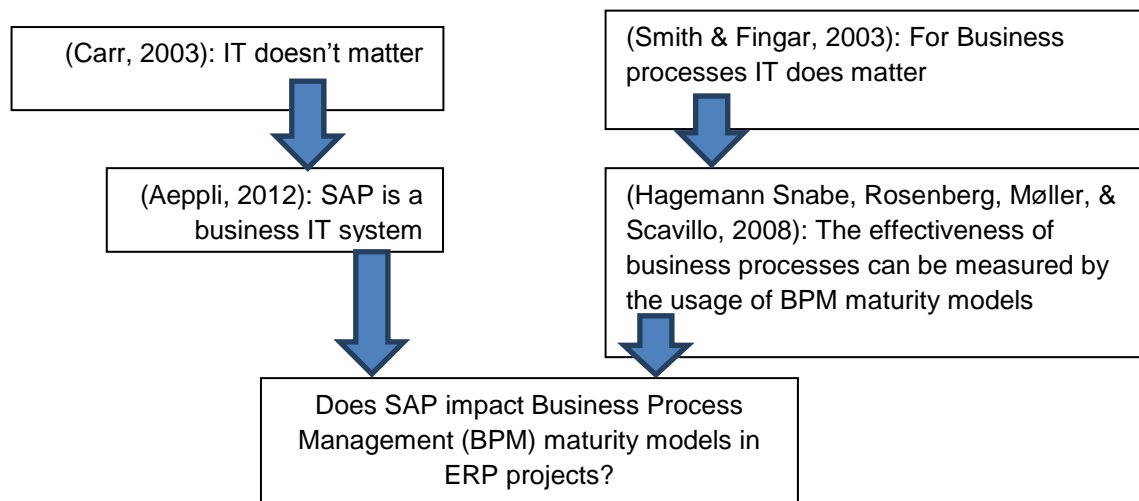


Figure 3: Statements for the research question

For better illustration the research arises from the statements depicted in Figure 3.

This research has a more specific view and does not reflect the general IT. With SAP as the most common business IT system, this study considers SAP ERP as a special business IT system. The overall aim for this research is to establish if SAP - as a specific IT system - can influence the use of BPM maturity models. In general, the research evaluates if SAP provides restrictions which do not allow a BPM maturity model to reach the highest maturity levels. The research also analyses, whether changes in SAP implementation are required if SAP is used for a BPM maturity model, and if implications for maturity models can be indicated for different SAP processes.

As a result of the literature review the following research questions are developed:

- 1) How are BPM maturity models used in the planning and implementation of ERP software projects?
- 2) How does SAP impact upon the use of specific maturity models?
- 3) Is it possible to develop a comprehensive mapping of different maturity models to SAP processes, indicating the implications for maturity model utilisation and the required changes in SAP implementation practice?

Research Methodology and Design

The main elements of a research methodology can be selected from a body of methods that are used to gather and process data and can be depicted by a 'research onion' with six layers (Cryer, 2006; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009).

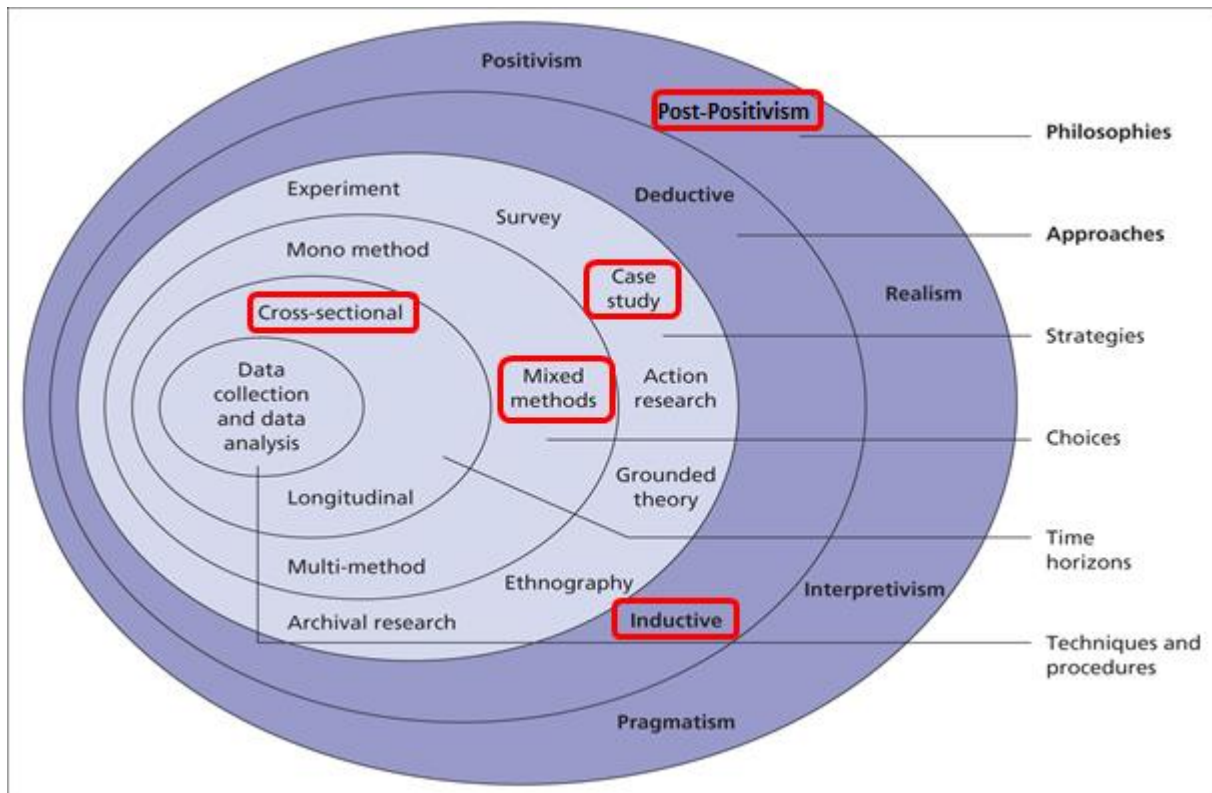


Figure 4: Research Onion
Source: (Saunders et al., 2009, p. 108)

Philosophies and Data Sources

This research adopts a post-positivist position (Guba, 1990; Ryan, 2006). From this position, data sources can be viewed from different perspectives for an optimum result (Onwuegbuzie, 2000). For this research two main groups are to be investigated:

- Users who use BPM maturity models for their company
- Developers that have produced a BPM maturity model

Approaches and strategies

This research has an inductive approach as an explanatory study (Collis & Hussey, 2009), to examining the impact of SAP when used with BPM maturity models in ERP projects. With a multiple case study approach and based on semi-structured expert interviews this research looks in-depth at a small number of organizations. This strategy leads the researcher into a learning role within a post-positivist manner.

The interview partners will be chosen from the authors' network of business and personal contacts of developers and users of BPM maturity models and additionally a BPM expert from SAP in Walldorf, Germany. A multiple case study research approach will be used that draws on the expertise and experience in this network of contacts. Up to 4 different BPM maturity models will be studied as separate cases, with at least one developer and one user being interviewed in each case.

Regardless of careful planning, some of these experts might not be available at the proposed interview time. The "snowball technique" (Kumar, 2011) will deliver further experts from those interviewed. This selection of experts can lead to a constraint that limits or restricts the outcome of the research, but has the advantage that those personally known experts make it possible to get detailed and open answers that experts not personally known may not provide.

BPM maturity models documentation (e.g. user manuals and leaflets) will also be examined to complement the interview data and gather appropriate information about the usage of IT systems like SAP and will be used to validate the results of the Interviews (Gläser & Laudel, 2010).

The interviews and documentation are part of a mixed-method research approach, reflecting the nature of the research questions and objectives. The use of independent sources has - amongst others - the advantage of corroborating the findings from two different bases (Saunders et al., 2009).

Timescale

The timescale for this research will be decided due to time constraints a cross-sectional snapshot study (Saunders et al., 2009). The research analysed the current SAP impact on BPM maturity models in practice and evaluate a picture at the time of the study (Kumar, 2011). Overall, it describes the incidence of a phenomenon and the related factors in a short period of time about the present day relationship of SAP and BPM maturity models in ERP projects.

Techniques and Procedures

The interviews will provide expert opinions and allow significant expert knowledge about important issues, events and patterns to be gathered (Bryman & Bell, 2007). The essential framework and questions for the interviews will be based on the literature review and analysis and will focus on the complex interaction of SAP, BPM and BPM maturity models. At the same time, semi-structured interviews provide the flexibility to formulate additional or tangential questions during the interview to establish a deeper investigation of the issue (Kumar, 2011).

The author intends to use the software tool MAXQDA to facilitate qualitative data analysis and comparison of the cases. This software tool allows the researcher to sort, organize and analyse all data and make a systematic interpretation – in the case of this research to identify relationships and generalizations from all data about any described SAP dependencies and relationships at the different cases.

Research Overview

	Research Question	Method	Design	Sample
RQ 1	How are BPM maturity models used in the planning and implementation of ERP software projects?	Interviews	semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions	Users of BPM maturity models (User A, User B) + BPM expert from SAP
RQ 2	How does SAP impact upon the use of specific maturity models?	Interviews & Analysis of BPM documentation	semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions + Analysis of BPM documentation	Users & Developers of BPM maturity models (User C, User D, Developer A, Developer B) + BPM documentation
RQ 3	Is it possible to develop a comprehensive mapping of different maturity models to SAP processes, indicating the implications for maturity model utilisation and the required changes in SAP implementation practice?	Interviews	semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions	Users & Developers of different BPM maturity models (User E, User F, Developer C, Developer D) + BPM expert from SAP

Table 1: General Research Overview

First Findings and Outlook

At the moment this research is at the interview stage. It can be observed, that it is much more difficult to find interview partners than expected. Many companies use a SAP ERP system and introduce BPM for their organization, but only few companies are already a step further and deal with BPM maturity models to measure their BPM behaviour.

The used ERP system usually is only a small part within the BPM environment of an organization. The ERP processes are initially pre-set by the SAP system, and organizations are paying more attention to other issues. For example interfaces and system breaks are considered more than the already given ERP processes in a SAP System.

A lot of maturity models have only minor restrictions about the used IT, but there exist also some BPM maturity models which recommend specific IT. For example, the SAP maturity model only reaches the highest maturity level if no modifications within the SAP system

exist (DSAG-Arbeitskreis BPM, 2013). Therefore, it is assumed that a certain classification of the investigated BPM models of the research is expected. Furthermore, it is important to explore several BPM maturity models with different IT requirements, to get more general statements about the impact of SAP on the utilisation of BPM maturity models.

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Supplier adaptation to changing collaboration levels in B2B networks

Ingo Husmann

Abstract

The aim of my research is to explore and analyse the adaptation processes of suppliers to changing collaboration level, i.e. different types of resource integration in business-to-business (B2B) networks. Despite its importance for B2B networks there is a stated research gap regarding the systemic nature of coordination of resource integration in general, the adaptation processes based on changes of collaboration level and the influence of the institutional logics held by the suppliers of a B2B network. Drawing on a practice-oriented approach within institutional theory, and the resource integration concepts of value co-creation, my research aims for a more comprehensive understanding of the adaptive processes of suppliers to changing collaboration levels in a B2B network context.

Key Words: B2B networks, supplier integration, changing collaboration level, coordination of resource integration, institutional logics, organizational routines.

1. Purpose of the Paper

A B2B network consists typically of different suppliers from different organisational fields with different institutional logics, i.e. “socially constructed, historical patterns of cultural symbols and material practice, including assumptions, values, and beliefs, by which individuals and organizations provide meaning to their daily activity, organize time and space, and reproduce their lives and experiences” (Thornton, Lounsbury, & Ocasio, 2012, p. 2). “Logics, in other words, provide guidelines on how to interpret and function in social situations” (Greenwood, Raynard, Kodeih, Micelotta, & Lounsbury, 2011, p. 318). Edvardsson, Kleinaltenkamp, Tronvoll, McHugh, and Windahl (2014) stress the relevance of including institutional logics in the conceptualization and analysis of resource integration and value co-creation in service ecosystems.

In B2B networks changes in collaboration level are not uncommon and are often a result of managerial actions driven by the client's strategic decisions. Changes in collaboration level are critical for B2B networks as the coordination of resource integration is changed significantly. A successful adaptation is very important for single suppliers and the client as they both aim to gain advantage from the changed collaboration level as well as from an ongoing relationship (Ylimäki, 2014).

However, a theoretical connection between changing levels of collaboration and adaptation of the suppliers is missing. Collaboration forms are typically studied as static phenomenon, i.e. one type of collaboration level. Little is known about the effects of dynamic alterations of collaboration level (Ylimäki, 2014).

The aim of this research is to explore and analyse the adaptation processes of suppliers to changing collaboration level in B2B networks. The collaboration level in a B2B network has been referred to as black-box development (suppliers provide their products independently), grey-box development (suppliers create work products jointly together) and white-box development (suppliers just provide skilled practitioners; the client manages the production independently) (Petersen, Handfield, & Ragatz, 2005).

My practical experience as a management consultant allowed me to gain first-hand experience of the complex and dynamic nature of B2B networks. Changes in collaboration level are critical for B2B networks as the coordination of resource integration is changed significantly. The need to tap the full potential of B2B networks directed me to the main research question: "How do suppliers adapt to changing collaboration level in a B2B network?"

Collaboration in a B2B context is frequently discussed in relation to the concept of value co-creation (Grönroos & Voima, 2013; Vargo & Lusch, 2004). In this view, collaboration has been understood as resource integration and collaboration levels as different types of coordination of resources.

Collaboration levels have been primarily studied as static phenomenon and, in comparison, with benefits and costs associated to specific collaboration levels. Although, existing research has addressed the evolution of B2B relationships, in general research on

collaboration levels has been mainly related to the supplier selection process (Ylimäki, 2014).

Interfirm adaptation in general has been studied from different perspectives (e.g. investment, commitment, learning, sense making, power and trust) and on different levels (e.g. adaptations of actors, resources, activities). Research has focussed primarily on industrial manufacturing (e.g. production planning, product adaptations) and on business dyads, thus not taking network effects into account (Holma, 2009).

Despite the importance of dynamic alteration in the form of collaboration in B2B networks, little is known about supplier adaption processes to changes in collaboration level. Also, the process of competing and co-mingling logics is poorly understood (Lindberg, 2014). Several scholars have encouraged researchers to carry out studies in this topic area (Edvardsson et al., 2014; Ylimäki, 2014).

In evaluating the existing literature and reviewing the theories and methods, gaps in the research can be identified:

- There is a stated research gap regarding the systemic nature of coordination of resource integration in general (i.e. collaboration levels) and for identifying and analysing the influence of institutional logics on service systems. (Edvardsson et al., 2014).
- The existing literature fall short of discussing adaptation processes based on changes of collaboration level (Ylimäki, 2014).
- Few studies examine B2B networks that consist not only of a dyad but of a range of actors (Jaakkola & Alexander, 2011).

The research gaps led to the following research questions:

- RQ1: How do suppliers adapt to changing collaboration level in a B2B network?
- RQ2: What changes do different collaboration levels mean for suppliers in a B2B network?
- RQ3: Why do suppliers in a B2B network adapt differently to this changing collaboration level?

I conceptualise collaboration level as a coordination type of resource integration for value co-creation. I see resource integration as well as institutional logics as a set of continuously enacted practices/routines (Lindberg, 2014; Nicolini, 2012).

I see a client-induced change of collaboration level (black box -“designing for customer”, grey box - “designing with customer”, white box - “design by customer”) as an “institutional demand” (Greenwood et al., 2011) in the sense that it provides supplier with principles about how to organize their practice (Lindberg, 2014).

The supplier adaption is conceptualised as interactional on an inter-firm level (i.e. between the B2B network actors) and on an intra-firm level (i.e. within a firm). The layers of the adaptation process are activities, actors and resources and the two key dimensions of interaction are time and space (Ford, Gadde, Håkansson, & Snehota, 2008).

The institutional logics held by the suppliers guide the enactments but are also continuously re-constructed in practice (Baunsgaard & Clegg, 2012).

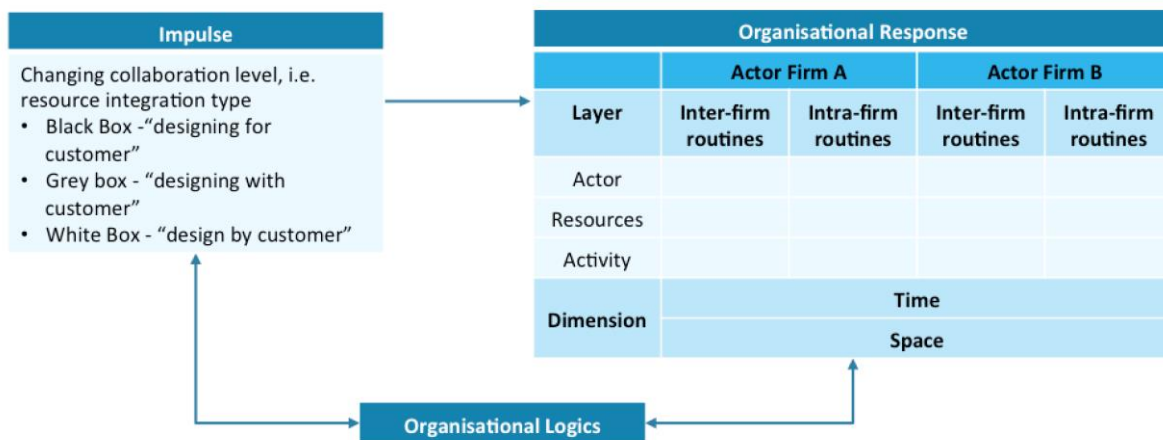


Figure 1: Initial Conceptualisation

The contribution to knowledge of my research will be a more comprehensive understanding of the adaptive processes of suppliers to changing collaboration levels in a B2B network context. The contribution to practice will be a more informed foundation for the management of B2B networks, specifically regarding strategically intended changes of collaboration level.

2. Research Design

My research proposal has generated questions to be explored rather than a hypothesis to be tested. Thus, this research will be performed within a phenomenological paradigm that follows moderate social constructivism and focuses on the perspectives of enactment and alignment (Leonardi & Barley, 2010; Orlikowski, 2000; Orlikowski & Yates, 1994).

Social constructivism “is concerned with the ways in which knowledge is historically situated and embedded in cultural values and practices (...) it is always fluid and dynamic” (Camargo-Borges & Rasera, 2013, p. 2). It supposes that an individual and his reality are inseparable and that knowledge is socially constructed, not objectively given (Arbnor & Bjerke, 2009).

My methodological approach is based on a single case study participatory research design (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2014). A single case study allows me to get close to my object of study (through participant observation, in-depth interviews, archival records, and physical artefacts) and provides me with longitudinal data (supplier adaption to changes in the coordination of resource integration that unfold over time).

I use Qualitative Content Analysis (Schreier, 2012) of the following data and the zooming-in and zooming-out approach on practices (Nicolini, 2012):

Data Sources	Description
Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• approx. 10 Interviews Supplier A• approx. 10 Interviews Supplier B• approx. 10 Interviews Supplier C• approx. 10 Interviews Supplier D• approx. 10 Interviews Client
Observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attending meetings• Visiting offices• Observing day-to-day activities
Archival records	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentations• Reports• Organizational organigrams• Corporate information, e.g. Investor Relations, Human Resources, suppliers’ self-presentation on website
Physical artefacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Photography of office materials, e.g. project plans, office settings

Table 1: Data Sources

This single case is a B2B network for developing and implementing an end customer focussed digital solution for an international original equipment manufacturer. Within this network I focus on four different suppliers (two interactive agencies, two business process and IT consultancies).

Actor groups	Role
Supplier A	Supplier (Interactive Agency)
Supplier B	Supplier (Interactive Agency)
Supplier C	Supplier (Business process and IT consultancy)
Supplier D	Supplier (Business process and IT consultancy)
Client	Supporting data regarding adaptations of Supplier A, B, C and D

Table 2: Case Study Characteristics

As a research insider, I must be aware of the critical issues, especially pre-understanding, role duality, organisational politics and its dynamics over time (Brannick & Coghlan, 2007).

3. Preliminary Findings

The data collection is not yet finished. In the following I will summarize some preliminary findings for one supplier type (interactive agency) regarding my first research question.

RQ1: How do suppliers adapt to changing collaboration level in a B2B network?

During a period of two years the B2B network's coordination type of resource integration was changed by the client from Black Box to Grey Box and from Grey Box to White Box. In the following I will describe the adaptation of one supplier (interactive agency) in the three layers of activity, actor and resource.

Activity: inter-firm routines (resource integration), intra-firm routines (e.g. hiring, staffing, travel arrangements)

The changing resource integration types led to a range of new routines and to a change of existing routines. The new routines were caused by the new joint on-site development (starting with the Grey Box phase and continuing in the White Box phase).

Routines (Interactive Agency Supplier)	Grey Box	White Box
Inter-firm		
New routines	Working on-site with different supplier and the client Representing the agency on-site Coordination of agency resources in joint teams on-site	
Changed routines	Solution development Solution discussion Solution decision Solution implementation	Solution development Solution discussion Solution decision Solution implementation
Intra-firm		
New routines	Hiring and staffing of large numbers of freelancers Weekly Travelling of large groups Living together in an agency-rented flat Motivating large numbers of employees	
Changed routines	Solution development Solution discussion	Solution development Solution discussion

	Solution decision Solution implementation	Solution decision Solution implementation
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Table 3: Impact of Change in Resource Integration on Supplier Routines

Actor (adjustments in organisational structures of the firms, and in the roles of the firms)

Every change in resource coordination type (from Black Box to Grey Box to White Box) had a significant impact on the supplier's roles.

Roles of Actor Interactive Agency	Change from Black Box to Grey Box	Change from Grey Box to White Box
Creative Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivational routines (e.g. negotiating incentives) • Representational routines (e.g. branded office equipment) • Supporting routines (intra-firm, e.g. hiring, staffing) • Coordination routines (intra-firm) • Communication routines (intra-firm) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of professional lead to client
Key Account Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivational routines (e.g. negotiating incentives) • Supporting routines (hiring, staffing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of professional lead to client
Project Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representational routines (being on-site) • Coordination tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of professional lead to client
Practitioner (concept, design, programming)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representational routines (being on-site and in mixed teams) • Coordination routines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of professional lead to client

Table 4: Impact of Change in Resource Integration on Supplier Roles

The change from Black Box to Grey Box is characterized for the interactive agency supplier by the enactment of new or changed routines for every role. These new routines arise from being on-site with the client. The change is especially significant for the Creative Director role. This role has now to enact a whole range of new routines. Surprisingly, this role

participates strongly in routines that belong rather to the Key Account Management and Project Management area (representation and coordination routines).

The change from Grey Box to White box is characterized for the interactive agency supplier not by additional routines but by a loss, namely the loss of the professional lead to the client. This loss affects all resource integration routines within the B2B network and especially the roles of the Creative Director and the Project Manager.

In summary a change of resource integration results in the emergence of a range of new routines (Black Box to Grey Box) and in a change of the enactment of existing routines (Grey Box to White Box). The role of the Creative Director is impacted the most. In the Grey Box resource integration phase, the Creative Directors somewhat unpreparedly and accidentally enacted representational and coordination routines. In the White Box resource integration phase the Creative Director role had to enact discussion and decision routines very differently, as the client took over the professional lead, i.e. the client acted as a Creative Director.

Resource (human and physical investments, also adaptations in interaction)

Within the analysed time of two years the interactive agency supplier made no additional investment into its resources in terms of training routines (new resource integration techniques, e.g. Scrum method) or in terms of improvement of internal supporting routines. This non-investment into internal supporting routines is noteworthy as the project as well as the client were very important to the supplier (in fact it was the biggest project and the most important client) and as the key players constantly complained internally about the additional routines and the lack of support:

“That was brutal. That was what killed me, to constantly motivate people.”

“That was brutally difficult [organizing branded office supply] and got me a bloody nose.”

The preliminary findings for the interactive agency supplier could be summarized as follows:

The change of resource integration type in a B2B network had a major impact on the interactive agency supplier due to an emergence of new and changed existing routines.

In adapting to the new and changed routines the supplier's roles changed also significantly, especially the Creative Director role.

The importance of the Creative Director role for this supplier as well as first findings regarding my second research question - What does a different collaboration level mean for suppliers in a B2B network? – point in the direction of the institutional logics held by the supplier. This institutional logic could be labelled as 'Artisan/Product-dominant logic'. In this logic the product quality (judged by other artisans, not the client) is the overall criteria for the perceived quality of routines and the result of resource integration.

Issues like resource interaction process quality (e.g. ease of resource integration, cost of resource integration) are not anywhere near as important as the product itself.

This shared logics of action seems to overly concentrate on the Creative Director role, leading to paradoxical processes by the suppliers when the resource integration type is changed (creative director enacting administrative routines). The institutional logics held by the interactive agency supplier seem to get into conflict with the new resource integration type leading to the emergence of defensive routines (blaming, constant negotiating).

These preliminary first findings underscore the influence of institutional logics on the resource integration in service systems. The data will be further analysed in-depth in the ongoing process of data collection and analysis in the next months.

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A theoretical framework that identifies ways to foster post-merger integration using elements of the psychological contract

Heinzpeter Kaerner

Abstract

Keywords: psychological contract, psychological contract management, mergers & acquisitions (M&A), post-merger integration, corporate socialisation, onboarding, senior leaders, entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial behaviour, innovation behaviour, service innovations, new service development (NSD), cultural fit, strategy fit

The aim of the DBA research project is to provide a theoretical framework that identifies ways to foster post-merger integration of senior leaders by an active management of elements of the psychological contract starting in early stages of the M&A process of service and consulting companies ('people businesses'). The qualitative case study approach of the research provides in-depth insights into four actual cases investigated from different perspectives.

The idea of an indirect behavioural control in the employer-employee relationship led to different contractual concepts. Traditional explicit employment contracts are static and limited to the definition of basic terms and conditions (e.g. job description, working hours and location, travelling duties, payment, etc.) or rights and obligations of the employee and of the employer in a labour legislation and economic point of view. Such factors can be measured or quantified (Rousseau, 1995). Examples for explicit contracts are the contract of employment and the additional individual objective agreement. Objective agreements are written or verbal deals concerning performance targets between employer and employee which have to be fulfilled within a defined period of time (Deich, 2004).

The psychological contract comprises "individual beliefs, shaped by the organisation, regarding terms of an exchange agreement between individuals and their organisation (Rousseau, 1995, p. 9). It contains perceptions of mutual promises and obligations of both parties to the employment relationship (Guest & Conway, 2002).

As a general rule the employment contract is uniquely formed at the beginning of the employment, and later only completed by supplemental agreements or replaced after situations of elementary changes (e.g. promotion, etc.). In conclusion they can be seen as static contracts. Otherwise the concept of the psychological contract is meant to explain the dynamic component as well as relevant behavioural expectations, assumptions or beliefs which are implicit and therefore cannot be fixed clearly in a written contract (Roehling, 1997). The function of the psychological contract is to reduce uncertainty related to mutual performance expectations, and thus the provision of reliance (Biele Mefebue, 2013). Both parties have implicit and explicit expectations which they interpret as their responsibilities and commitments. For this reason they take effect as stimuli for behaviour and performance (Biele Mefebue, 2013; Conway & Briner, 2005).

Literature, practitioners and scholars use the terms M&A often synonymously and interchangeably (Marks & Mirvis, 2011). Here the term merger indicates the integration of one entity into an existing (family) organisation, in which both organisations remain active on the market. The term acquisition describes a takeover of the target entity and full integration into the lead organisation, after which only the lead organisation remains active on the market.

In general the research investigates the effects of considerable organisational changes such as M&A activities on the psychological contract of the involved senior leaders on target side, and how an active and constructive 'management' of elements of the psychological contract can contribute to a successful and sustainable integration process. The purpose of the research is to develop a theoretical framework that identifies ways to foster post-merger integration of senior leaders using elements of the psychological contract. Focus of the research is to investigate the part the psychological contract plays in M&A situations, the roles and influences of the relevant actors, and how motivation and entrepreneurial spirit of the post-merged senior leaders can be restored within companies of the service, project management and consulting sector (knowledge workers).

Characteristically for senior leaders is that they have complex and onerous duties and responsibilities, that they are difficult to replace, and that they have an important influence on corporate success. In a sort of hybrid position leaders have employee and employer

authorities and specific characteristics. Results are problem statements in the field of steering and control (Biele Mefebue, 2013). They have entrepreneur responsibilities in the fields of business development, acquisition, project deployment, and leadership.

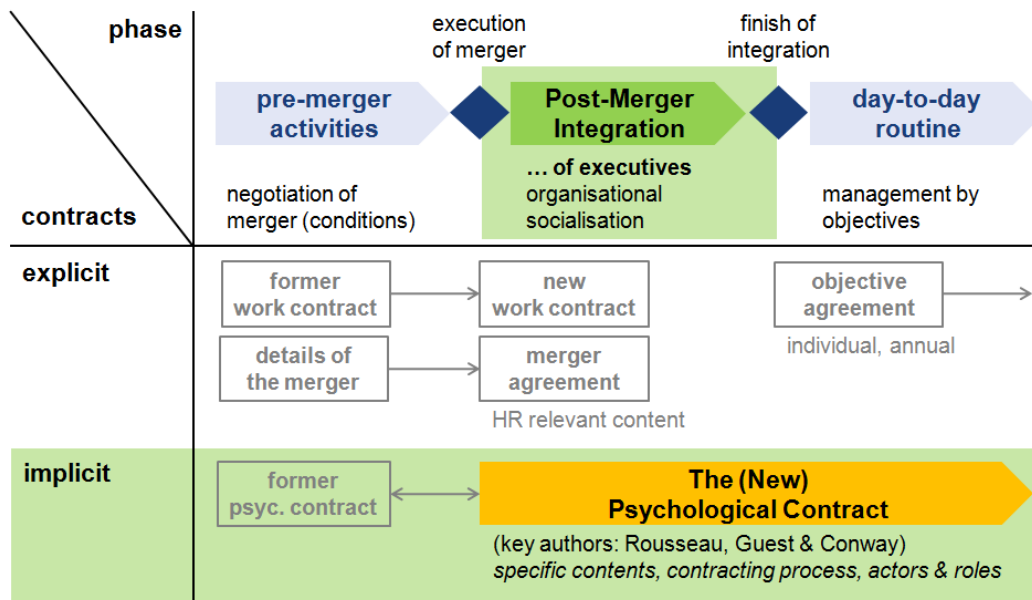


Figure 1: Conceptual framework of the research (source: own illustration)

Theoretical Framework

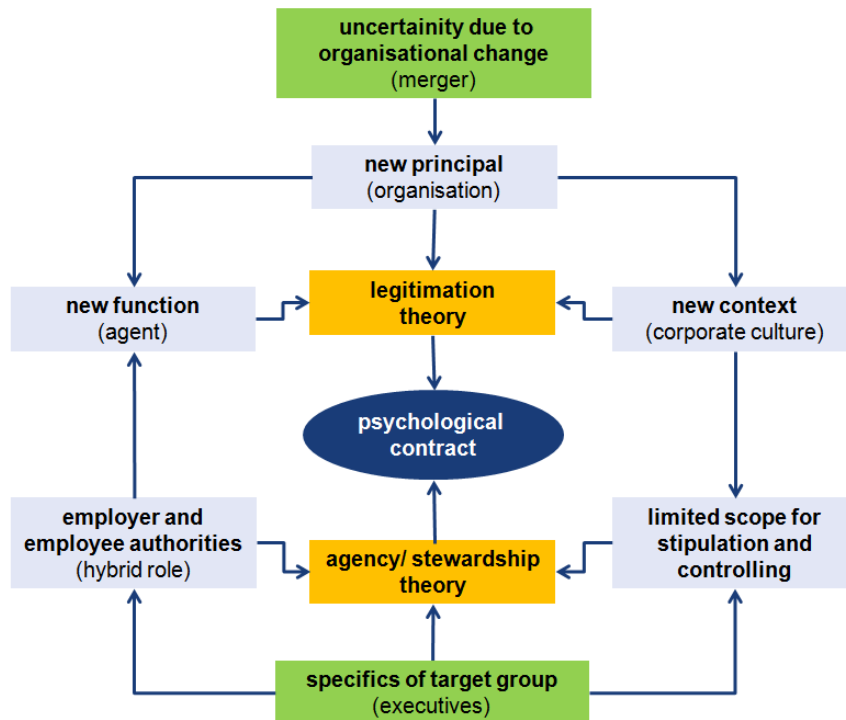


Figure 2: Theoretical framework of the research (source: own illustration)

The aim of the study is to deliver a process roadmap for the active management of the psychological contract and to create awareness for the specifics, content and context of the psychological contract of senior managers during post-merger integration to enable sustainable corporate socialisation. The contribution of the research to the body of knowledge can mainly be seen in the following areas:

- a) exploration of a holistic process map ('psychological contract management process')
- b) exploration of relevant actors and roles (contractors, integrators, agents/ stewards, principals)
- c) exploration of the legitimation process behind M&As (application of legitimation theory to post-merger integration)

- d) target group specific qualitative elaboration (senior managers, executives, leaders and specialists; knowledge workers; project management and consulting services)
- e) elaboration of a concept with practical use (e.g. for M&A due diligence concerning strategy and cultural fit, for the selection and training of the integrators, and as a guideline for the planning of integration processes)
- f) building new theory: examination of a previously unexplored relationship or process
- g) testing existing theory: grounding the predictions with existing concepts and theory

According to the taxonomy of theoretical contributions for empirical articles developed by Colquitt and Zapata-Phelan (2007, p. 1283), the research at hand can roughly be categorized with a tendency in the area between qualifier and expander regarding the dimensions of building new theory and testing existing theory.

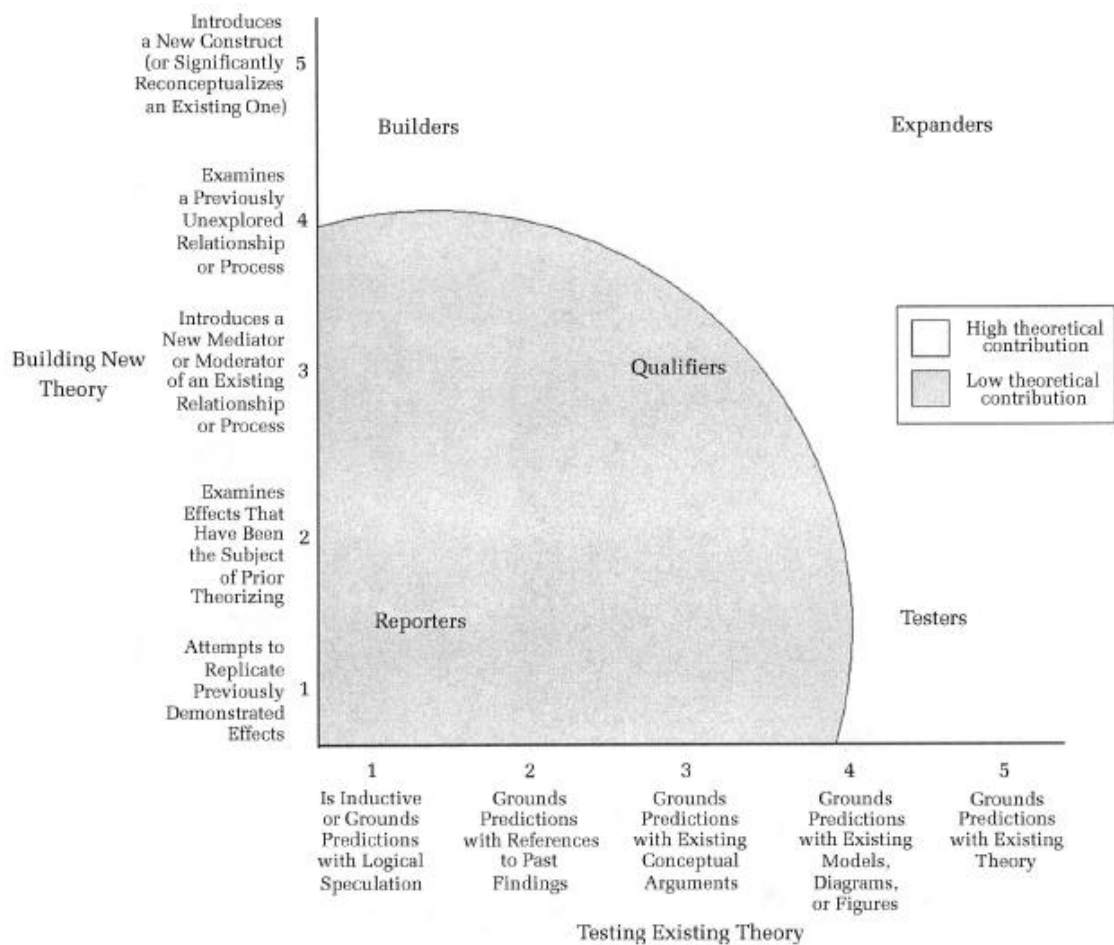


Figure 3: Taxonomy of theoretical contributions for empirical articles (Colquitt and Zapata-Phelan, 2007, p. 1283)

A case study investigates a research topic or a phenomenon, i.e. the 'case', within its real-life context making use of multiple sources of evidence (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012; Yin, 2009; Yin, 2012). Following Yin (2012, p. 4), "...the case study method allows researchers to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events...". Case studies enable the researcher to gain rich and deep contextual insights and understanding of the research topic and process claimed by Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007).

For the planned journey of data making qualitative methods will be used in the form of case studies to create rich in-depth data (Yin, 2012). The field of M&A research has a history of over 30 years, and strongly dominated by deductive approaches and quantitative studies. Meanwhile a lack of qualitative in-depth studies can be identified (Garrow, 2005). The field of psychological contract research goes back to the 1960s, and was re-newed by the new psychological contract in the beginning 1990s following changes in the business and work environment. A vast number of research in the field of psychological contract and mergers or acquisitions also is of quantitative nature, often with very specific respondent groups, predominantly focussing on the breach or violation of the psychological contract of employees in general. Here also a need for qualitative in-depth data especially researching the behaviour of leaders and executives is evident (Bligh & Carsten, 2005, literature review).

Qualitative research methodologies can be used to investigate how and why things happen, hence it is contextual and data can be collected in a real-life setting. Qualitative research often is used for exploratory research (Yin, 2012) and for inductive approaches (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012; Yin, 2012). Explorative studies also allow open questions to be asked. Expert interviews or in-depth individual interviews are two examples for ways to conduct them. The flexibility and adaptability to change are central advantages of exploratory studies (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012). Therefore this research will be carried out with qualitative methodology also because the topic of the research focuses on a complex, contemporary phenomenon with context of real professional life (Yin, 2012). On that account the form of a case study will be applied as research strategy. Case studies are

able to explore research topics within real-life contexts, with a lower distance between the studied phenomenon and its context (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012; Yin 2012).

Single cases are very often used for typical, critical, extreme or unique cases. The idea of multiple cases is to find out if findings can be replicated across the board. Literal replication means that the set of cases was chosen on the basis of predicted similar results. Theoretical replication means that the set of cases was chosen where contextual factors are different on purpose. Here the researcher predicts the effects of the different contexts. Yin (2009) suggests that a multiple case study strategy should combine both, each with a small number of cases chosen to predict literal replication and a small number of cases to predict theoretical replication at the same time. This course of action creates a very strong backing for the theoretical propositions on which the prognosis was based (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012; Yin, 2009). The paper at hand uses a multiple case study approach to combine both, theoretical and literal replication.

There exists a lot of research in the field of M&A investigating economic, financial, human, organisational, and cultural aspects and respective failure or success factors as well as diverse types and motives of M&As. For more than 30 years of research in this field high failure rates of M&As have still been reported (Marks & Mirvis, 2011). This is not the focus of this research. A vast amount of research in this field confirms the relevance of the integration process, but also very high failure rates, and they explain or explore the reasons and possible success factors. However, literature review revealed a need for research on how the construct of the psychological contract can be an enabler for post-merger integration of the specific target group of senior leaders. Information and communication processes are crucial for the success of integration processes (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994). Especially radical organisational changes such as M&As can lead to a mismatch of expectations (Shield, Thorpe, & Nelson, 2002; Raeder & Grote, 2012).

Existing research in the field of the psychological contract mainly focuses on reasons for the failure and breach of the contract and the negative results in regard to commitment, trust (Robinson, Kraatz, & Rousseau, 1994), job satisfaction (Turnley & Feldmann, 2000), resignation (Fisch, 2003), organisational citizenship behaviour (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000), and turn-over (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994) or even damaging behaviour (Bordia,

Restubog & Tang, 2008). Most studies are based on data derived from relatively specific target groups (i.e. education, government, army, students, cultures, etc.) and researching on all employees as one homogenous group. The value of my DBA research is that it investigates companies (real participants of the economy) and that it contributes qualitative insights from practice generated with in-depth interviews of both concerned sides (i.e. employer vs. employee side, buying vs. target company) exploring the psychological contract of senior leaders in relation to their post-merger entrepreneurial behaviour.

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Understanding the role of Culture Agents in the introduction of art programmes in German secondary schools: Methodology and methods

Florian Keller

Abstract

The 'culture agent' is a new profession in Germany. Among other tasks, they support (head)teachers in conceiving and implementing long-term art programmes in general schools and in managing art projects. Culture agents have worked in the 'Culture Agents Programme' for two years. The programme is funded by two foundations and five German Federal Districts. I am the Commercial Director of the organization in charge of the programme. The planned research project will investigate the Culture Agents' role in the introduction of arts programmes in German secondary schools. This paper sums up the development of methodology and methods for the project. Constructivism is established as the paradigm and an interpretivist case study approach as the overall design for the research. Quality criteria are determined as guiding framework within an open research structure. An overview about the planned iterative data collection procedures (mainly interviews) and data analysis strategies/techniques is given (data coding, analytic induction, single- and cross-case analysis, inductive and abductive reasoning, generation of hypotheses and theories). Finally, a preliminary research design is provided, including a pilot study to verify the study focus and design.

The **purpose of this paper** is to sum up the development of methodology and methods for the planned research.

Design/methodology/approach

In the project, I will investigate the following **research questions**:

What is the Culture Agent's role in the introduction of arts programmes in German secondary schools?

To what extent does the Culture Agent's role change during the introduction process?

How can the Culture Agent's role be developed to foster the introduction process?

I feel an affinity for constructivism as a **research paradigm**. Its proponents believe that what may be called reality is "constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world (Crotty, 2013, p. 42)". For them, knowledge is built predominantly by the construction of perceptions and meanings (Corbetta, 2003, p. 24). Apart from the researcher's personal stance, he or she should choose the research paradigm or design by the research subject (Boyd, 1992). A constructivist

methodology is suitable to create a holistic picture of the social situation to be studied, i.e. the Culture Agents' activities, as it considers also the subjective perceptions and experiences that may have formed the social situation (Hassard, 1991; Jervis, 1997). Due to the complexity of social situations, the project schedule must remain flexible throughout the research process (Hoffmann-Riem, 1980; Steinke, 1999, pp. 35-36).

An **interpretivist approach** deploying 3 or 4 **case studies** will offer the opportunity to study the Culture Agents' activities thoroughly (Woodside, 2010, p. 41 et passim). For the sake of a deep case analysis, the project should employ a small number of case studies, yet more than just one, to enable comparisons and cross-case analyses (Miles & Huberman, 1995).

Since I can only define a preliminary research programme at the outset, I will adopt **quality criteria as overall guidance**, which appear of relevance for the research project. Objectivity, validity and reliability are common criteria for quantitative studies, but of limited applicability for qualitative research (Corbetta, 2003). Alternatively, Steinke (1999) suggests *intersubjective auditability*, which requires transparency for the research process and results (pp. 207-208). Within limits, also qualitative researchers may *generalise* from their studies, but should make those *limits explicit* (Steinke, 1999). An *iterative procedure* of collecting and evaluating data and drafting hypotheses enables the researcher to consider all relevant aspects of a social situation and develop persuasive theories (Flick, 1995; Steinke, 1999, p. 41). The research design should be *subject-appropriate* (Blumer, 1979). The conclusions from the research should fit together logically (*consistency*) and conceptually (*coherency*) (Lehmann, 2014) and be meaningful for the study participants' actual situation (*practical relevance*) (Steinke, 1999).

Social research **defines a case** as a social phenomenon in a context with more or less distinct boundaries (Miles & Huberman, 1995, p. 25). For now, I define a case as a Culture Agent's activities in the context of introducing an arts programme in a German Secondary school. A diverse selection of cases will enable to test the robustness of a theory against varying contextual factors (Bryman & Bell, 2007; Silverman, 2000), such as different school locations in Germany or Culture Agents' professional background. I may identify other context-related characteristics by means of a pilot study and from there determine the selection criteria.

Semi-structured in-depth interviews (Bryman & Bell, 2007) are appropriate for gathering relevant data, i.e. the perceptions and views of the participants in the relevant situation. Semi-structured

interviews involve a catalogue of specific, yet open questions (Aufenanger, 1991). Their order and number may vary, according to the progress of the interview (Bryman & Bell, 2007). Interviewees may include Culture Agents, school staff, artists co-operating with the school, and students, with a total of approximately 5-6 interviewees per case study. Especially with students, focus group interviews may be useful. Such interviews with homogeneous groups (Steinke, 1999) may deliver a more extensive impression of the participants' experience (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). As the Culture Agents are knowledgeable about, and responsible for, the processes in question, they are experts according to the definition of Bogner and Menz (2005). Expert interviews focus on the interviewees' knowledge (Meuser & Nagel, 2005) and involve straightforward questions (Littig, 2008). However, those interviews should explore also the Culture Agents' subjective experience.

As suggested by the literature (Sambrook & Stewart, 2008; Symon, 1998), I will use as data source also my research diary with **reflections** on the research subject, my activities and role as a researcher and practitioner. Reflection is a mental process that often pursues a practical target beyond the sphere of thoughts. (Moon, 1999). Keeping a research diary may also help deal with ethical issues and researcher's bias, by bringing to mind the influence of own views on the subject matter.

Based on the **overall analysis strategy** of analytic induction (Bryman & Bell, 2007), I will seek to align cases and derived theories by modifying either preliminary explanations or hypotheses, thus excluding deviant cases (pp. 582-583). The adjustment of earlier explanations will require the collection of more data, against which the revised theory is then tested. As an iterative process (cf. the corresponding quality criterion above), analytic induction in principle appears appropriate for qualitative empirical studies. Eventually, I may build theories, including across cases, where appropriate. Otherwise, a thorough analysis of the single cases and a comparative overview of results will be an equally valuable goal for the research project.

Data coding as early step in the analysis process encompasses decomposing the interviewees' statements into fragments and restructuring them according to partially pre-defined, partially emerging codes (Bryman & Bell, 2007, p. 594), i.e. micro-topics. As the data from both semi-structured and expert interviews are likely to emerge already pre-structured, coding in patterns of meaning (Miles & Huberman, 1995, p. 69) may be suitable.

Description and explanation (cf. Woodside, 2010) will be valuable ways of **data interpretation** as the phenomenon has not been studied before. A cross-case analysis may show cause-effect relations

between events and contexts (Strauss & Glaser, 1966) and help build a theory resilient against contextual variations and practically relevant (Miles & Huberman, 1995). Typical everyday (school) activities and communications are interpretable through interpretation pattern analysis, where the researcher tries to unveil implicit interpretations (Meuser, 2003; Oevermann, 2001). Proceeding from implicit meanings detected behind the (inter)actions of study participants, the technique of thick description may be employed to create a vivid account, yet avoiding excessive embellishments (Friebertshäuser, 2003). For the eventual building of hypotheses respectively theories out of the interpreted data, induction and abduction are the preferable ways of reasoning (Rescher, 1987). From the study of a particular situation, the inductive approach seeks to determine features that may apply to a multitude of cases (Moses & Knutsen, 2012). The researcher may then formulate hypotheses from these regularities. Abduction (introduced by Peirce, 1960) looks for a general rule to elucidate a novel or unfamiliar impression (Habermas, 1969, p. 147). Thus, both induction and abduction are subject-adequate approaches to the generation of hypotheses and theory. Transparency is to be observed especially in the writing-up. The piece should make explicit mental processes and display a clear writing style with consistently used terms.

The **preliminary research design** looks as follows: (A) Tentatively define a case in terms of the planned case study: the activities of a Culture Agent relating to the introduction of arts programmes in a German secondary school. (B) Ask Culture Agents, school institution staff and students for their readiness to participate. (C) Carry out pilot study for verification and re-adjustment of study focus, involving short interviews (approx. 15 minutes) with Culture Agents about their views on issues from the preliminary literature review, including the actual relevance of topics and potential other issues the literature review did not reveal. (D) Based on pilot study results, select suitable cases for main study; refine literature review; make necessary adjustments to research design. (E) Develop guiding questions for main study interviews. (F) First round of interviews followed by a first data analysis and interpretation; clarify need for further adjustments to the research questions and further data collections. (G) Perform further iterations (interviews and analysis/interpretation), until there is sufficient information to describe and analyse the studied cases thoroughly. (H) Draw conclusions; establish theories and recommendations for practice and research.

Findings: At this early stage of the project, there are no substantial findings to be reported.

Research limitations/implications: Further implications than the limited generalisability of results from a qualitative study (see above) may emerge during or as results of the data collection and analysis procedures.

Practical implications: Potential practical issues may include the readiness and availability of interview partners, the setting up, location and timing of the interviews and the transcription of the – potentially extensive – data collected. Ways to deal with such implications will be a realistic and detailed project planning including the coordination of meetings for interviews well in advance. For the transcription, I may hire a relevant service provider.

Social Implications: For interviews with students of minor age, a parents' permission will be necessary. Another issue is that I am a supervisor of the Culture Agents. All research activities will comply with the university's Ethics code and other related rules. The research may have an impact on the culture agents, the participating schools, the Forum K&B GmbH (project executing agency) and my position as its Commercial Director. However, at this stage, it is not possible to predict concrete implications of those circumstances.

Contribution to knowledge/value of paper: The activities of the Culture Agents relating to the introduction of art programmes in German secondary schools have not been studied yet. The development of a methodological approach for a related research may prove valuable for me and for other scientists.

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Exploring the role of organizational trust in mergers and acquisitions (M&A) processes in family firms

Stella Lind

Abstract

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How is current theory about organizational trust applicable to family firms that have undergone M&As?
2. How do the unique circumstances of family firms impact the organizational trust in family firms that have undergone M&As?

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. Review the current theory about organizational trust in relation to the family firm and M&A context
- 2a. To gain a deeper understanding of the unique circumstances that influence trust in family firms that have undergone M&As
- 2b. To develop a theoretical model of organizational trust specific to family firms that have undergone M&As

3. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study is to contribute to the understanding of organizational trust within the unique context of family firms that have undergone M&As.

4. CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

One widely accepted definition this research follows is that organisational trust is “a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behaviour of another” (Rousseau et al., 1998, p. 395). Organisational trust is not predetermined, but rather develops as a process and can be changed (Graeff, 1997). It can be reinforced by positive events, but also withdrawn as a result of negative events. In M&As the known inherent rules of an organisation are replaced

with unknown ones. Thus, such changes can be regarded as critical for the existence of trust as they are perceived as being risky (McLain, 1999) and usually cause uncertainty (DiFonzo & Bordia, 1998). This leads to an increased salience of the trust relationship and, based on this information processing, organisational members reassess their trust in management and in the organisation itself. Hence, the assumption is that there may be less organisational trust after an M&A than before, as during the M&A, trust is put to a test given that employees feel uncertain and not in control (e.g. Buono & Bowditch, 2003).

The following key antecedents (influencing factors) and consequences of organisational trust are well established in literature:

1. Antecedents: Job security (Probst, 2002), perceived future prospects (Leung, 2004), information and communication (Schott & Jöns, 2004), fairness (Klendauer, 2006), organisational support (Ferres et al., 2005) and involvement (Doppler & Lauterburg, 2005) are likely to influence employees' organisational trust during the M&A process.
2. Consequences: Reduced organisational trust is likely to have the following consequences: turnover intention (Ferres et al., 2005), readiness for change (Berner, 2002) and commitment (Ozag, 2006) have been identified as attitudinal consequences of organisational trust, e.g. organisational engagement (Ferres et al., 2005) as a behavioural consequence.

These key antecedents and consequences of organisational trust can be summarised to depict a model of current organisational trust theory.

The next section examines how this model is applicable to family firms.

There are many definitions of the family firm. This research follows the approach by Chua et al. (1999, p. 25) that defines firms only as family firms when family involvement leads to distinctiveness and specific behaviour: "A business governed and managed with the intention to shape and pursue the vision of the business held by a dominant coalition controlled by members of the same family or a small number of families in a manner that is potentially sustainable cross generations of the family or families".

In family firms trust plays a crucial role (Arregle, 2007). This is particularly the case for family-owned medium-sized companies, as personal relationships are very important here (Kraiczy, 2013). In Germany over 90% of companies are owner-managed (Zentrum für Europäische Wirtschaftsforschung, 2014). As German family firms have started to undertake more M&As (Müller, 2013), this research topic is particularly relevant to that context.

There are references in literature that trust is generally higher in family firms (e.g. Kachaner et al., 2012). Thanks to their specific resources such as long-term orientation (Miller & Le Breton-Miller, 2005; Block, 2009), consistent behaviour according to a set of principles, high feeling of responsibility and care about employees' wellbeing (Lee, 2006), family firms are more likely to be trusted by their employees. As family firms are characterised as risk-averse (Ward, 2005), employees believe that risky decisions (e.g. like M&As) are well-considered (Kraiczy, 2013). As shown by Sachs (2007) family firm employees are more likely to trust the acquiring firm after M&As when that firm is also family-run. Apart from these studies however, the role of trust in the context of M&As in family firms has rarely been studied (Kachaner et al., 2012).

Future research on the relationships between trust, M&As and family firms could be approached by further exploring organisational trust in this specific context. It can be assumed that not only do the strengths of the aforementioned key factors differ in family firms, but that the key factors themselves differ: e.g. it is possible that M&As have less consequences for the perceived job security and correspondingly for trust in family firms as such firms have a stronger tendency to keep their employees even in times of economic crises (Lee, 2006). Since family firms often possess the resource of trust, it is imaginable that commitment does not decrease after an M&A in case the employees see the buying family firm as favourable (Vallejo & Langa, 2010). Overall, this would suggest that the role of organisational trust may be more complex and different in family firms.

This research contribution seeks to gain a deeper understanding of the unique circumstances that influence trust in family firms in order to derive an explicit framework for family firms that have undergone M&As.

5. METHODOLOGY & METHODS

This research adopts an interpretivist stance and uses an exploratory approach for the main study since new insights are to be gained.

A pilot study will be undertaken to evaluate current theory about organisational trust in relation to the family firm and M&A. The pilot study will enable a deeper understanding of the unique circumstances that influence trust in family firms and lead to develop of a model of organisational trust specific to family firms that have undergone M&As. This model will then be explored in the main study.

Sample

Pilot study: As a sample, a German medium-sized family firm that undertook several acquisitions of other family firms in the last couple of years will be investigated. The company has agreed to provide access to a previously conducted employee survey that addresses variables related to trust. Via a paper and pencil survey the acquired companies, as well as the acquiring company, were asked about their organisational trust, the antecedents and consequences of trust and the acquisition process itself. Employees' attitudes towards the constructs prior to and after the acquisition were collected.

Main study: For the main study qualitative interviews with key stakeholders from 5-10 family firms with exposure in M&As will be conducted. These contacts will be gained with the help of the German Foundation for Family Businesses. Thereby, the sample of expert interviews will consider different levels of managers and workers in the chosen family firms.

Design

Pilot study: In order to address research question 1 by investigating the current theory of organisational trust derived from a systematic literature review, existing secondary data from the survey will be evaluated. The research will assess the relative importance of certain components and explore strengths and differences in family firms. This will be done through the use of structural equation modelling.

After testing if current theory about organisational trust is applicable to family firms that have undergone M&As in the pilot study, in the main study one goes one step further by analysing the unique circumstances of family firms in this setting.

Main study: In order to address research question 2 by gaining a deeper understanding of how the unique circumstances of family firms impact the organisational trust in family firms that have undergone M&As, the study will use a qualitative method aimed at exploratory research. A qualitative study, which consists of approximately 40 – 50 semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders at all levels, and which have experiential knowledge of family firms that have undergone M&As, will be conducted. Their participation will consist of an approximately 60 minute individual interview where they will be asked questions related to their experience of managing the family firm M&As. Each interview will be transcribed. The text will be coded and categorized in order to describe the major themes and patterns which emerge from the analysis.

The qualitative interviews will lead to a deeper knowledge of the unique circumstances that influence trust in family firms that have undergone M&As. This can then be used to develop a theoretical model of organisational trust specific to family firms that have undergone M&As.

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Exploring Corporate Reputation Attributes: Evaluating Latest Business Insights Based on the RepTrak System

Holger Minning

Abstract

The complex construct of corporate reputation, which can add more than 60 percent to a company's value, consists of numerous attributes. This paper aims to explore these attributes using the RepTrak reputation system by mapping insights from 56 online business articles, dated between October 2013 and April 2015.

The findings acknowledge the RepTrak system, and particularly highlight the importance of corporate governance, the positive influence on society, the importance of a strong and appealing leader, and the well-being of employees. The analysis of the business articles reveals some additional attributes of corporate reputation, such as customer care and safety, crisis management, meeting stakeholders' expectations, credibility and authenticity, global competitiveness as well as the industry's and competitors' reputation.

These outcomes can be taken into account when using corporate reputation attributes for research. Professionals and academics could consider including the additional attributes to their measurement. The measurement results might be analysed and translated into a reputation management action plan which could lead to an increased reputation performance.

Purpose of the Paper

Corporate reputation is the central intangible asset of a company (Liehr-Gobbers, 2014). It helps to attract talented employees and win customers, and can add more than 60 percent to a company's value (Chun, 2005; Shamma, 2012). Concurrently, business leaders identify the damage of corporate reputation as the biggest strategic risk for the future success of their companies (Fombrun, 2012; Gaines-Ross, 2013). Therefore, reputation measurement has become vital, though it is a challenge to achieve valuable results (Davies, 2011).

The complex construct of corporate reputation consists of numerous attributes. This paper aims to explore these attributes by reviewing an existing measurement framework in the light of latest business insights. The results can contribute to the building of an updated framework which I consider to be one of the starting points for my doctoral thesis research about corporate reputation of medical device companies in the stakeholder group of hospital procurement managers.

Design/Methodology/Approach

The most established and in-depth corporate reputation measurement framework is RepTrak by the Reputation Institute (Ressler & Abratt, 2009; Stacks, Dodd, & Men, 2013). The institute was founded by Charles Fombrun who established the term 'corporate reputation' among academics and professionals. The framework, named RepTrak Index, consists of the seven reputation dimensions of products/services, innovation, workplace, governance, citizenship, leadership and performance. Each of the dimensions is described by three or four attributes (Fombrun, Ponzi, & Newbury, 2015). Emotional attributes such as overall reputation, admire and respect, feeling about a company, and trust, are joined in the RepTrak Pulse model which can be used as a separate measure of a stakeholder's emotional perception of a company (Fombrun et al., 2015; Ponzi, Fombrun, & Gardberg, 2011). The RepTrak framework has been tested against the latest insights from the corporate reputation business community.

For this purpose, 78 online articles about corporate reputation, dated between October 2013 and April 2015, have been screened for a description of one or more corporate reputation attributes. This criterion is met by 56 articles: 26 articles report about survey findings, 13 give overviews about corporate reputation issues, nine represent opinions of professional business bloggers, five identify corporate reputation trends, and three give insights into reputation case studies.

The attributes found in the business articles have been sorted in the existing RepTrak framework where applicable. Overall, 475 findings have been identified, and rated for relevance: 436 findings name a reputation attribute and present one example or explanation to the attribute (category 1 = one point); 30 findings explain the attribute with two to four different aspects (category 2 = two points); nine findings provide an in-depth description of

at least five different aspects of the attribute (category 3 = 3 points). In total, 523 points have been allocated. Both the existing and new attributes I found are discussed in my analysis.

Findings

My analysis results in appendix 1 demonstrate that the business community agrees fundamentally with the seven RepTrak Index dimensions and their 23 attributes.

The most frequently mentioned attributes in the business articles are accumulated in the governance dimension (26%). The most stated attribute is ethical behaviour (9%) which is to be considered as a central attribute for consumer decision-making: “People, who put ethics at the heart of their purchasing decision, are willing to pay more for a product/service. [...] ethical consumers are willing to spend 25 percent more for a product/service since they feel it is fair” (Dwarakanath, 2015). Additionally, the business authors highlight the demand for a transparent company (7%) and connect this with the increase of the social media activities of the company’s stakeholders. The journalist Amble (2013) states: “Another finding is that achieving transparency is more important for reputation building than seeking to avoid negative impressions or risks.” The Holmes Report cites a survey: “The overwhelming majority (85 percent) of the public globally believes that being open and transparent is the single most important factor in delivering an effective communications strategy” (Holmes-Report, 2014). A relevant new aspect in the RepTrak government dimension is the company’s ability to manage inconsistencies or crises. New communication channels and their real time use by relevant stakeholders lead to a closer public observation of how companies react when challenges occur (Athal, 2014; Davies, 2011; Holmes, 2015).

Three other RepTrak attributes were outstanding in the business articles: (1) The positive influence on society (8%), (2) the importance of a strong and appealing leader (6%), and (3) the well-being of employees (6%). (1) The establishment of corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs are beneficial for companies. CSR activities are noticed by customers and most of them tend to recommend companies that support the society (Environmental-Leader, 2013). (2) The CEO reputation of a company has become more strongly connected with the reputation of his or her company over the past years. His or her behaviour deals with the soft skills towards employees, customers and communities. A CEO today has a

public profile, personal missteps are treated like the ones of celebrities and are transferred to the reputation of the company (Fombrun, 2015; Gaines-Ross, 2013; Ketchum, 2013). (3) The well-being of employees is stated in the business articles as particularly important, since they have the function of reputation ambassadors to other stakeholders (Amble, 2013; Gaines-Ross, 2013).

Three attributes, which are not listed in the RepTrak framework, have been found in the business articles: (1) In health care, the safety of patients has seen an increase in awareness. This development is driven by active patient advocacy groups, well-informed patients and their relatives about treatment options (Patient-View, 2014, 2015; Weintraub, 2015). (2) The same business authors mention that the reputation of an industry or of competitors will influence the company's reputation as well (Patient-View, 2014, 2015; Weintraub, 2015). (3) Furthermore, global competitiveness is named as a reputation attribute in articles about the world's most admired companies (Kapur, 2015).

Not surprisingly, there is not a strong awareness among the corporate reputation professionals in relation to the RepTrak dimensions performance (10%) and innovation (5%). The business authors often have a marketing, legal, public relations or sociological background and focus on their specialist fields. Corporate reputation is not equally represented in articles on managerial and financial websites.

Of the four emotional RepTrak attributes – overall reputation (9%), feeling about a company (6%), admire and respect (12%), and trust (35%) – the latter one has been highlighted in a range of business articles. Trust is by far the most important emotion-driven attribute and a “fundamental part” (Blagg, 2014) of corporate reputation. Trust is assumed to be connected with other reputation dimensions and represents rather a method of perception than the perception of the company itself (Watkins, 2015).

The business literature suggests more emotion-driven attributes such as (1) credibility and authenticity (22%), and (2) the need that experiences have to meet the company's stakeholders' expectations (16%). While credibility is often only mentioned in a list of attributes, managing expectations appears to be “[a] central challenge in managing reputation opportunities and risks [...]” (Liehr-Gobbers, 2014).

Overall, the findings show today's relevance of the RepTrak system, and reveal additional insights on corporate reputation. Business thought leaders may introduce appealing ideas to

describe additional reputation attributes. They could be taken into account when measuring corporate reputation.

Research Implications and Limitations

The results of this paper could be a promising starting point for my doctoral thesis research about corporate reputation of medical device companies. As a critical realist researcher, I aim to map the social construct of corporate reputation following a retroductive approach (Blaikie, 2010; Danermark, Ekström, Jakobsen, & Karlsson, 2002; Hanson, 1958). In the thesis, it is desirable to start with a preliminary corporate reputation framework and discuss it in interviews with hospital procurement managers. The interviews will be split in three subsequent groups, which will allow analysing the findings and refining the framework after each group of interviews.

This paper covers only a discussion about corporate reputation attributes. The antecedents and consequences of corporate reputation as well as its channels, multipliers and target groups are not analysed. They will be discussed after an extensive study of the academic and business literature.

Practical Implications

Identifying the attributes of corporate reputation supports the measurement of the complex reputation construct by professionals. Companies can consider including the additional attributes I found to their system of measuring in order to receive a result which includes ideas of the business corporate reputation community. The measurement results could be analysed and translated into a reputation management action plan which may lead to an increased reputation performance.

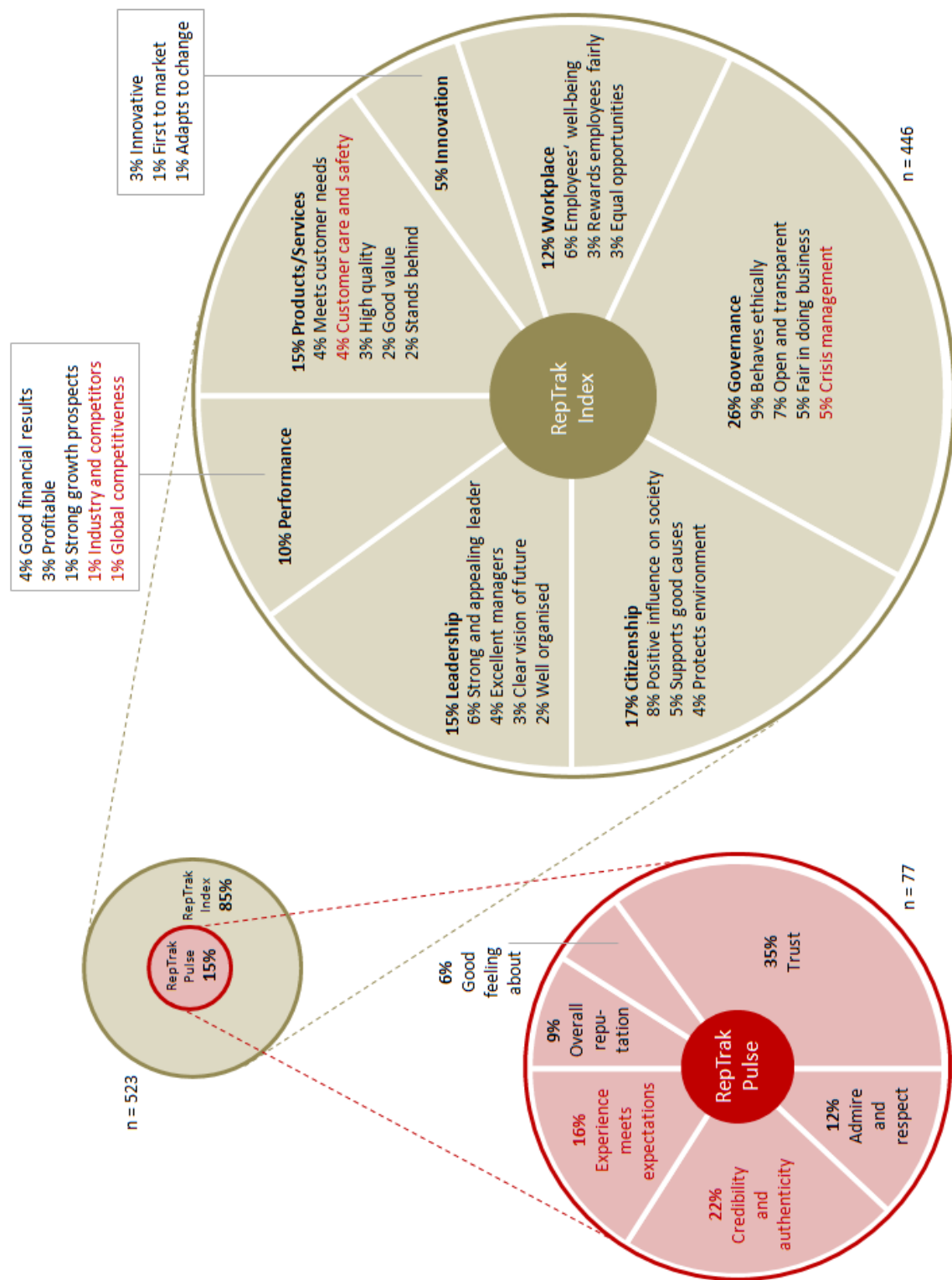
Social Implications

Corporate governance, corporate social responsibility and corporate sustainability are major attributes of corporate reputation. A greater awareness by companies could lead to a positive mindset towards activities and reporting of responsibility issues. Additionally, an inclusion of customer care to the reputation attributes can highlight its importance and lead to appropriate activities.

Original Value

This paper aims to make a contribution to the established RepTrak system of corporate reputation, which has been constantly verified by academics (Fombrun et al., 2015). It reveals insights of corporate reputation thought leaders with a professional background. The insights could be reflected on and added to an attribute list of corporate reputation in order to measure the corporate reputation of companies. For corporate reputation researchers, the findings can be a source for debates about the impact of new attributes to the construct of corporate reputation.

Appendix 1: Analysis of 56 business articles based on the RepTrak system



Red colour = New attributes found in business articles

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An analysis of the new phenomenon known as grid owner companies from a financial perspective - systematic literature review

Hagen Peschke

Abstract

The following systematic literature review focuses on the new phenomenon known as grid owner companies. In Germany, electricity and gas distribution are regularly governed by rights-of-way contracts. A process began four years ago to phase out more than 20,000 rights-of-way contracts throughout Germany. Often, a grid owner company is established whose shareholders are the current distribution grid operator and the municipality. The aim of the following systematic literature review is to undertake a review of academic and practitioner literature from 2010 to 2015 on the new phenomenon known as grid owner companies to develop a theoretical framework in order to support municipalities and private companies in their decision-making process. All in all, this systematic literature review shows that grid owner companies in Germany are already the subject of research by academics and practitioners, but rather from a narrative perspective and with regard to the advantages and disadvantages of the process of remunicipalization of public services. To support the decision process, research questions concerning recently founded grid owner companies, typical legal structures, relationships between the percentage of ownership and the net income, as well as typical accounting principles of grid owner companies in Germany, have to be addressed.

Purpose of the paper

The aim of the systematic literature review is to undertake a review of academic and practitioner literature from 2010 to 2015 on the new phenomenon known as grid owner companies to develop a theoretical framework in order to support municipalities and private companies in their decision-making process. In general, further research is necessary, because in future several rights-of-way contracts phase out and local as well as private electricity and gas companies have to make a decision to either renew rights-of-way contracts or to set up grid owner companies

Methodology

The following four online databases were selected: Business Source Complete, Beck-Online, Google Scholar and SSRN.

Due to the fact that a grid owner company is primarily a German phenomenon (Michaels and Kohler, 2013), the search terms are mixtures of English and German words.

In general, central key words which refer to the topic are:

- grid/grid owner company (German: Netz(eigentums)gesellschaft)
- public private partnership
- electricity/gas
- remunicipalisation (German: Rekommunalisierung)
- cooperation model (German: Kooperationsmodell)
- rights-of-way contract or concession contract (German: Konzessionsvertrag)

Several searches with the following key word combinations were carried out:

- “Public Private Partnership” and “Netzgesellschaft”
- “Netzgesellschaft” and “Konzession”
- “Netzgesellschaft” and “Rekommunalisierung”
- “Re-municipalisation”

The following inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied:

Table 1: Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

<i>Parameters</i>	<i>Inclusion Criteria</i>	<i>Exclusion Criteria</i>
Language	English, German	Non-English, Non-German
Location	Germany	Non-Germany
Time Frame	From 2010 to 2015	Before 2010
Outcome	Literature concerned with grid owner companies and remunicipalisation	Literature not concerned with grid owner companies and remunicipalisation
Document Type	Academic and practitioner literature	Newspaper articles, websites

The time frame from 2010 to 2015 is chosen, because before 2010 only a few rights-of-way contracts phased out, so grid owner companies were not established. Furthermore, literature which dates before 2010 often deals with the so-called unbundling of grid companies. The unbundling of grid companies is a legal requirement, but in most cases it is not linked to the phase out of rights-of-way contracts. So, it is not part of the research questions.

Newspaper articles and websites are excluded from the search, because they do not comply with general quality criteria of academic or practitioner literature.

In general, the relevance of a literature to the review depends on the relevance of its research questions. The quality of its methodology is not an exclusion criterion, because otherwise the scope of literature would have been too narrow due to the fact that a grid owner company is a rather new phenomenon.

Findings

The systematic literature review shows that grid owner companies in Germany are already the subject of research by academics and practitioners, but rather from a narrative or qualitative perspective and with regard to the advantages and disadvantages of the process of remunicipalization of public services. In accordance with Berlo and Wagner (2013) public services in Germany are well researched. However, nobody has systematically taken stock of the grid owner companies already founded in Germany in the last four years. Neither their legal or ownership structures nor their financial or accounting figures have been analyzed. With regard to the legal or ownership structures, for example Arnold (2012), Chen (2012), Kunze (2012), Rosenberger (2012), Tugendreich (2014) already have discussed cooperation models or joint ventures. However, they do not refer to empirical cooperation models or joint ventures. In practice, those cooperation models or joint ventures could have different balance sheets or profit and loss accounts. Key figures like revenues, cost or net income, have not been analyzed yet. Although Menges and Müller-Kirchenbauer (2012) maintain that the question of ownership structure has got a lower relevance for the advantages or disadvantages of municipalisation, the percentage of ownership could be very important for the net income and other financial outcomes of local government and the other owners of a grid owner company. Moreover, the accounting standards which are relevant for a grid owner company, especially the German Generally Accepted Accounting Principles or the International Financial Reporting Standards, determine the net income of the owners and hence the income of local government. Furthermore, the percentage of ownership of local government determines the influence of local government on the relevant decisions in the grid owner company.

The relevant decisions are the decision on the budget, the investment in the grids and the capital structure of the grid owner company.

Implications

The authors of the literature found mainly apply a narrative style to deal with the problems. Empirical data is rarely used. This could be the basis for further research, also to support the narrative arguments. Financial data from the Federal Gazette in Germany or other sources could be used to analyze the phenomenon grid owner companies in Germany. Due to the fact that in future further rights-of-way contracts phase out and local as well as private electricity companies have to make a decision to renew rights-of-way contracts or to found grid owner companies, a quantitative aid to decision-making is needed.

To sum it up, the research gap can be described as follows: Only a few authors, especially Arnold (2012), Chen (2012), Kunze (2012), Menges and Müller-Kirchenbauer (2012), Rosenberger (2012), Tugendreich (2014), have

- identified the recently (in the last four years) founded grid owner companies in Germany,
- analyzed the legal structures of grid owner companies in Germany,
- examined the relationship between the percentage of ownership and the net income and other important financial figures of a grid owner company from a quantitative perspective and
- examined the accounting of grid owner companies in Germany.

As a result of the systematic literature review, the following research questions and research objectives have to be addressed:

Research question 1: Who are the recently (in the last four years) founded grid owner companies in Germany?

Research objective 1: To identify the recently founded grid owner companies in Germany.

Research question 2: What are typical legal structures of grid owner companies in Germany?

Research objective 2: To analyze the legal structures of grid owner companies in Germany.

Research question 3: Is there a relationship between the percentage of ownership and the net income of a grid owner company?

Research objective 3: To examine the relationship between the percentage of ownership and the net income of a grid owner company.

Research question 4: What are typical accounting principles of grid owner companies in Germany?

Research objective 4: To analyze typical accounting principles of grid owner companies in Germany.

Value of paper

The research will contribute to the understanding of the practical phenomenon of grid owner companies from a general theoretical perspective. The author aims to find out whether and how public-private partnerships, especially grid owner companies, could become an attractive option for municipalities to resolve their financial problems. One important hypothesis of the research will be that a grid owner company is a strategic means to generate municipal revenues and to reduce municipal deficit. Furthermore, the search aims at showing the influence of grid owner companies on decision-makers in companies and institutions. Moreover, the research attempts to contribute to knowledge by providing a basis for a quantitative and financial analysis of different types of grid owner companies.

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Dualistic passion and the development of talent in the Swiss textile industry

Peter Preisig

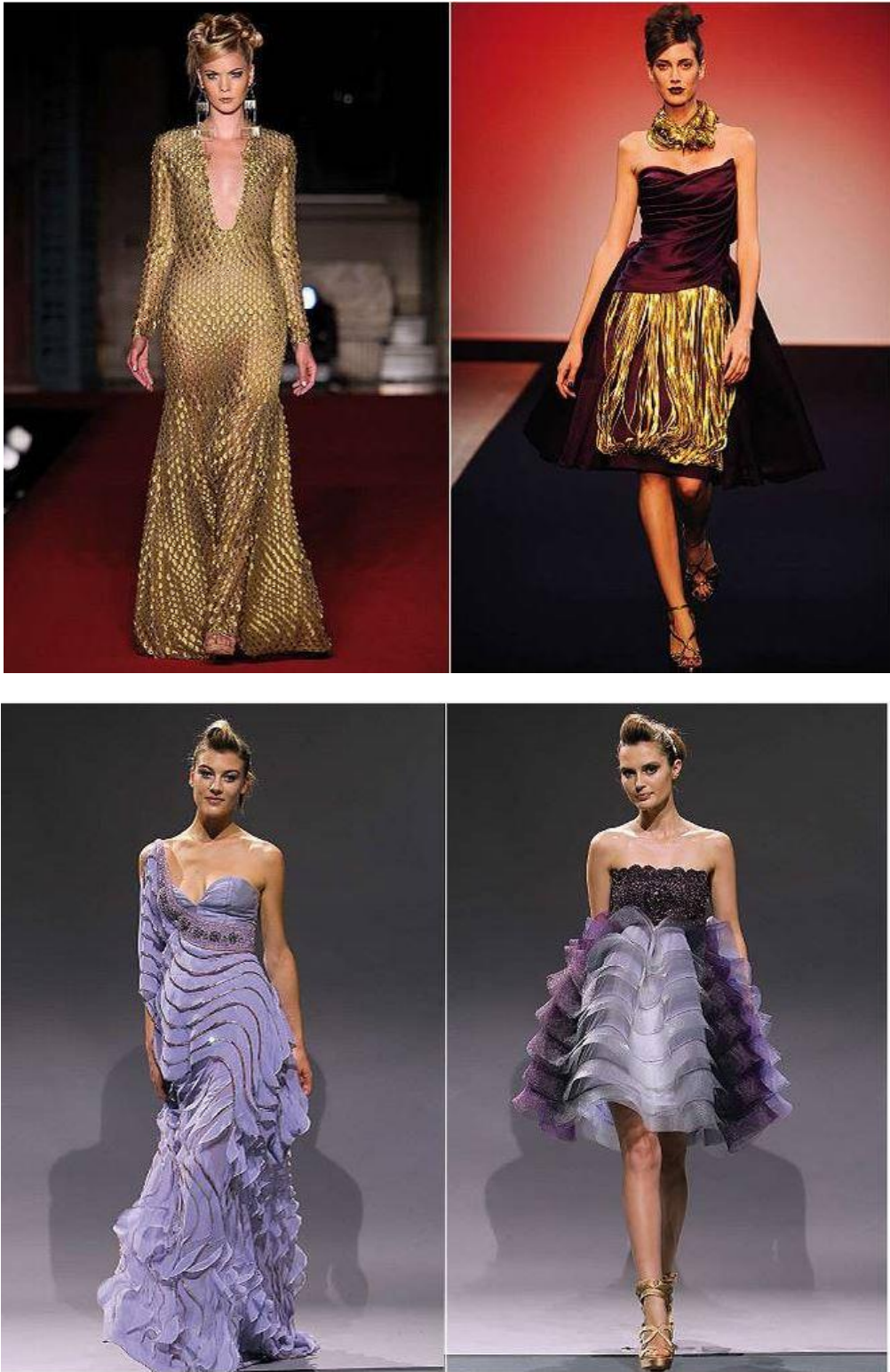


Figure 1 Textiles by Filtex Ltd.

Abstract

As with most industries in the world the textile industry struggles to get, retain and develop new talent. This research looks into the possibility to improve talent management in this industry with the factor of 'passion'. Choosing a soft factor like passion as a key ingredient pays tribute to the growing discussion about work-life balance. The process of talent management in this research starts at recruitment and ends in the steady development of talent in the companies including employer branding. Using the dualistic model of passion this research will determine what kind of passion exists in selected textile companies (Vallerand et al., 2003). From there I will explore possible ways to enhance the positive effect of passion in the management of new talent.

Question 1: What is passion at work?

Objective: To define passion using the dualistic passion model

Question 2: Why do feel people passionate about their work with textiles?

Objective: To examine passion in the context of the textile industry

Question 3: What elements can enhance passion in the development process of new talent in our industry?

Objective: To identify elements which have the potential to contribute to build and encourage harmonious passion in the development process of new talent

Keywords: talent, passion, talent management, employer branding, dualistic model of passion

Purpose of the paper

Developing talent within a company has always been a taxing endeavour. Due to globalisation and the diminishing weight of the industry it gets even more difficult to get the right people for the job.

War for talent as Ed Michaels called it is a global fight for talent in a relatively small pool of potential candidates (Michaels, Handfield-Jones, & Axelrod, 2001). For a niche industry like the textile industry it is not possible to compete with financial and fringe benefits.

Employer branding is one of the possible methods for a company to get more attention (Ambler & Barrow, 1996; Barrow & Mosley, 2005). In order to compete with the bigger companies and their waste resources, SMEs have to look for other ways to get and retain the right people. What is needed is a longer lasting element that enables talented people to excel in their job and at the same time feel good about it.

This is where the concept of **passion** comes into play. Authors like Boverie/Kroth have shown that even tedious work can get transformed into something worthwhile with the right attitude (Boverie & Kroth, 2001). The emotional factor can make the difference between a good employee and a talent. While motivation and enthusiasm are rather short lived passion is more of an attitude that can last through a whole work-life. With the help of the dualistic passion model of Robert Vallerand it is possible to determine to what extent passion exists in a company and its nature.

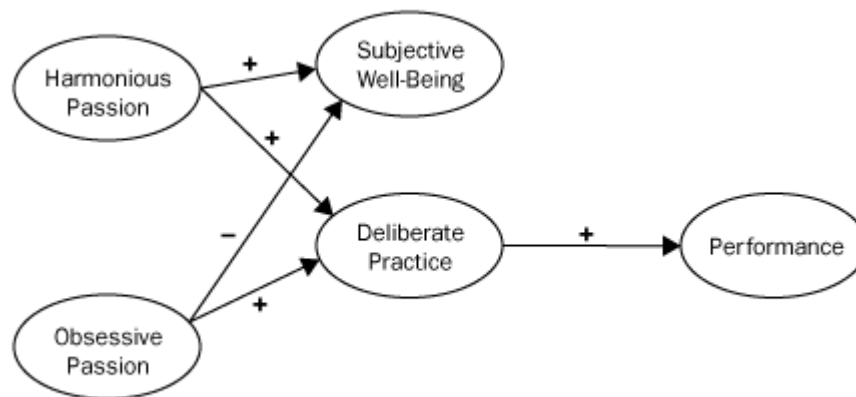


Figure: the Passion & Performance basic Model(R. Vallerand)

Figure 2 Dualistic passion model by R. Vallerand

The aim of this study is to contribute to a better understanding of the factor passion that allows the textile industry to use passion as a driver in its talent management.

Design/Method/Approach

I will approach this study in a more active role. The central parts of this research are the employees and their view of the world. Passion at work is something that derives from an employee's attitude towards his job. This also leads to a subjective stance as the researcher is part of the system he is going to look at.

Therefore being close to the participants of the study will be essential. A constructivist stance will enable the researcher to look into the actual work environment. Being interested in the motivations of my participants leads me to an abductive strategy in a bottom-up approach. Abductive strategy allows the research to look at the everyday activities and language of the social actors. The ontology of the idealist might describe the intentions of this study most accurately. Most of the primary data will be sampled through different kinds

of communication which leads to the paradigm of critical theory represented by authors like Habermas (Blaikie, 2000).

Preferred methods of research will be a **survey, focus groups** and **interviews**. A survey referring to the dualistic passion model in the participating companies will be the starting point of the study. Focus groups will serve as a forum to discuss and also revise findings that the ongoing study will produce. Interviews will add in-depth discussions.

Participants of the focus groups: new talent, future new talent, teachers, parents, advisers

Participants of the interviews: role models, teachers, parents, new talent, company representatives

Focus groups will serve as the main tool for gathering data as they will meet regularly during the research phase. With the help of this forum the researcher will be able to constantly work on his findings with the participants. This leads to an active role of the participants during the study. Using different techniques like the Socratic Method will lead to fruitful discussions (Carvalho-Grevious, 2013; Maxwell, 2009).

Essential interview partners will also be role models that the researcher can identify with the help of the dualistic passion model. Interviews will also give the participants the possibility to talk about more sensitive subjects that can't be discussed in the group. Interview partners can also be part of a focus group but not necessarily. Interviewing experts from outside will ensure that the study does not get too one-sided in just one corner of one industry.

Ethical standards in this study must be held high as passion and its drivers are very personal and may touch sensitive areas. Researcher and participants will enter a constant dialogue in that matter to ensure the right of privacy for each of them. Guide-lines will ensure that the participants are aware of their rights and the correct proceedings within this research. Material out of discussions and interviews will always be verified and edited by the participants or experts.

Findings

Pilot discussions have showed me that passionate people can enable talents to thrive. During those discussions participants emphasized the importance of role models and the way they defined their passion at work. The trend could go to a more individual approach when developing talent. Different people need different factors that lead them to passion at work.

At this stage it is too early to tell but there seems to be a fair amount of passionate employees that participants view as potential role models. Looking at these employees might be a good starting point for research.

Research limitations/implications

At this stage it is recommended that after this study a pilot in the field should try to implement the framework into the existing talent management. A field study would show how a change could be achieved. Due to a limited time horizon this study will not go into action research.

Practical implications

First discussions have shown that the existing talent management systems would have to adapt to the more emotional factors. In practice this could mean a more flexible system that treats employees as individuals. Individual career plans instead of uniform training sessions for all.

Social implications

The attitude of the companies towards their employees should change from human factor to humans. Improving the situation of the employee by making individual career plans must lead to an emancipation of the employee (McWilliams & Siegel, 2001). Quality of life should improve as people should feel passionate about their work. The companies will benefit from this shift of focus in the long run as a passionate employee will deliver better results on a constant level.

Value of the paper

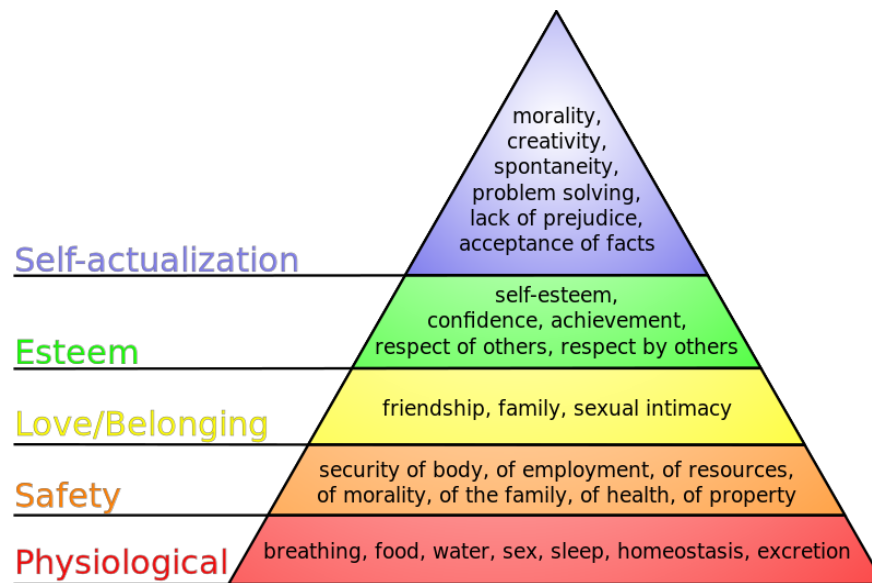


Figure 3 Pyramid Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Most of the talent management systems still operate on the level of financial and fringe benefits. With the introduction of the passion concept, the employee should get a more active role. Especially the textile industry with its emotional products should be able to tap their already existing source of passion and use it to their advantage in the war for talent.

This study will help companies to adapt their talent management to today's lifestyle. Looking at Maslow's pyramid in the western hemisphere I am looking at the peak in terms of meaning, fulfilment (Stum, 2001).

The outcome of this paper can be useful to other industries and companies as well. Passion lies in the eyes of the beholder and does not require an interesting product per se.

List of tables

Figure 1 Textiles by Filtex Ltd.

Figure 2 Dualistic passion model by R. Vallerand

Figure 3 Pyramid Maslow's hierarchy of needs

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Ethical issues for insider action researchers in the context of lean implementation

Michael Rose

Abstract

Purpose of the paper: As a professional who is in charge of implementing lean, I seek to share my perceived interrelations of ethical issues in lean implementation (LI) through applying the methodological approach of action research (AR). This paper seeks to draw attention to such issues to research and raise awareness of concerned managers and their practice.

Design/methodology/approach: Besides issues why LI might fail, contextual challenges for internal AR and corresponding ethical issues are discussed.

Findings: The manner in which lean is implemented influences its success. Based on my dual role as both a professional and a researcher, I consider AR as an appropriate tool. Joint action of a cooperative enquiry of AR may help to overcome resistance against change and LI. Personal, organizational, and political issues require attention to consider ethical concerns.

Research limitations: My entrepreneurial thinking, as well as being internal to the organization, may induce conflicts of interest due to my expected role as researcher.

Practical implications: The posed questions may help other researchers to become more sensitive to possible conflicts emerging from various stakeholders expectations.

What is original/value of paper: The issues addressed accentuate the need for the action researcher to consider ethical, personal, professional and managerial issues for both researchers and practitioners who actively participate in AR or daily routines.

Purpose of the paper

Recognizing personal involvement and possible tensions which might arise when conducting participatory approaches like AR, this paper seeks to address potential issues with which action researchers might be confronted. Based on my professional role as someone who is in charge of LI, and as a researcher who deploys internal AR, I want to share my experiences raise colleagues' awareness of possible emerging ethical issues.

Most authors understand lean more as a philosophy, a mind-set, and a cultural change and attitude rather than as a pure set of tools (Achanga, Shehab et al. 2006, Anvari, Zulkifli et al. 2010, Rother 2010) which focuses on the elimination of waste throughout a product's entire value stream (Scherrer-Rathje, Boyle et al. 2009). Such change cannot be reached merely by implementing lean tools and techniques (Achanga, Shehab et al. 2006, Anvari, Zulkifli et al. 2010). Hence, lean penetrates the entire organization from top management to front line operators as an integrated socio-technical system (Anvari, Zulkifli et al. 2010).

Whilst Womack, Jones et al. (1990) popularized the term lean, their findings neglected to detail how to become a lean organization. Despite the abundance of literature since their early work, the many failures in LI indicate a lack of knowledge about necessary environmental prerequisites (Naylor, Naim et al. 1999, Cooney 2002). Human issues seems to be crucial in LI but are often neglected (Furlan, Vinelli et al. 2011, Losonci, Demeter et al. 2011). Several authors identified barriers in LI which may help to understand the problems encountered: executive, cultural, management, implementation and technical issues (Esfandyari and Osman 1997, Mejabi 2003, Taleghani 2010). Hence, the nature of success factors in lean implementation seem to be related to culture, philosophy, vision, respect, skills, involvement, and commitment of management and employees, focus on people, use of tools and change management (Achanga, Shehab et al. 2006, Liker and Hoseus 2008, Anvari, Zulkifli et al. 2010, Angelis, Conti et al. 2011, Arlbjørn and Freytag 2013).

According to (Mann 2009), only 20% of the effort in LI is focused on tools and techniques - 80% is needed to change a company's' philosophy, culture and principles. These issues indicate the need for someone who is able to manage LI, e.g. a facilitator with a holistic view considering the above mentioned issues simultaneously. Given these issues, the facilitator

plays a major role for a successful and sustainable LI which is hard to accomplish for a single manager but requires a broad participation and activity from inside the organisation. This seems particularly true when considering that only 2–20 % of all lean approaches are estimated to be successful (Sohal 1994, Mora 1999, Ransom 2001).

Methodology and approach

As Taylor, Taylor et al. (2013) summarize, the involvement of employees in LI has been neglected. As lean is described as a set of principles and practices, my vision of a successful LI involve different levels of operations from top management to shop floor operators. This cross-hierarchical approach might help to develop, establish, maintain, and sustain a lean mind-set and culture. Schonberger (2007) conflates, that companies excessively rely on consultants without having an appropriate internal depth of knowledge and employee involvement. Hence, participatory approaches like AR provides a valuable long term basis for successful LI grounded on participation of all hierarchies involved. The sustainability of LI building on collaborative action, reflection, reporting, and learning, as provided by AR, seems promising. Since LI-failures are predominately related to non-technical but social phenomena, I insinuate AR embracing LI by mutual respect and multiple expertise of employees contrasting a pure top down commanded, tool based approach. The findings of Losonci, Demeter et al. (2011) that learning, participation, perception, and human issues of shop-floor operators as enablers of lean support my suggestion, too.

AR is of reflective, collaborative and interventionist nature (Riordan 1995, Cooke and Wolfram Cox 2005) and enables me answering what and why something happens from an internal perspective (Lewin 1946). Dick and Swepson (1997) point out, that AR intends to achieve both action (change) and research which informs change. The cyclical, iterative process that consists of plan-act-observe-reflect (McTaggart and Kemmis 1988) serves my dual role as both professional and researcher, too. My AR-approach intends to tackle and improve the working environment for both, employees and employer, initiating change by asking questions about issues that should be improved. This serves as basis for identifying and analysing areas of action, how to tackle, measure, or improve these areas, etc. as joint action. In this context and based on my dual role, I need to balance out necessary change, politics and my future career perspectives against diametrically research or ethical

requirements (Coghlan and Brannick 2009). The issue that AR is a process with unknown or uncontrollable outcome (Barton, Stephens et al. 2009) and Mumford's (2001) remark that AR first serves the group, may contrast the willingness of managers to fund and deploy AR. However, my familiarity with different hierarchies, stakeholders, and setting, as well as job responsibility, previous work results, and the belief of management that LI improves competitiveness should facilitate funding for the AR. Recognising Polanyi's (1967) statement of tacit knowledge and the concept of Argyris and Schön (1974) about theory in use and espoused theory, AR seems appropriate to capture issues and improvements that will be hidden without cross-hierarchical involvement.

The ethical quandary for insider action researchers

As action researcher I expect to immerse in people's day-to-day affairs by seeing first-hand, how people grapple with uncertainty, how meanings, interpretation, and participation emerge, e.g. caused by participants injected improvements (Mascia-Lees, Sharpe et al. 1989, Schrijvers 1991).

AR alternates between collaborative action, experience, and critical reflection (Kolb 1984). If the experience of active participation and contributions to lean leads to a backlog of work, resulting in layoffs or other individually-interpreted punishments, then how does this affect LI and active participation? Such experiences inevitably affect trust in active participation in LI. Furthermore, this addresses ethical questions and dilemmas for me as a researcher as well which I am not sure how to cope with. This is especially true when considering the aspect that LI deals primarily with cultural issues and mind-set. Thus, distribution of benefits and savings correspond to adequate or inadequate management action. As Checkland and Holwell (1998) underline, change becomes the subject of the research where the researcher becomes participant of the setting. Thus, I am part of the change process (Eden and Huxham 1996) and strongly embedded in the setting which addresses core questions of objectivity, neutrality, participation, reflexivity, role duality, self-awareness, and ethics.

The above mentioned lack of lean knowledge inside organisations (Schonberger 2007) requires familiarization of at least some participants with the concept of lean. Management needs to budget and fund the necessary training and participation of participants. In

general, management only grant funding if they anticipate reasonable return on invest (ROI) and AR to fulfil their particular expectations. First, this contrasts the nature of AR as an evolutionary, emerging process without pre-specified ends which contradicts an expected detailed and advanced scheduling of LI. Moreover, the different expectations of involved stakeholders and the nature of AR will inevitably elevate conflicting interests between my researcher-self and my professional-self, e.g. practical, political, and ethical issues. It seems likely that attention of ethical and methodological requirements as action researcher may challenge lived practice and various stakeholder expectations or requirements interrelated to my dual role and the intended insider AR.

Brydon-Miller (2008) points out, that despite the unifying element of shared sets of values in AR, intersecting complex settings (like LI) with various stakeholders haunting competing sets of interests and moral convictions will influence attempts to achieve overall positive change. However, the understanding of what one regards as positive is inevitably linked to someone's standpoint. This may be rooted in contradictory sets of values, different shareholder's expectations, individual and community identity, internal relationships, dependencies, unilateral maximization of benefits, disempowerment and control of those whose actions challenge established systems, power or privilege distance. These issues contradict the notion of a democratic AR-process and equal benefits and opportunities for all participants involved. Because researchers and professionals (like myself) do not exist in isolation from environmental influences (Brydon-Miller 2008) critical reflection and the application of critical management theory could cause considerable ethical, political and professional issues, especially, if the funding agent of the AR is the company or management itself.

My predominant dilemma is that management wants to become a lean company based on anticipated benefits. Aiming this, employees should, or even must, participate in the process of becoming a lean company to establish and maintain lean. Suggestions for improvements and corresponding results from deliberate participation of front line operators do not necessarily serve their interests. Hence, I am the executing hand of the management seeking participation from the employees, but I feel obliged to maintain participants' well-being. The well-being of the employees may not be the major concern of the management at all. Due

to various expectations and my dual role I need to execute or take decisions for the management and myself as researcher which might go contrary to the interest of the very people affected and involved in the process. At least, this is the dilemma that I don't know how to deal with yet.

Imagine that a team of front line operators identifying plenty of approaches to improvements, e.g. £250 k in material savings and £100 k in time savings. Depending on the organizational culture and prevalent mind-set of management, at least two different directions how to distribute benefits/economisation of the team are possible. One option is to save the whole amount of £350 k which could include equivalent lay-offs of £100 k (e.g. two operators to full costs). In principle, this opposes my understanding of lean management and cause discomfort to both my research and professional selves which evoke ethical, professional, and researcher conflicts. The other option might balance out the improvements between the team and management by recognizing and distributing the identified benefits. In this notion, an alternative scenario could be to invest the saved process time (or employee-equivalent of £100 k) for more in-depth investigation for the future to identify and eliminate additional waste in the sense of lean. This will elevate the willingness of active participation by recognizing lean as mutual beneficial philosophy.

Depending on the stakeholder's point of view, the different options might be perceived as reasonable or makes someone feel hard done-by. The option of unilateral benefit will inevitably enforce the perception of lean as a synonym to bail jobs and nip LI in the bud. LI and active participation is then perceived as deterrence and punishment which will embitter future cooperation to eliminate waste and participation in lean activities based on feelings of self-rationalization.

In this context, further ethical attention should be given to activities of recruiting, involvement of stakeholders, training, reporting, promoting, publishing, reviewing, advocating, challenging, and creating collaborative change, which are the substance of the AR-routines. The particular form and dynamics of the aforementioned aspects will inevitably impact organisational practice, ethics, performance and results of individuals and the community. Some ethical core requirements and discussion, e.g. as exemplary fixed in the Belmont report (Biomedical and Behavioral Research 1978) or the RESC, address possible

fields of tension to my intended insider AR. Possible conflicts of different stakeholder requirements are discussed below.

Ethical principles	Description of ethical core requirements based extracts of the Belmont Report
I1 Respect for persons	Individuals should be treated as autonomous agents
I2 Beneficence	Who is the beneficent of the research and how beneficence is distributed
I3 Justice	Involve affected persons which are among the beneficiaries
I4 Informed consent	Subjects should be informed about the reserach which should be the basis for voluntary participation
I5 Assessment of risk and benefits	Balance possible benefits and risks by trying to maximize benefit and minimize harm
I6 Subjects	No unfair inclusion or exclusion of researchers participants and focus on protection to individuals and groups

The respectful treatment of people as autonomous persons (I1-Respect for persons) could be antagonized by a predominant spokesman or executive. This issue seems to be strongly linked to the willingness and ability of participants to take responsibility, participate actively, and contribute own ideas to help advance a status quo. As I have experienced, the absence of active participation lead to the situation that some participants become opinion leader to fulfill given objectives in a determined period of time or due to their rank. Latest discussions with colleagues (usually opinion leaders) indicate that this is associated with losing respect to people and trust in participation, which illustrates the dominance of meritocracy and management culture. On the other hand, the interpreted lack of passion and engagement of passive bystanders addresses questions, why people do not participate, how to encourage them, what is needed to stimulate active contributions and if someone is allowed to arrogate active participation from involved people? Serious ethical and political contrasts may arise when reporting non-participation of members to management (professional-self) which oppose the maxim of voluntary participation and exit from the setting without consequences. Based on experiences in my setting, there seem to be an accumulated need for valuing each workers opinion, giving affected people a voice and pushing cross-functional capability in a “sheltered area of esteem” to foster participation. Noffke (2009) points out, the professional dimension like power structure or distribution is also important and might affect issues of participation and respect for people.

The issue of beneficence (I2) and assessment of benefit and risk (I5) might cause controversy between stakeholder stances. While many managers tend to justify the company as main beneficiary of changes, which leads to the invariable distribution of benefits and cost savings to the company, participants from the shop floor may feel ignored, aggrieved, and exploited which presumably influence the issue of respect for persons and future participation. The

question how to balance out stakeholder, researcher and professional expectations (e.g. how entrepreneurial thinking can be combined with social justice), and how they affect, sustain and maintain LI should be answered in further research. As shown by Taylor, Taylor et al. (2013), adequate reward as a sign of participation can vary from public recognition, bonus systems, gratifications or long term job security. Rector-Aranda (2014) linked the assessment of risk and harm with consequences for participants expressing their voice and evaluating the repercussions of their study. She refers to the frequently accompanied pressure from within the organization as reaction to unpleasant findings especially for practitioner researchers. Likewise the issue of publicizing unpopular findings can lead to immense challenges for researchers – in particular when the affected company can be traced back by the practitioner researcher. Further harm to participants may correlate, if published findings infringe data secrecy or obligation of confidentiality. Similar to whistle blowing, moral conflicts and legal consequences may arise. Likewise, own experiences put the issue of justice (I3) and subjects (I6) on the agenda. Depending on power distance or relationships between stakeholders, the process of involving affected people as well as the (un)fair inclusion or exclusion of participants should be evaluated critically. Depending on objectives to be pursued, the conviction of management to know best what is convenient for employees, high pressure of time, unwanted meddling of minorities or participants, individuals or groups run the risk to be deliberately excluded from participation. Such issue can arise in hostile atmospheres, e.g. based on personal antipathy between single managers which have an effect and impact on the cooperation between departments, functions or hierarchies. The significance of information as a source of power, highlight the provision and distribution of information as major concern to ethical attention, too. Especially the issue of who is allowed to distribute what kind of information at what time to other participants, can cause serious trouble and may affect funding as well.

Conclusion

An AR-based LI drawing on internal facilitation might have better chances of being successful. But ethical principles – especially for internal action researchers like me – need to be kept in mind. Professionals conducting an embedded internal research should be sensitive to ethical, political, personal, and professional dimensions which may affect

oneself, participants and the whole organization. The contextual embedment, situational or lived praxis, relations and relationship in or to the setting, involved people, and the role of actors of change requires careful attention to avoid harm for participants. Further investigations should address core questions in the field of perspective of the researcher as change agent for LI, what to divulge about attitudes and values of involved stakeholders, the self, and the company. Dilemmas, caused by different stakeholder requirements and how they might affect respect for people, democratic processes, beneficence, justice, shared values, and morally committed action should be considered in insider AR practices. The emerging nature of AR and change, originated by affected participants, should be evaluated critically adverse to established practice of anticipated ends determined by management.

Based on the mentioned barriers to LI and ethical issues, simultaneous management of these issues are required to be successful. Thus, I believe that the predominant, omnipotent but often overestimated role of a single facilitator as saviour and the prevalent top-down approach of LI must be challenged. I understand LI as bottom-up philosophy that considers concerns and ideas of affected employees. The prevalent manager view that supervisors know best how to implement lean without involving shop-floor employees do not create a mutually beneficial LI. A pure top-down implementation includes the risk that employees who are faced with a *fait accompli* will only do what they are told. Staff, who are expected to contribute experience, participation or creativity actively, should be involved from the very first by recognizing ethical issues.

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Ethical consumer decision making – a research approach to understand how desired benefits relate to ethical values in holiday planning.

Steffen Sahm

Abstract

Environmental and ethical aspects have become increasingly important for holidaymakers in Germany. The latest *Reiseanalyse*¹ (FUR, 2014) defined 28 percent of the German population as sustainability-interested, i.e. stating that their holiday should be ecologically and socially sustainable (FUR 2014). The results of the *Reiseanalyse* also indicate that there is a gap between environmental concerns and action resulting in a major proportion of consumers who do not translate their concerns behavior.

The aim of this research is to create a *values-benefit model* based on a prolonged analysis and understanding of ethical consumers' holiday planning. The model will link ethical values to desired benefits in holiday planning and decision making. From a practical perspective, understanding the meaning of desired benefits, and how these relate to ethical values will provide sustainable tourism suppliers with knowledge to improve their communication strategies and offerings by making their offerings more meaningful for ethical consumers (Reynolds and Gutman, 1984) and better satisfy their needs (Weeden, 2008). Working within an interpretive paradigm, a multi-method prolonged naturalistic approach is proposed in order to gain a deep understanding of ethical consumers' holiday decision making.

Introduction:

The current *Reiseanalyse* (FUR, 2014) defines 28% of the German population as sustainability-interested in a holiday context. But only a small proportion actually translates their concerns into behavior: 2% state that sustainable criteria were the central criteria on which they based their decision in their last holiday (equates to 1.1 million). Another 2%

¹ The „*Reiseanalyse*“ is a representative yearly survey in Germany covering consumers' holiday behavior, attitudes, and future planning.

state that sustainable factors were pivotal when choosing between two offerings and another 11% stated that sustainability was one factor, among others, in their holiday design. Barriers for not choosing a sustainable alternative were additional costs, more information needed when designing a sustainable holiday, and one third stated that there is a lack of sustainable offerings (FUR, 2014).

Apart from these barriers, the gap between concerns and behavior might have several other reasons. First, attitudes have been criticized for being poor predictors of behavior (Pearce and Packer, 2013; Weeden, 2014). Second, a social desirability bias has been reported in research covering ethical or sustainable themes (Peattie, 2010). Third, as people are driven by several personal values (not only ethical ones), they will decide on the values most important to them (Rokeach, 1973; Steg et al, 2012) or as Fennell (2006) describes, ethical tourism is a compromise between hedonic, social and environmental concerns which are often conflicting in nature.

Ethical values and their influence on holiday planning/ decision making

The influence of personal values on consumer behavior is recognized in several theoretical frameworks (Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1994; Stern, 2000), vacation tourist behaviour (Moutinho, 1987) as well as empirically supported for ethical tourists (Weeden, 2014). Ethical consumers have been characterized by their concerns for environmental or social issues, animal rights, and/or fair trade (Weeden 2014). The underlying personal values of such concerns are universalism and benevolence (Schwartz, 1994; Weeden, 2008), or altruistic and biospheric values (Stern, 2000).

The aim of this research is to understand how ethical values influence the desired benefits ethical consumers seek when planning their holidays. The mentioned theories and frameworks which relate personal values to decision making will be matched with “*Why we buy, what we buy*” (Sheth et al, 1991) in the next paragraph.

Why consumers buy – value and benefits

Consumer decision making in tourism is described as goal-oriented behavior which is influenced by a perception and evaluation of alternatives by the consumer (Moutinho ,

1987). Consumers weight alternative offerings based on their beliefs and evaluation, which of the offerings' attributes will satisfy best their expected benefits (Moutinho, 1987) or contribute to realizing the consumer's personal goals (Woodruff, 1997).

Research on benefits from the consumers' view is conceptualized within the "value" literature in marketing. "Give versus get" approaches (see also Zeithaml, 1988) measure value by comparing the trade-off between benefits (get) and sacrifices (give). Others (Holbrook, 1999; Sheth et al, 1991) have developed multi-dimensional constructs focusing on several get-components (benefits). Multi-dimensional approaches have their roots in behavioral psychology (Sánchez-Fernandez and Iniesta-Bonillo, 2007) and consider cognitive as well as affective dimensions. Holbrook (1999) developed the most comprehensive framework consisting of eight benefit/value types which not only consider quality or status, but also cover hedonic benefits (e.g. play/fun). Furthermore, Holbrook (1999) and others (Woodruff and Gardial, 1996; Vargo and Lusch, 2004) stress the contextual nature of benefits, e.g. different benefits desired due to different travel parties.

Empirical findings from the literature

The most relevant empirical findings concerning ethical tourists (Malone, 2012; Weeden, 2008) provide deep insights into what kinds of benefits or experiences ethical consumers derive from their holidays. Furthermore, both PhD theses provide extensive insights into how ethical values influence holiday decision making (Weeden, 2008), or the hedonic benefits derived from the holiday experiences (Malone, 2012). On the other hand, they only deliver snapshots (i.e. only considering one holiday) and therefore do not provide insights into the contextual nature of benefits.

Other empirical research focuses just on one single decision within holiday planning and how this relates to personal values, e.g. destination choice (Klenoski, 2002; Klenoski et al, 1993) and do not take into account the multiple decisions involved in travel planning. Furthermore, pro-environmental behavior is not always an indicator for ethical values as behavior might stem from egoistic motivations (Stern 2000), e.g. benefits due to smaller group sizes (Fennell, 2006). This questions research which applied sampling based on

behavior, e.g. segmenting visitors to Belize (Palacio, 1997) and analyzing the benefits they expected.

Therefore, the current knowledge of ethical consumers' holiday decision making provides only a small and fragmented insight into the heuristics ethical consumers apply, especially concerning the multidimensional and contextual nature of benefits. Furthermore, several researchers have called for a longitudinal approach to gain a better understanding of ethical consumers (tourists) holiday planning (Martin and Woodside, 2008; McGuiggan, 2004; 2008; Weeden, 2008). Such an approach will enhance the trustworthiness of the outcome (Wallendorf and Belk, 1989).

Methodology & methods

Working within a constructivist paradigm, the methodological approach is exploratory in nature. Based on the gap in the current literature, a prolonged engagement covering two in-depth interviews with a consumer diary in between is planned. This approach aims at understanding why ethical consumers form their benefit judgments and decisions in two travel planning contexts per participant. Such an approach will deliver deep insights into the contextual nature of benefits, the meaning of benefits, and how benefits relate to ethical values.

Purposive sampling will be applied, including self-declared ethical consumers. Access to participants will be sought through sustainable trade fairs or magazines and online communities covering environmental and social issues. I will aim at a sample size of 20 participants as several sources indicate that most themes emerge within 20 interviews (Green and Thorogood, 2009, as cited by Mason, 2010; Guest et al, 2006).

The first semi-structured interview aims at identifying the personal values and how these became apparent in the last holiday planning. The interview will follow the laddering technique from the means-end theory (Reynolds and Gutman, 1988). Connecting personal values to product attributes and the benefits consumers derive from those attributes is embedded in means-end theory (Gutman, 1982) and Woodruff and Gardial's (1996) value hierarchy. Consumers search for product attributes from which they derive benefits. Following benefits, one step further in the hierarchy are personal values which are of

motivational character (Woodruff and Gardial, 1996), influencing the benefits below on the ladder.

Participants will be asked to reflect on the most important attributes of their last holiday planning. The ladder starts with the attributes mentioned by participants and advances for each attribute through repeated questioning “*Why is that important to you?*” or “*What does that mean to you?*” (Woodruff and Gardial, 1996: 179), leading up the ladder towards the benefits and personal values (Weeden, 2008). Based on the initial in-depth interviews, structured paper and pencil diaries will be given out. The diary aims at documenting the holiday planning process of participants’ next holiday and the product attributes searched for. As travel planning covers several micro-decisions, a diary will provide the basis for more accurate descriptions (Nezlek, 2012).

Within the final stage of travel planning (about to book or just having booked), a final in-depth laddering interview with participants will be conducted. The diary entries will be the basis for this final interview as they help participants to recall their decisions.

Data and data analysis:

Qualitative data will be analyzed using an interpretive approach. An initial set of codes for content analysis will be derived from the conceptual frameworks of Schwartz (1994) for personal values, and Holbrook (1999) for benefits, as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994). Those initial codes will be used as guiding frames, not forcing data into those categories. The transcribed interviews will be coded for attributes, benefits, and values (Weeden, 2008). A summary table documents how often single attributes, benefits, and values were mentioned by all participants (Woodruff and Gardial, 1996). Furthermore, based on the sum of resulting ladders (attributes -> benefits -> values), a summary for each interview with all single ladders (Reynolds and Gutman, 1988) will be created.

Based on the data from both interviews per participant, the results will be compared between the first and second interview to discern similarities or differences in order to analyze the contextual nature of benefits. The resulting benefit categories and values types will be described in detail and supported by probes of participants. The results of all interviews and participants will be presented in a Hierarchical Value Map (Reynolds and

Gutman, 1988). This group hierarchical value map combined with the thick descriptions and meanings of benefit and the underlying personal values will be the basis for the development of the resulting values-benefit model.

Conclusion

The literature review has identified several gaps within current knowledge. First, there is very little evidence in ethical consumers' holiday planning, especially from a holistic perspective (covering all micro-decisions involved in travel planning). Second, the existing research base does not provide insights into the contextual nature of benefits. The proposed approach will close this gap by a prolonged engagement with ethical consumers and their holiday planning.

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Exploring project commitment experiences: A constructivist approach

Michael Schaefer

Abstract

This paper introduces a constructivist research approach to explore personal commitment experiences of individuals involved in an international IT project in the European transmission system operator (TSO) industry for electricity.

It is proposed that commitment is constructed in people's minds rather than it is part of an existing external reality. This leads to idea that it can be reconstructed by project managers to enhance the overall project performance.

To get a deeper understanding of how commitment to a project is experienced by both, project team members and management, a case study shall be conducted. In the case given, an international IT project between 27 TSO, individuals shall be observed by the use of ethnography, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. As the study advocates an inductive approach, grounded theory shall deliver a substantive theory through going back and forth between data collection and analysis. The intended study aims to get new insights in the field of project management by enhancing the understanding why people commit to a project. Furthermore, the specific focus of a joint project in the TSO industry gives a reasonable chance of revealing original findings.

Abbreviations

DBA	Doctor of Business Administration
ENTSO-E	European Network of Transmission System Operators for Electricity
IT	Information Technology
TSO	Transmission System Operator

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to introduce a constructivist research approach for a planned DBA thesis to explore personal commitment experiences of individuals involved in an international IT project in the European transmission system operator (TSO) industry for electricity. It is proposed that commitment is constructed in people's minds rather than it is part of an existing external reality. This leads to idea that it can be reconstructed by project managers to enhance the overall project performance.

Practical Background

The interconnected European high voltage electricity transmission system is operated by a variety of TSO companies, who are in charge of the real-time operation to keep energy production and consumption in balance. In the light of the energy sector changing towards a coupled liberalized market and a low carbon energy production (European Commission, 2015a, 2015b), TSO continuously have to adapt their business IT to the new requirements of a coalescent market. Therefore, a growing number of IT systems are being moved from previously decentralized forms towards centralized solutions used and developed by two or more TSO.

To develop and introduce a new centralized IT system that is intended to support a cross TSO planning process, a project – the research case – has been initiated by the European TSO association for electricity (ENTSO-E). The project team is constituted of 20 members from two TSO (German and Swiss) and is supported by a working group with members from 25 other European TSO. Furthermore, the former two TSO are in charge of the project and consequently of meeting the performance targets. As project manager, the researcher is responsible for the day-to-day business and employed at the German TSO in charge.

Theoretical Frame

Since the development of an IT system has a unique character, project management is considered as an efficient approach of organizing activities, because it is capable to attain previously defined targets within an established time frame and budget (Project Management Institute, 2013; Snijders, Wuttke, & Zandhuis, 2014). However, despite established project management processes, a significant number of projects fail to meet the

performance targets by falling short of the goal for any success criteria of time, budget, and customer expectations (e.g. Iroanya, 2012; Latonio, 2007; Lindbergh, 2009; Shore, 2008; Yazici, 2009, 2011).

Project commitment describes the extent to which project members accept and believe in project goals and values, the willingness to engage, and the desire to be part of the project (Hoegl, Weinkauff, & Gemuenden, 2004, p. 40). Aubé, Brunelle, and Rousseau (2014, p. 123) suggested that committed team members are persistent in achieving activities despite hindrances and devote their cognitive and behavioural resources to achieve goals. In the context of IT projects, Korzaan (2009) argued that project team members, who are committed to time, budget, and goals, have a positive influence on project performance. Furthermore, there is a risk of project failure, if the project is lacking collective commitment to action and therefore managing commitment shall be one of the project manager's primary tasks (Culmsee & Awati, 2012).

The planned study will align theories of behaviour, teamwork, and goal commitment to gain a deeper understanding of how managers and project teams behaviours towards project commitment can help to achieve the balancing act of improving project performance in the triangle of time, budget, and customer expectations.

A Constructivist Research Philosophy

Constructivists suggest that social phenomena as commitment are not part of an existing external world, since they are rather constructed in people's minds. As a result, commitment does not have an objective and exterior existence and can be experienced differently by people involved in a certain process (Moses & Knutsen, 2012, p. 10), even so by members of a project team working closely together. This ontological view connotes that constructions of personal commitment do not have pre-existing characteristics and are rather subject to constant change over time, since they are not static objects of an external reality (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 21). Because of this changing nature of constructed realities, the constructivist researcher would argue that the meaning, which project members make of different project situations, is only valid at a certain point of time and context.

In line with this, Aliyu, Bello, Kasim, and Martin (2014) suggested knowledge accumulation in constructivism is a matter of “more informed and sophisticated reconstructions” and “vicarious experience”, rather than a process of adding building blocks to the edifice of knowledge (2014, p. 89). Additionally, Grix concluded that “the world does not exist independently of our knowledge of it” (Grix, 2004, as cited in Scotland, 2012, p. 11). Applying this on the research topic, knowledge about personal commitment is subject to fallibility and taken-for-granted realities shall be challenged by researchers, as alternative realities can exist (Cunliffe, 2008). Therefore, meaning that people make towards commitment to project objectives cannot be discovered, since it is constructed through interactions between members of a project-team and their environment. So it is understood that a constructivist research philosophy allow the idea of reconstructing people’s reality of personal commitment towards project objectives.

Research Design

Since the planned DBA study considers an intensive examination of people’s behaviours towards commitment in one major IT project, the case study design seems the most appropriate one. “The basic case study entails the detailed and intensive analysis of a single case” and is “concerned with the complexity and particular nature of the case in question” (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 59). Therefore, single case studies generally fit to a constructivist epistemology as they allow an in-depth view into one specific case.

Resting upon the constructivist belief that social reality is constructed and many truths are valid, the use of multiple methods seems reasonable to capture the complexity resulting from the different interpretations individuals make of various project situations.

For organizational studies, especially case studies, ethnography is suggested as an appropriate method of data collection for scholars working in the field as professionals (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Since the researcher, in his role as a professional project manager, is immersed in the ongoing project (the case), he has direct access to the organizational environment and is engaged in the project group’s regular interactions between the individuals. Through this method, it is planned to listen to conversations and observe

people's behaviours during project meetings and making written-up field notes for further analysis.

Beside observations, ethnographers may also collect data about the observed objects through documents (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Following this approach, email conversations, project reports, and other project documentation shall be considered as valuable data source to gain a better understanding of people's commitment towards projects and how it influences project performance. Considering that the researcher is a member of the researched organizations (the German TSO and ENTSO-E) since many years and has a day-to-day involvement in the project, he will be able to understand it from an insider's viewpoint as he is able to understand organizational and project values as well as workspace behaviours within the mentioned organizations.

In addition, semi-structured interviews shall be utilized for the intended thesis. This would allow the researcher to both keep a degree of flexibility as questions can be adapted to the interview process and giving some cornerstones of structure, (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Since the planned study aims to get a most complete picture of the case, it would be appropriate to interview a wide range of people in diverse project roles and organizational positions, which are project team members, line managers, project sponsors, and stakeholders. As a broad job range has to be covered, a sample size of approx. 20 individuals involved in the project seems reasonable to include members from each group.

Grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was designed as a method for theory development from qualitative data collected in the field (Charmaz, 2014). Therefore, its key concepts for data analysis shall not be ignored here. Central aspects of the approach are concepts and categories, which will be developed from the collected field data by the use of theoretical sampling and coding (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Related to the intended thesis, in a first step the researcher will collect data by the mentioned methods of ethnography and qualitative interviewing from the environment of the researched project. For this process, emphasis will be put on *comparative method* (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2012), which means considering same processes and events in the project from different viewpoints (e.g. how was a project kick off perceived by project members, sponsors and stakeholders). By *coding* the collected data, field notes and documents are labelled and

broken down into parts that seem to have theoretical significance, which then build concepts as a result (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 577). Between the coding and collecting of data there is a constant shifting forward and backward – an iterative process – and through *constant comparison* categories emerges on a higher abstraction level from the concepts until a state of saturation has been reached where new data don't bring further insights. According to (Bryman & Bell, 2011) in a next step, relationships between categories are examined giving provisional answers (hypotheses) to the research question and followed by further data collection used for testing the developed hypotheses in an iterative way, which leads to the specification of a substantive theory.

Conclusion

The constructivist research philosophy combined with case study research design and methods of ethnography, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis will provide an appropriate research framework to explore personal commitment experiences of individuals to gain a deep understanding of how people construct their reality of commitment to the case project. With this understanding, there is a reasonable chance to provide guidance for reconstructing people's commitment realities to improve the overall project performance and make a contribution to the research field of project management.

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Research Process 3.0 – When researchers meet the Semantic Web

Reto Schneider

Abstract

This paper presents an approach to integrate semantic web technologies (SWT) into a regular qualitative research project. The objectives for this approach are to better understand SWT on one hand and to evaluate the contribution of SWT enabled research to the qualitative rigour of the research process on the other hand. SWT allows knowledge to be made machine-readable. The research process therefore demands to develop ontologies and thesauri that reflect the researcher's knowledge, research process and research data. As part of the author's research project different thesauri and ontologies have been developed to assist literature review, methodology development, document and content analysis. The final thesis presentation and accompanying source data documentation will complete the SWT related part of the research project. It has been found that an SWT enabled research process can contribute to improved validity and reliability within the qualitative research process. However, those benefits come at the price of a noticeable additional effort as no tools and data sources are available that make SWT enabled research a convenient and efficient process in business administration.

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Introduction

This paper presents a methodological aspect of my DBA research project. The paper presents how semantic web technologies might support quality, effectiveness and efficiency of qualitative research in the near future.

The paper starts with the problem description. The description of the core characteristics of semantic web technologies (SWT) is followed a brief introduction of its application to research related information and knowledge management. Subsequently, I show how the semantic research process is going to be integrated into my research work. The paper closes with reflections on further work and contributions of SWT to the research process as such.

1. Background and Motivation

In my research project I am investigating tourism destination marketers' emergent problems with integrated marketing communication (IMC) in a social media driven environment (Minazzi, 2015). It has been identified recently that the issue of integration must be understood and investigated in a broader sense (Niemann-Struweg, 2014; Wolny, 2014). I therefore look at gaps around the concept of "integration" of data and processes, the key ingredients of digital communication. My intention is to evaluate the potential of semantic web technology (SWT) to solve marketers' existing or imminent problems with social media related IMC using soft systems theory (Checkland, 1999). With a constructionist worldview (Burr, 2007) I execute an explorative embedded, multiple-case use case study (Yin, 2009) with 5 major Swiss tourism destinations. The main methods I apply are netnography (Kozinets, 2010), focus groups (Stewart & Shamdasani, 2014), and document/content analysis (Mayring, 2014).

While doing my research work I recognized that the research process and the IMC process face some identic challenges. Those challenges are the fundamental aim of

knowledge creation and knowledge management(Sultan, 2013), an increasing digitization (Hand, 2014; Tiago & Veríssimo, 2014) and datafication (Lycett, 2013) of the process, and, as a consequence of the digitization, the challenge to achieve acceptable quality in working with a large amount of unstructured data (Lohmeier, 2014; Weinberg, Davis, & Berger, 2013).

In my research question I mention SWT as a potential solution for the above described challenges. As IMC and research processes nowadays face similar challenges one can derive that SWT might not only help marketers improve IMC but also researchers executing research projects. Thus, besides assessing the potential of SWT for IMC, I also want to make use of SWT in my research process. I expect that the combination of reflection on and application of SWT will improve my research project in three ways. Firstly, using SWT leads to a better understanding of SWT. Secondly, searching, finding and/or developing SWT tools provides me with an initial impression regarding the tools' utility or usability for tourism destinations. Thirdly, due to the characteristics of SWT, SWT enables me to make research data, procedures and results more traceable, retrievable and reusable. Thus, it contributes to the major dimensions of quality criteria relevant for my research approach (Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2013; Mayring, 2014; Yin, 2009).

2. Literature Review

"The Semantic Web is not a separate Web but an extension of the current one, in which information is given well-defined meaning, better enabling computers and people to work in cooperation." (Tim Berners-Lee, Hendler, & Lassila, 2001, p. 1). Simply said metadata ("data about data") is added to existing or new (web) documents. The additional metadata extends unstructured documents (web pages, pictures, word documents etc.) with machine- readable and interpretable structure (T. Berners-Lee, 2006; Rajabi, Sicilia, & Sanchez-Alonso, 2014).

The set of technologies that allows to add metadata and structure to documents is called semantic web technology (SWT). “SWT are data formats that can be used to encode knowledge for processing (relevant aspects of it) in computer systems, although the focus is on different forms of knowledge.” (Hitzler, Krotzsch, & Rudolph, 2011, p. 1). In recent years SWT research has been investigating amongst others the following areas of application: digital communication (El Mazoui Nadori, Erramdani, & Moussaoui, 2014; Kobilarov et al., 2009), Search Engine Optimization (Rovira, Codina, & Monistrol, 2013), web and text mining (Manuja & Garg 2011; Sauer & Roth-Berghofer, 2014) knowledge management (Gruber, 2008; Thomas & Sheth, 2011), network analysis (Mika, 2006), data integration (Passant, Laublet, Breslin, & Decker, 2010), reasoning (Hitzler, Krötzsch, Rudolph, & Sure, 2008) and web service management (Studer, Grimm, & Abecker, 2007). All the studies highlighted SWT potential to improve effectiveness and efficiency of data and information management.

The central concept of SWT are ontologies or ontology vocabularies. In philosophy, ontologies are “category systems that account for a certain view of the world” (Breitman, Casanova, & Truszkowski, 2010, p. 17). In the context of the Semantic Web ontologies are “an explicit specification of a conceptualization” (Gruber, 1993, p. 1) that enables “a shared understanding of some domain of interest” (Dengel, 2012, p. 64). The purpose of ontologies according to Dengel (2012) therefore are:

- Use shared concepts and symbols
- To make explicit a shared semantic
- To classify concepts
- To build relations between concepts
- To define rules and definitions for relations between concepts

Thus, ontologies are used to define domain knowledge. Ontologies can have different qualities from controlled vocabularies up to full-scale domain ontologies.

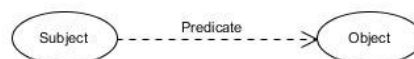
KNOWLEDGE REPRESENTED	Controlled Vocabulary	Glossary	Taxonomy	Thesaurus	Ontology
<i>Terms</i>	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Description</i>		X	X	X	X
<i>Formal Hierarchy</i>			X	X	X
<i>Informal Relations</i>				X	X
<i>Value and Logic Restrictions</i>					X

Table 1: Occurrences of Ontologies (see also appendix 1)

Whereas controlled vocabularies represent a simple list of terms, taxonomies represent hierarchical relationships between concepts. Thesauri in addition also allow non-hierarchical relationships between concepts and can represent for example synonyms and homonyms. Thus, thesauri can map conceptual relations such as “is part of”, “is similar to” and so on. Ontologies finally are able to define rules to concepts and relations. This in turn allows the implementation of machine-made intelligent reasoning. Ontologies are the best possible way in the Semantic Web to allow knowledge representation as well as knowledge inference (Joo, 2011).

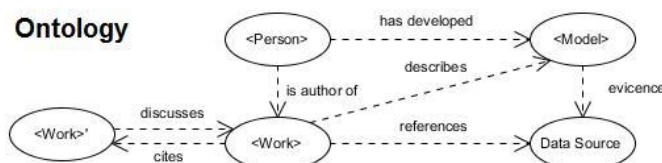
The basic element to represent knowledge in ontologies are “triples”. Triples consist of the three interlinked elements subject, predicate and object. Ontologies therefore are well-defined networks of triples. Furthermore, ontologies can be extended by either adding new triples to the existing ontology or by integrating existing ontologies or by mapping concepts of one ontology to concepts of another ontology. Below you find a simple example that shows how a literature review ontology could look like.

Principle

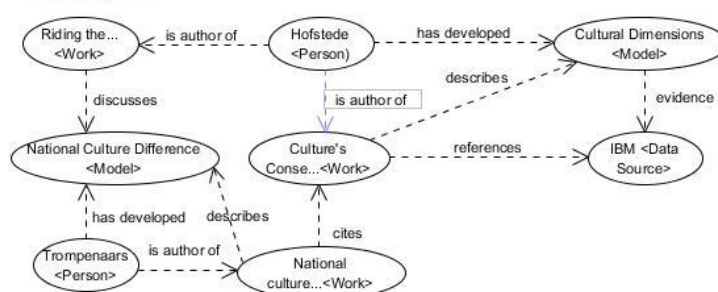


It starts with the basic element of any ontology, a generic triple.

Ontology



Example



A simple “literature review ontology” might for example consist of the concepts “people”, their “works”, reflected (conceptual) “models” and related “data sources”.

A literature review in the field of culture research possibly reviews different concepts developed by Hofstede and Trompenaars (Hofstede, 1996). That would lead to semantic metadata as depicted in the picture at the right.

Figure 1: Simple Ontology Example

A major advantage of extending (“annotating”) regularly written literature review with metadata according to the example above is that the annotations make the researchers’ findings and argumentations machine readable and therefore retrievable, automatically evaluable, testable, reusable and extendable by other researchers.

Using SWT as tool for researchers to gather, structure and analyse data in social sciences is a novel but promising approach. (Cheek, Kunz, Hatfield, & Ferguson, 2013; Halford, Pope, & Weal, 2012; McClure, 2011; Resnick, 2012; Shillum, 2014). Different research oriented ontologies have been developed over the last years. Most of them reuse basic ontologies that have already been used as metadata for digital documents or websites. The subsequent list briefly describes the most frequently used ontologies internet practice and research.

Abbr.	Name (Focus)	Sample Concepts	Link
FOAF	Friend of a Friend (People)	Person, Group	http://xmlns.com/foaf/spec/
SIOC	Semantically-Interlinked	Forum, Post	http://rdfs.org/sioc/spec/

	Online Communities (Online Communities)		
DC	Dublin Core (Documents)	Creator, Title	http://dublincore.org/documents/dces/
SKOS	Simple Knowledge Organization System (Knowledge Management)	Concept, narrower [Concept]	http://www.w3.org/TR/swbp-skos-core-spec
OG	Open Graph (facebook data)	Title, Image	http://ogp.me/
Schema.org	Schema.org (website metadata)	Event, Person, Place, Action	http://schema.org
Dbpedia	Dbpedia (Wikipedia)	University, TennisPlayer	http://mappings.dbpedia.org/server/ontology/classes

Table 2: General Purpose Ontologies

Abbr.	Name (Focus)	Sample Concepts	Dokumentation
FaBiO	FRBR aligned Bibliographic Ontology (Bibliography)	doctoral thesis, microblog, computer file, algorithm	http://purl.org/spar/fabio
CiTO	Citation Typing Ontology (Citation)	Document, cites	http://purl.org/spar/cito
DoCO	Document Components Ontology	Chapter, Paragraph, Bibliography	http://purl.org/spar/doco
SWAN	Semantic Web Applications in	ResearchStatement, statesAsSupportiveEvi	http://www.w3.org/TR/hcls-

Neuromedicine Ontology (Discourse)	dence	swan/
Nanopublication (research data publication)	Assertion, Provenance, PublicationInfo	http://nanopub.org/wordpress/
Open Annotation Data Model	Body, Annotation	http://www.openannotation.org/spec/core/

Table 3: Research related Ontologies

Due to SWT inherent transparency and traceability of research data and research context data, SWT supported research projects implicitly provide means to not only assess but also assure research quality. Those meta information help the researcher or any reader or reviewer to identify quality issues (Yin, 2009) such as internal or external validity (conditions of research, generalisability) or reliability (research procedures) faster and more accurately. To date, however, such easily accessible and usable SWT based quality assessment tools do not exist yet.

3. Research 2.5 - Prototyping the Research Process 3.0

In my research project I retroactively use SWT in almost every phase of the research process from literature review to data collection, data analysis, writing up and publication (see appendix 2 – Research 2.5). The research 3.0 prototype uses SWT in form of self-developed and reused thesauri and ontologies as well as an SWT-enabled multi-channel authoring and publication approach (see snapshot of work-in-progress in appendix 3).

As a first step I decided to make my use and understanding of relevant concepts in the area of IMC, tourism and research transparent. I therefore have been developing and publishing different thesauri applying the SKOS-standard. The thesauri cover the four domains of digital marketing, tourism, research theory and a focus group data collection. I

have subsequently been using the thesauri as substitute for a glossary on one hand and as machine readable and reusable substitutes for manually managed coding schemes and a coding manual (Bryman & Bell, 2011) on the other hand. Consequently, the thesauri have been used to semi-automatically extract, reference and link concepts from a large number of documents to process (research articles, posts, comments, newsletters, interview transcription and so forth). In other words: I have been adding machine readable structured metadata to unstructured documents.

A further application of ontologies has been taking place as part of my data collection and analysis work. Existing ontologies such as for example FOAF (focus: people) and SIOC (focus: online communities) are an integral part of the netnography exercise. Those ontologies allow to integrate and analyse destinations' multi-channel communication activities. The specific purpose of the reused ontologies help to efficiently and effectively analyse destination specific online communities, communication intensity and communication topics.

In order to understand destinations' internal perspective on problems with IMC, I held focus groups with a heterogeneous group of destination representatives. I use the Lego Serious Play technique to structure the focus group (Bertini, 2013; Frick, Tardini, & Cantoni, 2014; Kristiansen & Rasmussen, 2014). The videotape from the focus group as well as the detailed structure, flow and created artefacts of the focus group are documented using a newly developed focus group ontology. According to the guiding SWT principle of reusing and extending existing ontologies, the previously mentioned self-developed thesauri have become an integral part of the focus group ontology.

Finally, the thesis is written as a structured, semantically annotated document (Bellamy, Carey, & Schlotfeldt, 2012; Horn, 1997), publishable as well as a pdf, Word, html and machine readable document. All thesis related data (bibliography, web sites, articles,

collected data, pictures, videotapes etc.) or the link to them will finally be published in a semantic net that can be retrieved, evaluated or even tested semi-automatically against academic quality criteria.

4. Conclusion and outlook

This article describes a new but promising approach to undertake a research project in business administration. An SWT-enabled research process would basically allow researchers to be more effective (evaluate more data sources and find relevant data and information accurately) and more efficient (search and evaluate information faster) on one hand, and to have a means to make reliability and validity of research more transparent and traceable notably in qualitative research. However, there are currently not many relevant academic data sources available that have implemented SWT with the aim to contribute to researchers' effectiveness and efficiency. Additionally, in contrast with other disciplines such as for example biomedicine (Ciccarese, Ocana, & Clark, 2012), no tools exist that make it easy and convenient to use SWT for researchers in business administration.

Exploring the approach of psychodynamics: Change management seen as 'organizational therapy'

Carsten Skerra

Abstract

Title - Exploring the approach of psychodynamics: Change management seen as 'organisational therapy'

Purpose - The purpose of this paper is to explore the approach of psychodynamics and its relationships to organizational change, organizational and individual behaviour and the obstacles in managing organizational change implementation – change management.

Design/ Methodology – This paper is based on literature research.

Research Limitation – In the current paper, findings and suggestions are mainly based on theory and research done in the US, UK and Europe, that may restrict the suggestions from being applicable elsewhere; in addition any findings and suggestions may be influenced by culture.

Research Type: Literature review

Key Words: Business and Economics, Organizational Dynamics, Psychodynamic Approach, Organisational Change, Change Management

Methodology for Literature Review

The methodology used for the literature review is oriented to the approach described by Denyer and Tranfield (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009), which consists of the following stages and phases:

<p>Stage 1: Plan the Review</p> <p>Phase 1: Prepare proposal for review</p> <p>Phase 2: Develop review protocol (assignment document)</p>
<p>Stage 2: Conduct the Review</p> <p>Phase 3: Identification of research papers</p> <p>Phase 4: Selection of studies</p> <p>Phase 5: Assess qualities of studies</p> <p>Phase 6: Data extraction & monitor progress</p> <p>Phase 7: Data synthesis</p>
<p>Stage 3: Report and Disseminate</p> <p>Phase 8: Report and recommendations</p> <p>Phase 9: Getting evidence into practise</p>

Table 4. Bibliographical sources of articles reviewed

Category	1910-1950	1960-2000	2000-2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
Journal								
The British Journal of Administrative Management			1					1
Sage Open					1			1
Academy of Management Executive		1	1					2
Human Resource Management		1						1
Academy of Management Journal			1		1	1		3
Academy of Management Perspectives				1				1
Amity Global Business Review					1			1
Leadership excellence essentials							1	1
Harvard Business Review		1					1	2
Journal Personality and Individual Differences							1	1
Bloomsbury Business Library			1					1
Working Papers								
INSEAD					1		1	2
Total	0	3	4	1	4	1	4	17

The articles accepted for the analysis were published in 11 different journals (see **Error! Reference source not found.**). The articles were published between 1960 and 2014. In this first step, the major focus was to get an overview about the journals that give most evidence for the topics of organizational change and behaviour, as well as management and leadership issues focused on the individual person. All journals were published in US, UK and EU.

Methodological and definitional issues in the articles reviewed

The headings in *Table 5*. Methodological and definitional issues in the articles reviewed below (type of article, country of research, etc.) show the categories that were applied in building a typology of articles. This section will examine the categories and sub-categories in detail. The 17 articles were written by 23 different authors.

The classification 'Organisation' is used if the main topics of an article are dealing with the organisation at an abstract level. The classification 'Individual' is used if the main topics deal with persons, their roles or itself the individual (e.g. the leader, the manager, subordinates, and psychological aspect). The classification 'Interrelation' is used if the article links between the organisation and the individual. The classification 'Practical Research' is used if the foundation of the content of the articles is based on interviews, questionnaires, or other quantitative data that was statistically analysed. The classification 'Therapy' is used if an article contains ideas, hints or clear rules how organisational behaviour could be changed, for the individual or on the organisational level.

Table 5. Methodological and definitional issues in the articles reviewed

Author(s)	Type of article	Country of research	Keywords	Organisation	Individual	Interrelation	Practical Research	Therapy
(Banker, 2012)	Conceptual	INDIA	ORGANIZATIONAL change MANAGEMENT CHANGE management ORGANIZATIONAL effectiveness	x	-	(x)	-	(x)
(Beck, Brüderl, & Woywode, 2008)	Article	EUROPE/ GERMANY	ORGANIZATIONAL change ORGANIZATIONAL behaviour CHANGE management RESISTANCE to change	x	-	-	x	x
(Dasgupta, 2012)	Article	INDIA	Learning ORGANIZATION INDIVIDUAL learning KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION memory		x	x		(x)
(Fayol,	Article	EUROPE/ UK	BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS	x	x			x

Author(s)	Type of article	Country of research	Keywords	Organisation	Individual	Interrelation	Practical Research	Therapy
2000)			MANAGEMENT styles ADMINISTRATION					
(Gabarro & Kotter, 2005)	Article/ HBR Reprint	US	MANAGING your boss COMMUNICATION in management SUPERIOR-subordinate relationship EXECUTIVES -- Psychology EXECUTIVE ability (Management) SELF-perception SELF-management (Psychology)		x	x		(x)
(Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 2007)	Book Review	EUROPE/ UK	MOTIVATION to Work, The (Book)		x	x		x
(Kotter, 1982)	Article	US	EXECUTIVES MANAGEMENT science LEADERSHIP	x	(x)	x	x	(x)
(McCarthy, 2000)	Interview/ Crosstalk	US <- > EUROPE	INNOVATIONS in business SUCCESS in business MANAGEMENT science	x			(x)	
(Mirvis, 1997)	Article	US	BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS HUMAN RESOURCE	x		x	x	(x)
(Mirvis & Kanter, 1991)	Article	US	BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS HUMAN RESOURCE	x	x	x	x	x
(Shin, Taylor, & Seo, 2012)	Article	US	-	x	x	x	x	(x)
(Sieglings, Nielsen, & Petrides, 2014)	Article	EUROPE/ NETHERLANDS	EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE LEADERSHIP INTERNATIONAL Organizations BUSINESS	x	x		x	

Author(s)	Type of article	Country of research	Keywords	Organisation	Individual	Interrelation	Practical Research	Therapy
(Ulrich, 2014)	Article	US	LEADERSHIP CORPORATE culture	x				
(Van de Ven & Sun, 2011)	Article	US	ORGANIZATIONAL change ORGANIZATIONAL research ORGANIZATIONAL behaviour	x			(x)	(x)
(Kets De Vries, 2014)	Article	EUROPE/ US	EXECUTIVES -- Training of EXECUTIVES -- Psychology PERSONALITY EMOTIONS (Psychology) PERSONALITY disorders PATHOLOGICAL psychology	(x)	x		x	x
(de Vries & Cheak, 2014)	Working Paper	EUROPE	PSYCHODYNAMIC APPROACH LEADERSHIP ORGANIZATIONAL behaviour PSYCHODYNAMICS CLINICAL PARADIGM HUMAN behaviour GROUP process SELF-evaluation/ -assessment Effective Leadership	x	x	x	x	x
(Kets de Vries, 2012)	Article	EUROPE	ORGANIZATIONAL Dynamics	x	x	x	x	x

3.2 Theoretical frameworks utilized in the articles reviewed

Only 7 of the 17 article describe organizational 'therapy' as they contain ideas, hints or clear rules how organisational behaviour could be changed, for the individual or on the organisational level. Only 3 articles combine therapy with 'organisational', 'individual' and 'interrelation'. These 3 articles are written by Kotter (Kotter, 1982) and the other by Mirvis and Kanter (Mirvis & Kanter, 1991) and an interview of Daniel McCarthy together with Henry Mintzberg (McCarthy, 2000). And an article about emotional intelligence from Alexander Siegling (Siegling et al., 2014). Close to the classification of 'therapy', 'organisational', 'individual' and 'interrelation' is again an article of Mirvis (Mirvis, 1997). The most information about therapy in combination with leadership is available of Kets de Vries (de Vries & Cheak, 2014; Kets de Vries, 2012, 2014).

The findings reported in the articles as an excerpt

Table 6. Articles included in the review (excerpt view on therapy and critical review)

No	Author(s), Year	Journal	Topic of the article	Organisational Therapy/ Propositions	Critical Review issues	Further Investigation/ e.g. Sources mentioned
1	(Banker, 2012)	Amity Global Business Review	Organizational Change: Pragmatic approaches to Organizational Change Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Organizations should adopt more dynamism in the culture, so that the employees would be less rigid and can adopt change quickly and smoothly.</i> • <i>Increase performance driven culture, adaptability to change to reduce economic distress of people in the organization.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The article focus is not on the role of the subordinates, it seems they will only follow middle management • Employees are always sceptical, especially of management's commitment to change • Organisations rely on a repeatedly enacted routine • Problems only covered by a reselection of just another (already known) routine • Creativity or learning are not mentioned to overcome the status quo • The level of the individual is not mentioned 	
2	(Beck et al., 2008)	Academy of Management Journal	Momentum or Deceleration? Theoretical and Methodological Reflections on the Analysis of Organizational Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of change routines - recurring execution of change, organization members gain increasing competence, thereby reducing the marginal costs of making changes. • The ability to develop successful routines that guide organizational change processes can be considered a fundamental asset for facing upcoming problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conclusion stands for a deceleration hypothesis • Empirical analysis show that there is a negative effect of prior changes, but only with three data sets (Newspaper, Bank, German Bundesliga) • Role of the individual is not stressed, in one data set the replacement of CEO is mentioned as factor for change 	

No	Author(s), Year	Journal	Topic of the article	Organisational Therapy/ Propositions	Critical Review issues	Further Investigation/ e.g. Sources mentioned
3	(Dasgupta, 2012)	SAGE Open	Conceptual Paper: Organizational Learning and Its Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positions human resource strategy at the centre of corporate strategy • A learning organization must focus on valuing, managing, and enhancing the individual development of its employees • Knowledge is not a sacred cow and is not just preserved for people in managerial or professional positions but every employee will need to be a knowledge worker. However, it is not sufficient to have a greater number of knowledge workers in the organization than that of competition because the culture has to be right to enable the full potential of the individual talents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The article only cope with a positive view and attitude of employees • Creativity and innovation is described as it build during the learning process within the organisational context • Education or earlier experiences of the individual are not part of this article • HR view is pointed out, to deal with the need for more knowledge workers • No information how to deal with a problematic organisation, e.g. a laggard, with a different organisational behaviour 	(Barrow, 1993; Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross, & et al., 2001)
4	(Fayol, 2000)	The British Journal of Administrative Management	Managing in the 21st century	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage information through people – Knowledge Management as an up and coming area that can enhance the competitive edge of an organisation that takes the management of information seriously • There is a need for a passionate conviction about the value of Lifelong Learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landmark • Interview with Members and Fellow of the Institute of Administrative Management (IAM) might be biased • Management and not Leadership is in focus • Economic reasons aren't mentioned, some hint into benchmarking with the best • Managers are the intended readers, not the subordinates • Individual aspects for leaders, managers or others are not given (behaviour) <p>More talking about objectives that have to be managed</p>	McKee, & Goleman, 2002; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2008; Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002; Steadman, 2001); (Bennis, Goleman, & Biederman, 2008); (Goleman & Lueneburger, 2010); (Vorrta & Bohoris, 2009); (Mayer, Goleman, Barrett, Gutstein, & et al., 2004); (Bandopadhyay, 2011)

No	Author(s), Year	Journal	Topic of the article	Organisational Therapy/ Propositions	Critical Review issues	Further Investigation/ e.g. Sources mentioned
5	(Gabarro & Kotter, 2005)	Harvard Business Review	Managing Your Boss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The boss is only one-half of the relationship. You are the other half, as well as the part over which you have more direct control. • A Flow of Information. How much information a boss needs about what a subordinate is doing will vary significantly depending on the boss' style, the situation he or she is in, and the confidence the boss has in the subordinate. • Good Use of Time and Resources.- By using up blue chips on a relatively trivial issue, he had made it difficult for him and his boss to meet more important goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article gives advice to subordinates(or middle management), reader of HBR seems more the bosses themselves • Drawn picture here 'Bosses, like everyone else, are imperfect and fallible. They don't have unlimited time, encyclopaedic knowledge, or extrasensory perception; nor are they evil enemies' • But bosses are able to fire people in a minute, which is different outside US • Article is a little too positive about bosses and leaves open, what are the managerial skills or what is needed as a leader • Article lead to the toxic leader(Kets De Vries, 2014) 	
6	(Herzberg et al., 2007)	Bloomsbury Business Library - Management Library	Motivation to Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of employees attitude – people are our greatest assets • Hygiene factors – cover basic needs at work • Motivation factors –positive factors that provide satisfaction • Organizations should aim to motivate people through job satisfaction, rather than reward or pressure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landmark • A combination with knowledge of Hofstede's 'Cultures and organisations' would be great • Knowledge may be used as stated in the critic 	(Mayo, 1923, 1924); (Maslow, 2000); (Hamel, 2009);

No	Author(s), Year	Journal	Topic of the article	Organisational Therapy/ Propositions	Critical Review issues	Further Investigation/ e.g. Sources mentioned
7	(Kotter, 1982)	Harvard Business Review	What effective general managers really do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Excellent' performers, for example, create networks with many talented people in them and with strong ties to and among their subordinates. They do so by using a wide variety of methods with great skill. • Execution: getting networks to implement agendas • 'Excellent' performers ask, encourage, cajole, praise, reward, demand, manipulate, and generally motivate others with great skill in face-to-face situations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landmark • Puts general managers in the middle – (ego-) centric view • General managers are more skilled than others – in communicating and synthesising ideas to agendas • General Managers seem ineffective, but they might be not (maybe they are anyway?) • General managers are different as education and academia will see them 	
8	(McCarthy, 2000)	Academy of Management Executive	View from the top: Henry Mintzberg on strategy and management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They bring out the energy in people by creating systems that encourage and stimulate people. That is what happens in many of these young, high-tech companies. There is not so much announcing dramatic strategy; there is stimulating people to venture all over the place, and then pulling together the results of that venturing. • Kotter: He said that they believe in teamwork for sure, but they would rather be running the team. However, I say that running the team is not teamwork. If every member of the team is lusting to run the team, that is the antithesis of teamwork. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brings the idea of education and links former knowledge and learning to what happen within the organisation later on • Differentiate managerial work and education between nations (US, Canada, Europe (France, Germany) • Individual vs. cultural • Was written before economic crisis in 2008, but gives hint into what he calls the 'dramatic style of managing' • Styles: analytical-technocratic, boss-visionary, learning-crafting style • Brings in political issues and different pressure in different nations (e.g. Japan) 	1984); (Wahlgren & Stewart, 2003); (Carlson, 1993); (Camillus, 1982); (O'Regan & Ghobadian, 2012)

No	Author(s), Year	Journal	Topic of the article	Organisational Therapy/ Propositions	Critical Review issues	Further Investigation/ e.g. Sources mentioned
9	(Mirvis, 1997)	The Academy of Manageme nt Executive	Human resource management: Leaders, laggards, and followers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR management in larger companies was more influenced by customers and competitors, and by changes in the educational and demographic mix of their workforce, than in smaller ones. • HR leaders were almost twice as likely as laggards to encourage their employees to do volunteer work in public schools and seven times more likely to provide them with paid leaves-of-absence for this purpose. These programs may contribute to their success in attracting qualified people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landmark • Very HR driven, leaders and middle managers are the bad guys • This article brings a colourful picture of HR that is currently not realistic, HR departments have to rethink first • Social aspects have to be weighted more than the business goals. • How many HR departments are part of change initiatives? • There might be no therapy for the laggards 	

No	Author(s), Year	Journal	Topic of the article	Organisational Therapy/ Propositions	Critical Review issues	Further Investigation/ e.g. Sources mentioned
10	(Mirvis & Kanter, 1991)	Human Resource Managemen t	Beyond Demography: A Psychographic Profile of the Workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statements of philosophy define what a company stands for and what it expects of its members. Well thought out statements address, among other subjects, the company's beliefs about people, attitudes toward customers and aspirations for quality, standards of management and expectations of employees. • Undoing Life Experiences - Companies that want to combat cynicism have to undo the cynical formula and meet their employees half-way or more in the search for common ground. Another option is to promote managers based upon their demonstrated trustworthiness and integrity. That way people are at levels to become active participants in an effort to bring new corporate values focused on improving quality, teamwork, customer service, and human satisfaction to life (Mirvis & Marks, 1991). Cynical managers are just as reluctant to open this "can of worms" as are cynical workers. But having a straightforward, two-way dialogue on what is causing cynicism at work -diagnosing where and why expectations are out of line, identifying how companies and their people are failing to strike a fair deal, and pinpointing where practices are out of line with preaching . 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus to US workforce in 1990 • Stretches role of India and China • Historical the roll out (especially US companies) of manufacturing capacities to countries with lower wages • Describes the negative impacts of low attitudes in the workforce • Level of focus seems to be subordinates more than managers or top managers 	(Eichinger & Lombardo, 2003); (Eichinger & Lombardo, 2004); (Lombardo & Eichinger, 1997); (Lombardo & Lombardo, 1982); (McCall & Lombardo, 1982);

No	Author(s), Year	Journal	Topic of the article	Organisational Therapy/ Propositions	Critical Review issues	Further Investigation/ e.g. Sources mentioned
11	(Shin et al., 2012)	Academy of Management Journal	Resources for Change: the Relationships of Organizational Inducements and Psychological Resilience to Employees' Attitudes and Behaviours toward Organizational Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For instance, intangible inducements, such as social support and respect for employees, may be more likely to influence individuals' normative commitment to change, but tangible inducements, such as monetary rewards and benefits, are more likely to influence their affective commitment to change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaves out the aspect of business objectives and the managerial work itself, but puts practical implementations for managers in place 	(Armenakis & Harris, 2002)
12	(Siegling et al., 2014)	Personality and Individual Differences	Trait emotional intelligence and leadership in a European multinational company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Article handles the analysis of emotional intelligence, not the impact to organisation Distribution among people unclear Emotional Intelligence is research field 	
13	(Ulrich, 2014)	Leadership Excellence	20 Insights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culture may be embedded through an intellectual, behavioural and process agenda Align, integrate, and innovate HR practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HR biased Positivist view of people, HR selection taken place Not the how to, missing practice Education as instrument to get there mentioned 	
14	(Van de Ven & Sun, 2011)	Academy of Management Perspectives	Breakdowns in Implementing Models of Organization Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This enables us to think beyond a single change model—such as the dominant model of planned change (Cummings & Worley, 2008) - and to propose a contingency theory of organization change processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strongly building a model, individual aspects are missing Multinational distinction would be useful 	

No	Author(s), Year	Journal	Topic of the article	Organisational Therapy/ Propositions	Critical Review issues	Further Investigation/ e.g. Sources mentioned
15	(Kets De Vries, 2014)	Harvard Business Review	Coaching the Toxic Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executives sometimes suffer from serious personality disorders, such as pathological narcissism, manic-depression, passive-aggressiveness, and emotional disconnection. When these leaders reach positions of power, they create dysfunctional organizations in which everyone is miserable. • What is the Difference between Coaching and Therapy? Some claim that the distinction lies in time orientation— that coaching focuses on the present and the future while therapy looks more at the past. Others draw a line between the conscious (coaching) and the unconscious (therapy). Still others see psycho-therapy as a long-term treatment, and coaching as a short-term intervention. • Psychotherapists have more-intensive training in personality dynamics, while executive coaches focus more on the general work environment in which executives operate. However, it is my conviction that therapists can benefit from knowing more about the organizational world, and coaches without training in psychology would do well to acquire its basics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article takes only leaders into account and did not describe any influences of the subordinates • No pattern of subordinates are mentioned • Therapy based on classifying behavioural disorders of leaders, this rise the question, are there no disorders of subordinates? This may depend on that subordinates seem to be faster exchangeable. 	

No	Author(s), Year	Journal	Topic of the article	Organisational Therapy/ Propositions	Critical Review issues	Further Investigation/ e.g. Sources mentioned
16	(de Vries & Cheak, 2014)	INSEAD Working Papers	Psychodynamic Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At its heart, leadership is about human behaviour— what we do, how we do it and why we do it. Leadership is about the way people behave in organizations and effective leaders are those who meet the needs of their followers; pay careful attention to group processes; able to calm anxieties and arouse hopes and aspirations; and know how to liberate human energy and inspire people to positive action. In short, leadership involves harnessing and leveraging the different and complex forces and dynamics at play in organizational functioning. The psychodynamic approach to leadership study and development focuses on the dynamics of human behaviour which are often the most difficult to understand. It acknowledges that people are complex, unique and paradoxical beings with rich and myriad motivational drivers, and decision-making and interaction patterns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus to childhood experiences No focus at experience made through professional development nor organisational life 	
17	(Kets de Vries, 2012)	INSEAD Working Papers	Are you a Victim of the Victim Syndrome?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People who suffer from the victim syndrome are always complaining about the bad things that happen in their lives. Because they believe they have no control over the way events unfold, they do not feel a sense of responsibility for them. One moment, they present themselves dramatically as victims; the next, they morph into victimizers, hurting the people trying to help them and leaving would-be helpers with a sense of utter frustration. People with a victim mentality display passive-aggressive characteristics when interacting with others. Their behaviour has a self-defeating, almost masochistic quality. The victim style becomes a relational mode—a life affirming activity: I am miserable therefore, I am. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of people with the victim syndrome in the workforce would give further clue about current and future consequences 	

Findings

Psychodynamic Approach in Brief

The psychodynamic approach to leadership study and development focuses on the dynamics of human behaviour which are often the most difficult to understand. It acknowledges that people are complex, unique and paradoxical beings with rich and myriad motivational drivers, and decision-making and interaction patterns (de Vries & Cheak, 2014, p. 2). The psychodynamic approach focuses at 'bosses'. As executives sometimes, suffer from serious personality disorders, such as pathological narcissism, manic-depression, passive-aggressiveness, and emotional disconnection. When these leaders reach positions of power, they create dysfunctional organizations in which everyone is miserable (Kets De Vries, 2014, p. 103). Current working papers and publications about the psychodynamic approach found different kinds of therapy to manage these serious personality disorders of 'bosses' (de Vries & Cheak, 2014; Kets De Vries, 2014).

Change Management and the Important - Employees

Similarly, a recent survey of global companies reported that only one-third of organizational change initiatives were considered successful by their organizational executives (Keller, Meany, & Pung, 2010, p. 1). The practice theories of implementing change are lagging behind process theories of organizational change and development (Van de Ven & Sun, 2011, p. 58). Increasingly, researchers are recognizing the important roles that employees play in the successful implementation of organizational change (Shin et al., 2012, p. 727).

What is the Difference between Coaching and Therapy?

Some claim that the distinction lies in time orientation— that coaching focuses on the present and the future while therapy looks more at the past. Others draw a line between the conscious (coaching) and the unconscious (therapy). Still others see psycho-therapy as a

long-term treatment, and coaching as a short-term intervention (Kets De Vries, 2014, p. 107). Psychotherapists have more- intensive training in personality dynamics, while executive coaches focus more on the general work environment in which executives operate. But it's my conviction that therapists can benefit from knowing more about the organizational world, and coaches without training in psychology would do well to acquire its basics (Kets De Vries, 2014, p. 107).

Do Not Try to Change Healthy Ones - Talk about the Laggards and Possible 'Organisational Therapy'

As lighthouses are easy to find, there is less information how to deal with a problematic organisation, e.g. a laggard, with an abnormal organisational behaviour (Dasgupta, 2012, p. 8).

Gabarro and Kotter draw pictures like 'Bosses, like everyone else, are imperfect and fallible. They don't have unlimited time, encyclopaedic knowledge, or extrasensory perception; nor are they evil enemies' (Gabarro & Kotter, 2005, p. 97). However, would this bosses turn up for the yearly routine health check? How to identify the people with a victim mentality display passive-aggressive characteristics when interacting with others? (Kets de Vries, 2012, p. 3). And will consulting companies talk about their client's death toll?

These last questions are open questions about 'Organisational Therapy' to be answered with further research. – Not to administer the healthy ones and not to dip deeply into the forensic medicine.

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Applying blind spot theory for uncovering blind spots in start-ups

Oliver Stalder

Abstract

The aim of the present research project is to explore the influence that blind spot theory (invisible social constructions) may have on business model creation. Currently, there is still a high failure rate in new businesses, which it is argued is the result of inappropriate early stage business models. The presently most commonly applied 'mechanistic' creation approaches primarily neglect the systemic nature of business models. However, the latter are argued to be highly complex social systems. Thus, combining the blind spot idea with new venture creation may provide only rarely investigated systemic insights regarding the emergence of new business models. Therefore, the research methodology is systemic (participatory) action research that allows for unfolding hidden social constructions. The research will be conducted in two polar-type start-ups. Qualitative data, containing rich contextual information, will be collected through focus group discussions, (group) paintings, semi-structured interviews and journal notes, which will be evaluated following a thematic analysis approach. The data will be presented in a multi-case format. A theoretical framework that assists in understanding the linking elements between the blind spot phenomenon and business model creation will be used for theory building.

Introduction

Business models have been used to describe the overarching logic how companies work by illustrating the relationship of individual elements acting together (Amit & Zott, 2001; Chesbrough & Rosenbloom, 2002; Demil & Lecocq, 2010; Johnson, Christensen, & Kagermann, 2009; McGrath, 2010; Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010). Most definitions encompass at least the three basic elements of value proposition, value architecture and revenue model and the interplay of those components (Gassmann, Frankenberger, & Csik, 2013; Johnson et al., 2009; Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010; Stähler, 2002). In the start-up community, creating viable business models have become the core activity since *"A start-up is a temporary organisation aiming at finding a repeatable scalable business model"* (Blank

& Dorf, 2012) and the main task of an entrepreneur (Drucker & Drucker, 2007; Faltin, 2011). Today, we know that setting up working business models is not a question of financial resources, technology or processes. Many start-ups between 1995 and 2000 failed although they had cutting edge technologies, best managements, potent investors and high capitalization (Faltin, 2011). Thus, there must be something else making it difficult to set up a working new business model, which is considered the core of each new venture. Thus, the argument is that better understanding business model creation is a possible key to reduce the presently still high failure rates.

The high failure rate of new ventures (Faltin, 2011) can be interpreted as a high level of 'blindness' when launching a new venture. Accordingly, in the present context 'Theory U' is used to explain this 'blindness', or the blind spot idea, respectively, postulating that we are all part of established patterns of behaviour, which we take for granted and don't see anymore; since we don't see our constructions, we cannot change them. The blind spot is the fundament how to respond to the current waves of disruptive change from a deep place that connects us to the emerging future (Scharmer, 2004, 2009, 2013). Thus, the argument is that entrepreneurs try to 'connect' the present with the emerging future through creating new business models. However, they don't see all relevant constructions there preventing them from making viable 'connections'. Hence, better understanding the blind spot phenomenon may increase the success rate of new ventures.

Research Questions and Objectives

RQ1: To what extent is the blind spot theory applicable to the new business context?

RQ2: What are the characteristics of the blind spot in business models?

RQ3: What is the influence the blind spot may have on business model creation?

RQ4: What strategies would be appropriate for dealing with the blind spot?

RO1: To critically explore the blind spot theory and its applicability – and, if needed, its adaptability – to the business model creation context.

RO2: To explore the characteristics of the blind spot in business models.

RO3: To critically appraise the influence of the blind spot on business model creation.

RO4: To provide a basis for the development of strategies making the blind spot in business models manageable.

Theoretical Basis

The Lean Start-up concept has become popular in the business model creation context in the last few years through the idea of formulating ‘business hypotheses’, launching market experiments, pivoting and learning from customers (Blank, 2013; Ries, 2011). Traditionally, entrepreneurship understands business model creation as a core task of an entrepreneur (Drucker & Drucker, 2007): *“Entrepreneurs shift resources from areas of low productivity and yield to areas of higher productivity and yield”*. Thus, entrepreneurs, with their individual skills and backgrounds, can be imagined as movie directors bringing all elements of a business model together into play (Faltin, 2001, 2008, 2011). However, effectuation claims that the entrepreneur is not only trying to position his offerings in a given environment but forms that environment through his activities (Dew, Read, Sarasvathy, & Wiltbank, 2010). In addition the concept of design thinking emphasizes customer empathy and prototyping as a means to create new business models by adopting a design attitude (Brown, 2008; Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010). According to systems theory, business model creation may also be understood as the consequence of a learning organisation which ‘is one that continually expands its capacity to create its own future’ (Senge, 1997).

Taking the idea of human interactions and complex relationships between those interactions, business models can be understood as complex activity systems (Zott & Amit, 2013) where self-organisation is argued to be the only appropriate action strategy (Kruse, 2013). As every self-organising system, the collective activity cannot be explained by the sum of its units but, instead, produces emergent properties (Smith, 2005). Accordingly, business models evolve dynamically and path dependently, so the initial conditions play a central role (Cocchi, 2012; Sydow, Schreyögg, & Koch, 2009).

Based on its complex nature, the argument is that business models cannot simply be ‘planned’. Furthermore, market experiments may be argued to be inappropriate for dealing

with highly complex social systems since experimenting means decomposing the model – and, a complex system is far more than the linear sum of its decomposed parts. Furthermore, business models emerge path-dependently as self-organising systems, based on the entrepreneurs' skills and backgrounds. A possible way to interact with such systems is to set up appropriate initial conditions – the blind spot is argued to be such an initial condition allowing entrepreneurs to connect the present with the emerging future through their forming business model. Furthermore, from a systemic perspective, the blind spot – combined with the idea of initial conditions – can also be interpreted as a systemic lever that allows the influencing of the system in a desired direction.

Methodology and Methods

Systemic (Participatory) Action Research

Since the blind spot is considered a phenomenon of 'we don't see', the argument is that interacting in real time with start-ups by bringing about change and learning from the changing system's response may generate the most meaningful knowledge. Action research enables us to work with uncertainty in systemic environments by unfolding the unknown (Flood, 2010). This allows us to see 'more of the picture' (Burns, 2007).

Sample

A 'polar type' sampling approach will be applied in order to compare extreme cases allowing for observing contrasting patterns and providing variety in the data (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). Comparing two contrasting start-ups allows for understanding and explaining differences between their abilities to deal with the blind spot phenomenon. The two cases are as follows:

1. A 'successful' (and presently scaling) start-up that has already found a working new business model representing the main differentiation factor against its competitors – the start-up is interested in further developing its already working business model.
2. An 'unsuccessful' start-up that has not yet found (but is looking for) a working new business model allowing for differentiation.

Rationale for qualitative data

The complexity of the studied phenomenon advocates focusing on qualitative data. The research is not about broad generalisations but about transferring the results (relationship between blind spot theory and business model creation) into comparable contexts.

Data collection

Based on the direct involvement as participant researcher, focus groups and semi-structured interviews represent the core data gathering methods. The data will be audio-recorded for transcription. Additionally, data will be collected (in the focus groups) by creating paintings, diagrams, maps, videos and photographs; those methods will iteratively be (further) developed and integrated in the groups and finally used for triangulation. Journal notes will be made in all research phases containing data such as observations, contextual details, interpretations, different ideas (perspectives), (rival) explanations and ongoing reflections.

Data analysis and theory building

The data will be analysed in order to identify themes and concepts and to construct typologies. Hence, the data will be analysed by the researcher but also commonly in the groups, mainly following a thematic analysis approach. The aim is to abductively build theory as an iterative process. Since the theory shall allow understanding of the influence the blind spot may have on business model creation, a framework will be used to explore and understand the linking elements between the two concepts (Figure 2). Finally, the data will be presented by using a multi case format to comprehensively describe the cases and their contexts.

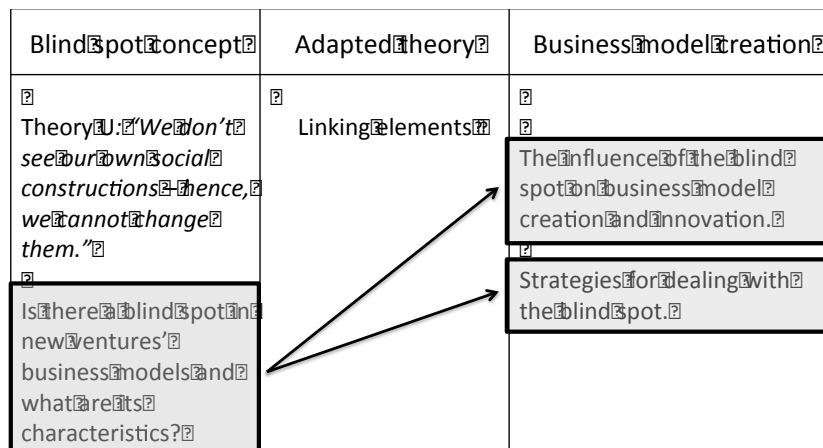


Figure 2: A theoretical framework linking the blind spot with business model creation. Source: Author.

Results (anticipated contribution to knowledge)

The research is anticipated to make a contribution in the debate of effectively creating new ventures as an emerging, self-organising process through combining business model creation with the blind spot phenomenon by creating an adapted theory explaining the relationship between the two concepts. The relevance of the blind spot concept in a path-dependent, highly complex social system will be outlined and strategies for dealing with it will be proposed.

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A Study of Strategic Investments by Multinational Logistics Providers in China

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Abstract

Foreign direct investment (FDI) and particularly the activities of multinational companies (MNCs) have drawn the attention of researchers in the international business area for some years. FDI appeared to be the preferred market entry mode, especially when MNCs were targeting a strong market position and strategic expansion.

While entry strategies and the location determinants for FDI in the productive industry sectors of China were extensively examined by researchers within the last decade, the specific role of logistics MNCs, as well as their anticipated future development, provides an ample field for investigation. China offers vast opportunities for multinational logistics providers to gain competitive advantage when they move early enough and steer their strategic investments wisely. This paper discusses some initial insights to where FDI into Chinese logistics are moving and what this means for a logistics multinational to be successful in the long term in one of the world's most important emerging markets.

Purpose of the paper

The on-going globalization within an increasingly volatile economic environment is causing more and more uncertainty for global supply chains and the logistics sector. Logistics multinationals like DHL, UPS, FedEx or Kuehne&Nagel investing in China are facing many challenges. Then again vast opportunities can be expected for logistics multinationals gaining a competitive advantage and developing their investments in line with current and future market requirements. Thus the following research questions shall be addressed in the study:

- 1) How do the Chinese economic-environmental determinants and country-specific advantages (CSA) affect foreign direct investment (FDI) in logistics from an internal business perspective, as well as from an external institutional perspective?

- 2) To what extent do firm-specific advantages (FSA), core competences and specialties in the service portfolio influence the competitiveness of multinationals undertaking FDI into Chinese logistics?
- 3) How can further scenarios of foreign investment in Chinese logistics be projected for the year 2030?

The MNC strategy analysis in this study builds on Mike Peng's (2001, 2002, 2009, 2011) unified global business concept of integrating the Industry-Based, Resource-Based and Institution-Based View in a so-called strategy tripod (see appendix 1).

The future perspective of the strategic investments undertaken by logistics multinationals in China feeds into a business model to be applied for maximising performance in the long run. A Corporate Foresight approach is chosen to identify the potential future implications of the post-investment strategic positioning of logistics multinationals in the Chinese market (Xie, Zhao, Xie, & Arnold, 2011). The key goal for the MNCs is not only to survive but remain on a sustainable development path in a continuously competitive environment. To identify the pivotal determinants driving performance in a rational way, scenarios of possible future developments are built and reviewed (Coates, Durance, & Godet, 2010; Hines & Bishop, 2006; Voros, 2001, 2003).

China's increasing demand for infrastructure advancement and adequate transportation services offers exceptional business prospects for logistics multinationals both domestically and across borders (Branch, 2009; Delfmann et al., 2010; Straube & Pfohl, 2008). Although scholarly interest in Chinese logistics and supply chain management is growing, there still remain areas worth exploring (Chen, Tian, Ellinger, & Daugherty, 2010; Göpfert, 2009; Hong, Chin, & Liu, 2007; Liu, 2012).

Research design, data and methodology

Based on the author's pragmatic-critical realist's worldview, a sequential mixed methods research (MMR) design combining quantitative and qualitative research techniques was determined as the underlying methodology (Cox, 2009; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Johnson & Duberley, 2000). The research design contains the following elements (see appendix 2):

A. Qualitative analysis

For the primary qualitative data collection 12 semi-structured interviews focusing on meso- and micro-level insights were conducted in China and Germany. The purposive sample of subject matter experts followed these criteria: local practitioner's experience in Chinese logistics, expertise from an academic and consulting perspective or logistics customer's view.

The recorded interview data was transcribed and then structured for further exploration. This includes allocating the results into categories, coding them, searching for keywords and retrieving the contribution towards the research objectives. The exploratory part of the qualitative analysis focuses on these research propositions:

- (P1) The Chinese market is playing a key role in a Logistics MNE's strategy.
- (P2) Gaining market share will be a major target for logistics MNEs in China.
- (P3) The investment environment will remain attractive for logistics MNEs in China.
- (P4) The long-term success of logistics MNEs in China will be determined by the ability to build and sustain critical competitive differentiators.

The interview content analysis is supported by QSR NVivo 10. Throughout the procedure the analysis framework of concepts, categories and themes is continuously adjusted and improved. The concluding steps contain extrapolating a logical conclusion from the available evidence with the aim to create a full picture of the personal experience and future expectations of the experts involved (Bazeley, 2007; Flick, Kardorff, & Steinke, 2007). The qualitative analysis provides a broad picture of different expert views on the situation and future of logistics MNCs in China, but the one unifying judgement builds on the expectation of continuing future growth in that area.

B. Quantitative analysis

The target of the analysis is to create a quantitative projection of FDI into the logistics sector in China until the year 2030. The Time Series Analysis as an inference-statistical method allows the analysis of existing data of a previous period and the prediction of possible future

developments. The data to be analysed builds a time-dependent sequence, and only secondary data with sufficient time-wise coverage provided by official Chinese statistics was used (National Bureau of Statistics, 2013). Both research objectives and the available data justify the choice of analysis. The underlying hypotheses to be tested are:

- (H1) The higher the GDP growth in China, the more the Inward FDI to China will grow in line with the GDP.
- (H2) The higher the international trade growth in China, the more the Logistics sector in China will grow.
- (H3) There is a high probability that Logistics FDI are growing accordingly to the growth of Chinese GDP, inbound FDI as well as Logistics sector growth.

By building a model that explains the historical values, a prediction is enabled whether and how much the values will increase or decrease in the future. Since the Time Series Analysis provides a variety of ways depending on the data and the research objective, several models are tested for their applicability to determine the best fitting method (Box & Jenkins, 1976).

The selection includes the following steps according to the Box-Jenkins-Approach:

- 1) Data transformation to generate variables used to establish periodicity, creating new time series variables and generating missing values
- 2) Developing a model based on historical observations and testing it how it works in a defined validation period of already known data points
- 3) Finalizing models and producing a prediction using time series modeller

The applied Time Series Modelling supported by SPSS 21 includes the following variables based on data published in the China Statistical Yearbook (National Bureau of Statistics, 2013):

- GDP growth rate
- Value of FDI

- Total Investment in Fixed Assets by Sector Transport, Storage and Post
- Total Freight Traffic
- Total Value of Imports and Exports
- Foreign Direct Investment Actually Utilized by Sector - Transport, Storage, Post

The last variable has the role of the target variable within the Time Series Model. A high correlation of all variables was assumed and then verified within the data scrutiny. The auto-correlation analysis of the target variable shows an auto-regressive process of first order, which means the value of year 't' is highly correlated to the value of year 't-1'. In order to reflect this time-wise correlation several autoregressive Time Series Models are built to forecast the time-wise development of the target variable. These so-called ARIMA models include the following parameters (Boef, 2004):

- 'AR' means 'autoregressive', that is to say the value of the target variable in 't' is forecasted by the value in 't-x'. Whereas 'x' explains the order of the autoregressive process.
- 'I' imply 'integrated' in relation to the order 'x', meaning that instead of original values the 'x-th' difference of values is used for the analysis.
- 'MA' represents a 'moving average' supporting the inclusion of a parameter into the model, which allows to rebuild a trend.

By applying different combinations of the parameters AR, I and MA, diverse ARIMA model specifications can be produced that are then evaluated for their fit towards the data and analysis target (Brandt & Williams, 2007; Brockwell, 2002). The applied model test resulted in an estimated ARIMA model with one autoregressive component and first-order differences, likewise an applicable model adjustment could be proven by applying the automatic model selection tool of SPSS. As a result, the quantitative analysis prognosticates a steady growth of the target variable 'Foreign Direct Investment Actually Utilized by Sector - Transport, Storage, Post', which would in fact mean tripling the value from 2012 until the year 2030.

C. Synthesis of outcomes and relevant discussion

All insights from the previous qualitative and quantitative analyses will be scrutinized in a Mixed Methods Synthesis approach to gain a comprehensive view of the knowledge created. Linking the outcome from both qualitative and quantitative methods allows for a variety of viewpoints which can be compared and finally combined in their meaning or contradicted to each other (Feilzer, 2010; Fielding, 2010; Modell, 2009). A sensible combination of different methods and therefore different perspectives can deliver a solid understanding of the complexity within the chosen topic. With the intended supplementary qualitative media analysis the author aims to provide an ample examination of the phenomenon in scope.

Initial findings

The research builds on a thorough conceptualization of theoretical and empirical perspectives of FDI into logistics and the existing internationalisation theory for MNCs in the context of the Chinese Logistics market. Further on, the economic environment for FDI in China and its effects on investment decisions by MNCs are examined. This comprises the identification, testing and discussion of key success factors for FDI into logistics in China. The economic-environmental determinants and existing investment advantages as well as obstacles are analysed for their impact on the MNC. The Chinese national economy shows still very impressive growth statistics, not only in its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) but also in international trade, infrastructure investment and FDI. The outcome of the quantitative analysis provides a remarkable scenario for the future development of FDI into Chinese logistics. While a linear development of the quantitative parameters was neither expected nor proved, the resulting probability values build a supplemental input for the synthesis and discussion of findings for the Chinese logistics market in the year 2030, which will then be debated for their applicability.

The findings from the qualitative research confirm China's increasing need for infrastructure advancement and supply of adequate transportation services both domestically and cross-border in order to support trade and the flow of commodities. Logistics companies of all sizes, including the big logistics multinationals, understand the immense potential of the

Chinese logistics market. Each MNC established in China is required to keep a stable supply chain and ensure continuous access to transportation services both locally and within their global networks. The same requirements apply to smaller companies having established a subsidiary or a joint-venture with a Chinese corporation. And of course the new group of emerging Chinese Multinationals - the so-called 'Upcoming Heroes' - provide a great potential for further growth in demand of logistics services.

Based on the attractiveness of China with its high growth rates and continuing demand for transportation services, a severe competition in the logistics sector is in full swing. This competition is characterised by a race for the most advantageous locations, the need for building a reliable network and comprehensive service portfolio, and finally achieving all of this at a competitive cost position. The general tenor is that logistics services in China are sold rather by prize than by quality, which proves to be an issue for the big logistics MNCs. However logistics multinationals seek to provide unique quality to differentiate from the competition, i.e. by providing Value-Adding Services (VAS) as part of their service offer. The increasing lack of qualified logistics workforce provides another serious trial for all market participants, while on the other hand enormous annual pay rises take place throughout the industry. The logistics MNCs thrive to increase their market share, but expansion is limited by the influence of the Chinese institutions, like the investment law and the influence of local authorities. Moreover the developments in the Chinese economic policies, the role of the government and further regulatory institutions need to be observed with high emphasis. One of the key public policy determinants influencing FDI into logistics is tax law, with its recently introduced Value-Added Tax Pilot Program or the benefits from the Free Trade Zone in Shanghai. Like all MNCs, it can be stated that logistics multinationals also actively engage within policy influencing bodies, e.g. the Chambers of Commerce.

Based on the given conditions the Chinese logistics market is considered as challenging for foreign investors while on the other hand exceptional prospects might very likely compensate for this. Key emphasis needs to be put on the conception and implementation of a sound business model, thus enabling sustainable performance and growth for logistics multinationals in China in the long term.

Research implications and limitations

The inaugural step of reviewing the area of published theories and empirical contributions on multinational strategy and Corporate Foresight provides an understanding of the overall economic-environmental determinants affecting recent development and foreseeable future trends for the logistics sector in China. This involves the perspective of a multinational logistics company, the industrial competition as well as Chinese regulatory institutions, thus providing for a thorough examination of the phenomenon of strategic investments by logistics multinationals in the major emerging market of China. The combination of qualitative and quantitative research approaches is rarely used in the academic discipline International Business. Thus the study aims to provide novel insights in the area of FDI post-investment review accomplished with future research and strategic foresight for MNCs in an uncertain economic environment.

Given the diversity of the several fields within the logistics market the research concentrates on supply chain outsourcing and freight forwarding areas. Hence, the primarily postal business areas are out of scope. Furthermore, the competitive situation between the major logistics multinationals prevents the author to actively engage in strategic discussions with representatives of other major companies. Possibly an independent academic researcher might face fewer restrictions. As the main part of the qualitative field research was undertaken during a journey to China, the author had to act under both time and financial constraints.

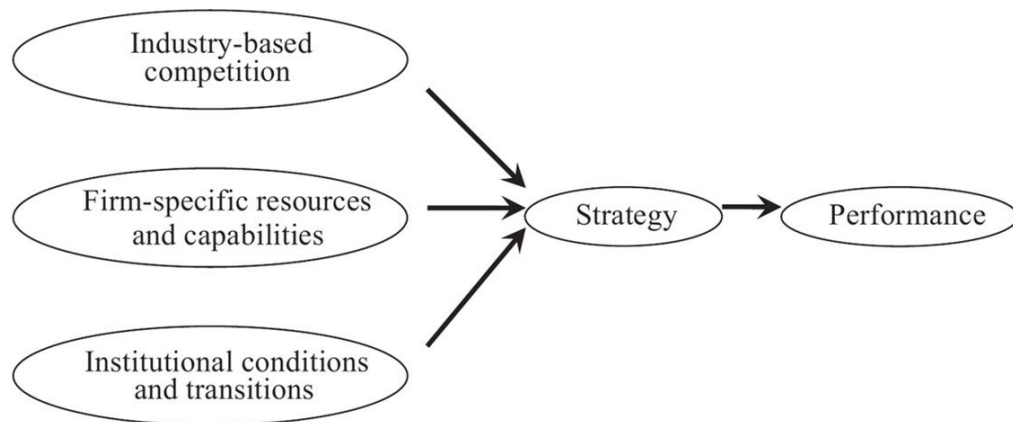
Practical implications and original contribution

Overall the contribution to knowledge can be seen in the area of investment strategy advancement for logistics multinationals in a volatile economic environment like China. This means linking established theories from International Business and FDI to the requirements of the fast changing logistics industry. The meso-level focus on logistics aims to provide a wide-ranging overview on existing investment knowledge within the industrial sector. This also includes the examination of major trends and technological developments for their impact on the industry and the individual logistics MNC. Consequently, practitioners from

logistics and other multinationals as well as researchers in international business and strategy with a focus on China may be suitable recipients of the expected insights.

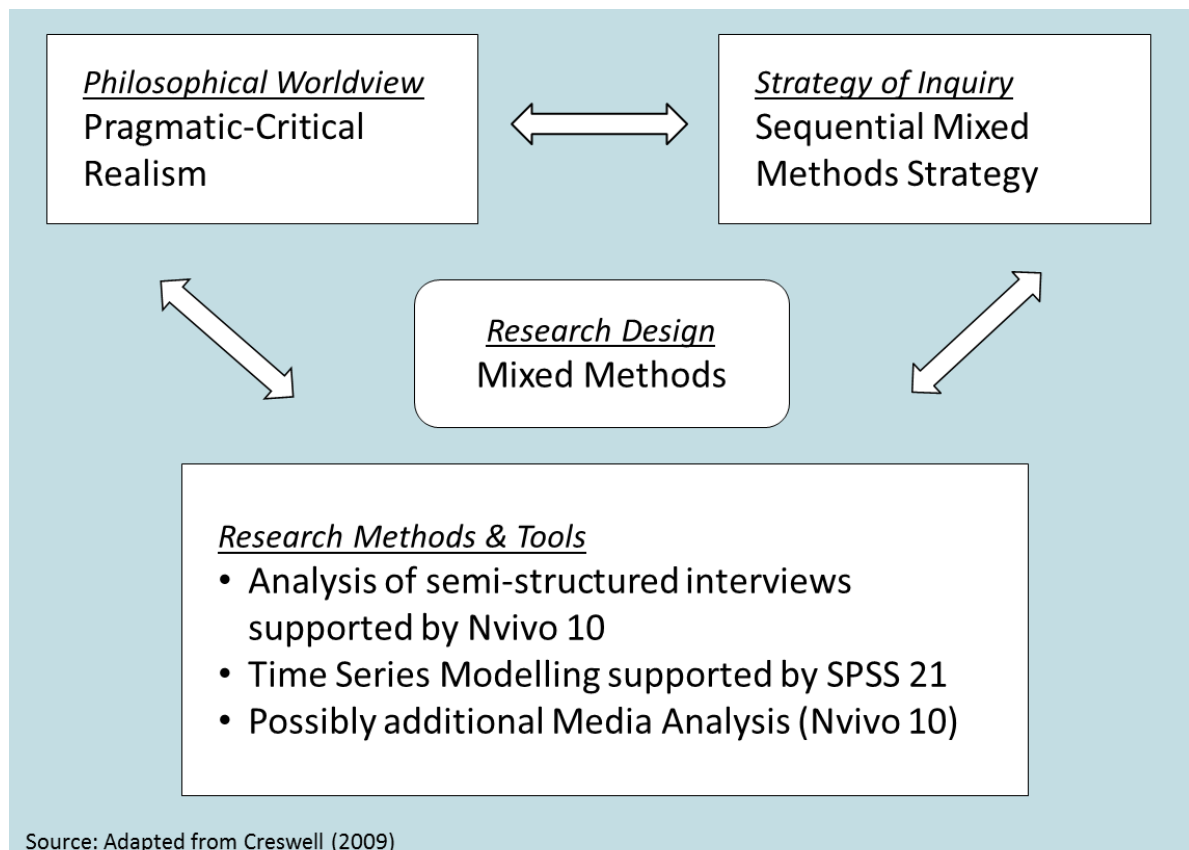
In order to establish a successful strategy a logistics multinational needs to be aware of all relevant developments and trends. Creating a true competitive advantage means to invest into research and business intelligence (Klaus, 2011). Further options may be to combine the classic way of determining a strategy by top management and consultancies with a knowledge-based logistics strategy system (Chow, Choy, Lee, & Chan, 2005). Based on these foundational efforts, different strategic activities may be pursued. Once one of these opportunities begins to show signs of being prosperous, a logistics multinational shall strive to be an early mover in order to successfully leverage its strategic investments in China.

Appendices



Source: Peng (2009, p. 15).

Appendix 1: Strategy Tripod



Source: Adapted from Creswell (2009)

Appendix 2: Overarching research design

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Posters

A Literature Review: Impact from ambulatory specialized care on quality of oncological treatment in an outpatient unit

Ruth Weber

